

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH and REVIEW

**Journal of Phi Beta Delta
Honor Society for International Scholars**



VOLUME 7 NUMBER 2 SPRING 2018

ISSN: 2167-8669





International Research and Review
Journal of Phi Beta Delta, Honor Society for International Scholars
Volume 7 Number 2 Spring 2018

Michael B. Smithee, Ed.D.
Editor

Table of Contents

A Process Approach to Internationalization – Utilizing De Wit’s Internationalization Circle (Modified Version) for Internationalization Planning Ling Gao LeBeau, Ph.D.	1
Impact of Study Abroad on College Students’ Intercultural Competence and Personal Development Gita Maharaja, Ed.D.	18
Improving International Students' Cultural Skills through A School-Based Program Yue Zhang, Ph.D. and Martha A. Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D.	42
The Drop-Off: Pedagogy for Study Abroad Educators Fostering Intercultural Competence Tammera R. Maloney, B.A. and Taryn E. Asbury, B.A.	65
Bilingual Literacy Development: Trends and Critical Issues Cristina Ríos, Ph.D. and Catalina Castellón, Ph.D.	85
Journal Description and Author Guidelines	

Copyright 2018, Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars;
All rights reserved. ISSN: 2167-8669



**International Research and Review:
Journal of Phi Beta Delta
Honor Society for International Scholars**

Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Michael Smithee, Syracuse University

Editorial Board

Dr. Patricia Burak	paburak@syr.edu	Syracuse University
Dr. Gary Cretser	gacretser@csupomona.edu	California State University, Pomona
Dr. Charles Gliozzo	gliozzo@msu.edu	Michigan State University
Dr. Yiurj Kondratenko	y_kondratenko@rambler.ru	Black Sea State University, Ukraine
Dr. Carl Patton	cpatton@gsu.edu	Georgia State University
Dr. Cristina Rios	cristina.rios@lamar.edu	Lamar University
Mr. Skip Greenblatt	sidney.greenblatt@gmail.com	Syracuse University (retired)
Dr. Judy Smrha	jsmrha@bakeru.edu	Baker University
Dr. Marco Tavanti	mtavanti@usfca.edu	University of San Francisco
Dr. Joshua McKeown	mckeown@oswego.edu	Oswego State University
Dr. Sharman Siebenthal-Adams	sharmans@umflint.edu	University of Michigan
Dr. John Winslade	jwinslad@csusb.edu	California State University, San Bernardino
Ms. Tyra Twomey-Smith	Consulting Editor	SUNY Institute of Technology

A Process Approach to Internationalization – Utilizing De Wit’s Internationalization Circle (Modified Version) for Internationalization Planning

Ling Gao LeBeau, Ph.D.
Western Carolina University

Abstract

This article examines how De Wit’s process approach (De Wit, 2002) describes internationalization and impacts its effectiveness, through a case study research at a comprehensive public university in the U.S. It aims to explore how a higher education institution may plan for internationalization, implement its plan, review how the implementation conforms to the plan, and act on what has been learned. This study examines the relationship between internationalization planning and assessing internationalization outcomes. It responds to the call for accountability, the call for quality assurance, and the urgent need for higher education internationalization. Most importantly, this study addresses the research gap in the area of internationalization assessment—exploring how De Wit’s process approach can be utilized to help higher education institutions strategically plan internationalization to effectively impact teaching, learning, research, and service.

Keywords: internationalization, process, accountability, effectiveness, assessment

In the past 20 years, the drive to improve the quality of education has been climbing in the increasingly competitive and internationalized context. Higher education institutions are urged by governments, policymakers, and accrediting agencies to evaluate their systems of academic quality assurance to maintain standards and to improve student learning, or in other words, to meet the call for accountability. The ranking of higher education institutions and the call for accountability have urged higher education institutions to judge the effectiveness of their internationalization strategies and related components for the purpose of improvement. International educators seek to understand how institutions are internationalizing their curricula and student learning experiences, what strategies are common among institutions that have successfully pursued internationalization, and most importantly, how to measure the outcomes of internationalization, but they are not alone in this interest. The contemporary emphasis on accountability means that accrediting agencies in higher education also need to know the effectiveness of campus internationalization.

When evaluating program effectiveness, inputs, outputs, activities, and outcomes are often identified as key components to consider. But within the current body of research on the effectiveness of campus internationalization, while many scholars emphasize the study of internationalization inputs and outputs, few research studies focus on outcomes (De Wit, 2009, 2010; Hudzik & Stohl, 2009, 2012). There are a few questions that drew the researcher’s

interests. For example, why do researchers focus on inputs and outputs of internationalization? What impact could those inputs and outputs make on teaching and learning? Those questions probably cannot be answered by only researching on inputs and outputs. There are also few studies on how the various inputs and outputs of these programs work together to achieve outcomes or on the institutional planning processes of campus internationalization. These are areas overlooked but do need to be addressed in depth, as identified by Hans de Wit for further research (2009, 2010). In De Wit's (2002) early work, he identified four different institutional approaches to internationalization: (a) activity, (b) rationale, (c) competency, and (d) process. The approaches of activity, rationale, and competency centralize on aspects of internationalization, while the process approach frames internationalization as a process that integrates international dimensions into teaching, learning, service, and research. De Wit (2002) claims that the process approach is the most comprehensive approach to studying internationalization, that includes strategies, national policies, and quality assurance.

The purpose of this study is to assess the institutional planning process of the comprehensive internationalization at Capital City University (CCU), to identify CCU internationalization planning's strengths and weakness in the context of an urban research university, with De Wit's internationalization circle as a conceptual model. This article studies how De Wit's process approach (De Wit, 2002) is utilized to describe a U.S. higher education institution's internationalization process and how the impact on its effectiveness. Herein, I explore how a higher education institution plans for internationalization, implements its plan, reviews how implementation conforms to the plan, and act on what has been learned. This study responds to the call for accountability, the call for quality assurance, and the urgent need for higher education internationalization. Most importantly, this study addresses the research gap in the area of internationalization assessment—exploring how De Wit's process approach can be utilized to help higher education institutions strategically plan internationalization to effectively impact teaching, learning, research, and service.

Measuring and Assessing Internationalization

As the word “internationalization” is becoming more prevalent in higher education institutions, stakeholders may want to know the actual impact of internationalization on higher education institutions and how internationalization has made a difference in teaching, learning, service, and research.

According to Beerkens et al. (2010), there were 33 existing tools and indicator sets for assessing internationalization in the field of international education by 2010. Beerkens et al. (2010) compared eight earlier assessment tools in the early 21st century that identified different categories of international activities to be measured to analyze the context of the European project Indicators for Mapping & Profiling Internationalization (IMPI). Each of these eight projects had a set of indicators that were developed to help institutions or programs evaluate internationalization efforts and obtain insights in different categories and subcategories. As Beerkens et al. (2010) pointed out, many of these tools were developed based on existing tools for evaluating other educational endeavors, and there are no universal standards for evaluating

internationalization and its quality; additionally, very few of these tools measure outcomes, only inputs and outputs. Currently, there are few published indicator sets for studying the internationalization planning process.

Outcomes and impacts are the end products and overall achievements of internationalization; these products also justify inputs and outputs and measure goal achievements. According to Hudzik and Stohl (2009), ranking bodies and funding agencies often focus on inputs and outputs as measurements of institutional internationalization efforts. However, inputs and outputs, which help track progress toward outcomes, are only part of assessment. De Wit's (2009) approach goes beyond the discussion of inputs and outputs. De Wit (2009) clearly differentiates the term *process* from that of activity. De Wit's process approach therefore adds a critical step between assessing inputs, outputs, and outcomes—analysis of the process. How are the inputs and outputs planned strategically to achieve the desirable outcomes?

The pioneer work on internationalization assessment was the Internationalization Quality Review Process (IQRP) in 1999 by De Wit and Knight (De Wit, 2010; Knight, 2008). The IQRP, a creation of the Institutional Management in Higher Education Program (IMHE) of the Organization for Economic and Community Development (OECD) in 1997, was the first initiative created for institutions not only to develop internationalization strategies, but also, specifically, to monitor and review their internationalization plans. At that time, some higher education institutions were still in the early stage of developing their internationalization strategies (Knight, 2008). This project developed procedures, guidelines, and tools to help institutions undertake a quality review process relative to their internationalization measures.

The ACE project "Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses" survey (n.d.) is an innovative movement in the field of internationalization assessment. The ACE project is currently the primary assessment tool utilized by U.S. higher education institutions. This ACE project was developed with the purpose of assessing the state of internationalization at U.S. institutions and examining its progress. This project is designed based on ACE's model of comprehensive internationalization (CI), "a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate international policies, programs, and initiatives" (ACE, 2012, p. 3). What contrasts ACE project with IQRP is that the ACE project was developed on a new concept of internationalization that is more inclusive and specific with internationalization dimensions. The survey questions created in the ACE project are contemporary and comprehensive with high quality, reflecting the current internationalization components.

According to Deardorff and Van Gallen (2012), there is no one single best way or best tool to assess internationalization activities. Different assessment tools are more applicable to certain institutions and particular contexts. Because internationalization assessment is a new, rising phenomenon, there are many issues and concerns by international educators. For example, De Wit (2010) argues that all previous and existing assessment tools only measure inputs and/or outputs, but not outcomes. Institutions tend to emphasize the number of institutional offerings and levels of participation but not to define the student global learning outcomes and effectiveness of internationalization strategies. The tools and projects discussed above either use

questionnaire or self-evaluation questions to collect data, heavily focusing on numbers and preliminary program effects. For internationalization assessment to be truly effective and informative, however, it must evaluate the process of internationalization, then the outcomes or impact, and finally focus on how the different elements work together in an integrated and strategic manner (De Wit, 2010; Knight, 2008).

De Wit's Model

The modified version of De Wit's (2002) internationalization circle is introduced in this research as the more comprehensive conceptual model for internationalization planning, supplemented with the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle (Tague, 1995). Many overlapping terms are used to describe the meaning, elements, content, and activities of internationalization, as previously discussed, which could appear to be confusing. De Wit's (2002, 2010) identification of four approaches to internationalization helps differentiate these various terms: (a) activity, (b) rationale, (c) competency, and (d) process. The activity approach focuses on the categories or types of activities. The activity approach in internationalization is broad and widely employed to describe the internationalization of higher education. Rationale and competency approaches are more specific than the activity approach and focus on narrow areas. The rationale approach describes internationalization in terms of purposes or intended outcomes, such as peace education (De Wit, 2002, 2010). The approach that focuses on the human dimension is the competency approach, which is used to describe internationalization in terms of developing new skills, attitudes, and knowledge in all stakeholders on campus (De Wit, 2002, 2010). This approach is widely applied to the assessment of student global learning outcomes. De Wit (2010) argues that the process approach would evolve into a primary approach with the development of internationalization efforts. Although the four approaches have their own unique foci, they are not exclusive but rather integrated across various aspects of internationalization.

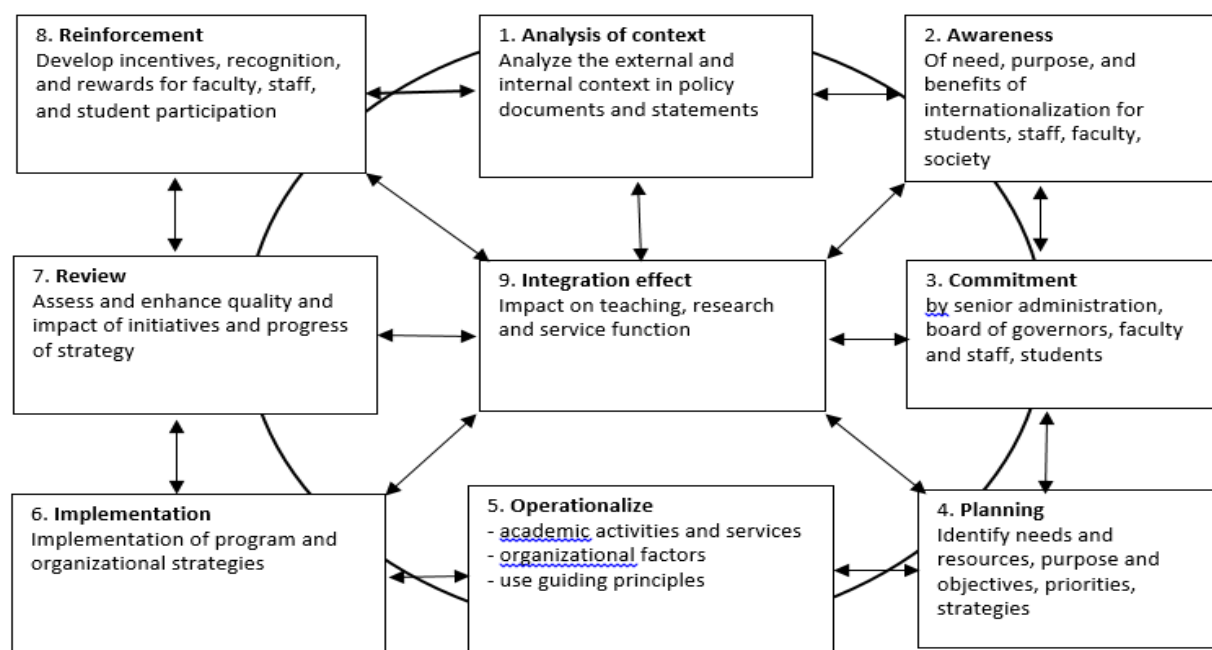
De Wit and Knight (1995) initiated the term *internationalization strategies* to describe initiatives at institutions that aim to incorporate international dimensions into regular functions and governing systems (as cited in De Wit, 2002). De Wit and Knight characterized two types of strategies following the process approach: program strategies and organizational strategies. Program strategies focus on an institution's specific curricular and co-curricular activities into which an international dimension is integrated. In regard to the organizational strategies, they refer to governance, operations, support services, and human resource development that help institutionalize international activities (De Wit, 2002). With the development of internationalization and the many other changes discussed previously, six organizational models of internationalization have been developed based on De Wit and Knight's identified strategies (De Wit, 2002). Two of the six organizational models of internationalization are Knight's (1993) internationalization circle; and (g) De Wit's (2002) modified version of the internationalization circle. These internationalization strategies and organizational models provide a theoretical foundation for internationalization measurement and assessment.

The modified version of the internationalization circle includes all the critical elements of the six organizational models De Wit (2002) lists, to study the internationalization process using the most inclusive and comprehensive conceptual model. De Wit's model considers the internationalization process as a continuous cycle, not a linear process. It identifies each step in the process of integrating all internationalization dimensions into the institutional systems, and it leads the process from innovation to institutionalization. This model has a sequence of nine phases that work in two unique ways among the different steps. De Wit's model also incorporates both institutional and specific departmental aspects. According to De Wit (2002), it is important to address the specific internationalization needs of each academic discipline, rather than "forcing [each discipline] into a general structure" (p. 137). De Wit (2002) states that internationalization in most cases is judged on its own merits, but not on its effect.

De Wit's (2002) modified version of the internationalization circle includes nine phases is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Internationalization circle (modified version)



Adapted from "Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: A Historical, Comparative, and Conceptual Analysis," by H. De Wit, 2002. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, Center for International Higher Education and the Program in Higher Education.

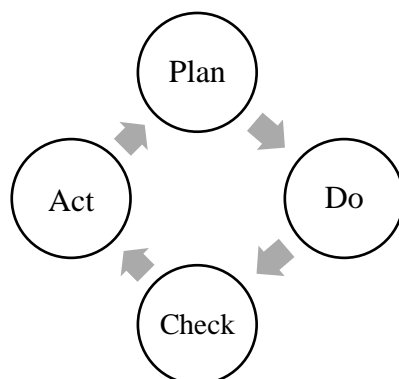
Prior to the actual planning of internationalization, Phase 1 involves higher education institutions analyzing the external and internal contexts and reviewing relevant documents, which includes policies at international, national, local, and institutional levels. The results of analysis from Phase 1 provide solid ground for the internationalization process. Phase 2 involves

conducting a needs analysis, and it draws awareness to how internationalization benefits faculty, staff, students, the institution, and the community. Internationalization is not an institutional task for a campus unit or a group of people. It needs commitment from all stakeholders, senior administrators, faculty, staff, and students, which is Phase 3. Without commitment, internationalization is not sustainable and will not be considered a part of the institutional culture and system. Once commitment is obtained, institutions can start on Phase 4, which includes examining current resources and identifying strategies and objectives.

Phase 5 and Phase 6 in the internationalization circle focus on actions (i.e., operations and implementation). Phase 7 is a critical element that is often ignored in many program initiatives, as it assesses the impact of internationalization activities and strategies and integrates the findings into Phase 8, the phase that includes program improvement. Phase 8 develops incentives and recognition for participants, and it is quite unique for its prominent place in the cycle. The last phase, Phase 9, integrates the effects of internationalization into a higher education institution's mission—teaching, research, and service—and is the key factor to institutionalizing internationalization in the system rather than maintaining a stand-alone strategy. Phase 9 is thus linked to all eight prior phases.

Another model recommended to be utilized to plan internationalization, along with De Wit's (2002) modified version of the internationalization circle, is the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle (Tague, 1995), see Figure 2. The PDCA cycle provides a broader scope for the planning process. It provides a model and strategy for organizations to plan an action, implement the action, check how it aligns with the original plan, and act on what has been learned (Tague, 1995). The PDCA cycle was not developed specifically to guide the process of internationalization, but the PDCA cycle's rationale of strategic quality improvement and the cyclical planning and assessment model clearly provide guidance to internationalization processes.

Figure 2
Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle



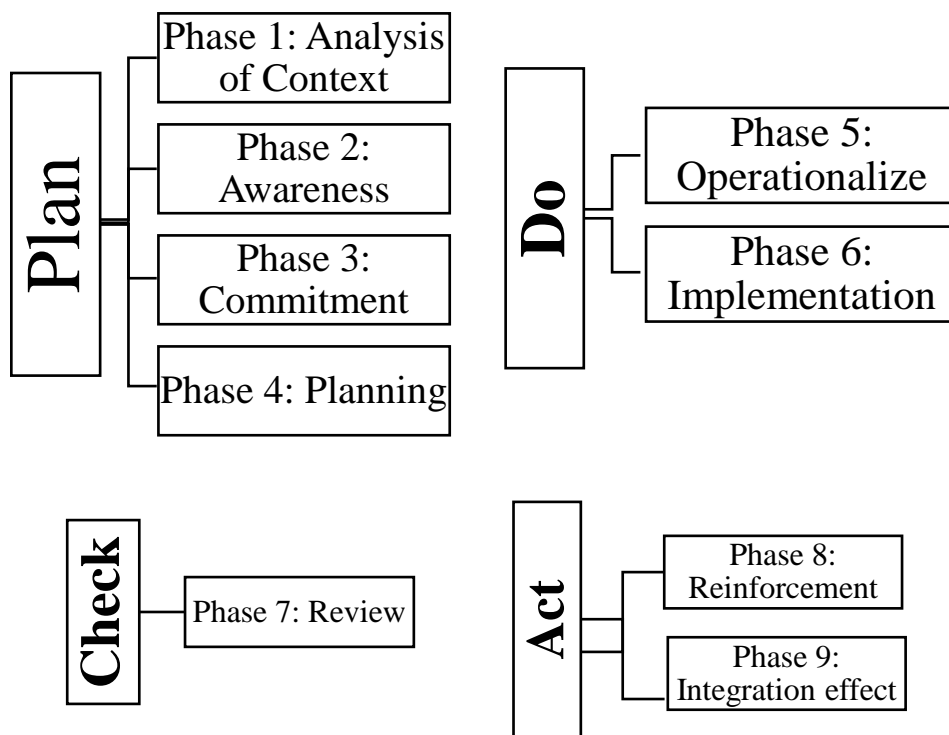
Adapted from "The Quality Toolbox," by N. Tague, 1995. Milwaukee, WI: ASQ Quality Press.

The PDCA cycle includes a much broader scope than the internationalization circle. For instance, the Plan stage in the PDCA cycle, during which opportunities are recognized and

changes are planned, covers Phase 1 to Phase 4 of the internationalization circle (i.e., analysis, awareness, commitment, and planning). The Do stage in the PDCA cycle (i.e., making the change and carrying out the study) aligns with Phase 5 and Phase 6 of the internationalization circle (i.e., operations, implementation). The Check stage of the PDCA cycle includes reviewing the change, analyzing the results, and identifying learning to be integrated into the process, which corresponds with Phase 7 of the internationalization circle. The Act stage of the PDCA cycle involves taking action based on what is learned in the Check stage, and this aligns with Phase 8 (i.e., reinforcement) and Phase 9 (i.e., the integration effect).

Figure 3

Internationalization circle embedded in the PDCA cycle



Adapted from “Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: A Historical, Comparative, and Conceptual Analysis” by H. De Wit, 2002. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, Center for International Higher Education and the Program in Higher Education.

The four phases in the PDCA cycle are the primary categories into which data analysis of an internationalization process can be organized. Under each category, there are subcategories that align with the phases in the internationalization circle. For example, the Plan category has subcategories of analysis of context, awareness, commitment, and planning; the Do category has subcategories of operations and implementation; the Check category has the subcategory of review; and the Act category has the subcategories of reinforcement and integration effect. Compared with other existing organization models, De Wit’s model was utilized in this research

as the conceptual model because of its comprehensive process approach and inclusiveness of internationalization dimensions.

Research Method

A descriptive single case study was conducted to examine the internationalization planning process by analyzing CCU's institutional records, reviewing archival documents, and interviewing key campus stakeholders. The key question guiding the research is: How does CCU plan for campus internationalization? Sub-questions include:

1. What are CCU's internationalization commitments?
2. How does CCU plan for various international dimensions: (a) Administration, (b) Curriculum Internationalization, (c) International Admissions, (d) International Partnerships, (e) International Scholar Services, (f) International Student Services, and (g) Study Abroad?
3. How does CCU integrate various international dimensions into its teaching, learning, research, and service?

In this case study research, I interviewed stakeholders/research participants with semi-structured questions to understand their views of the research problem being studied and examine their complexity. I assessed the internationalization process and used findings from the collected data to inform how I offered suggestions for new practices of internationalization.

Because of the nature of the case study, I used a purposeful sampling strategy to select CCU. CCU's leaders did not pay sufficient attention to campus internationalization until the mid-1990s as many other higher education institutions in the U.S. did, when CCU leaders realized how local and global issues were strongly interconnected, part of a growing trend of globalization. Over the past 15 years, CCU has made tremendous efforts in campus internationalization and has become an internationally recognized institution in the field of higher education internationalization.

The primary mode of data collection in this research was one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Document review was utilized as a supplemental tool when further information was desired. The research questions were used to guide the development of interview protocol. The stakeholders in CCU's strategic internationalization planning process were arranged into seven areas for interview: (a) Administration, (b) Curriculum Internationalization; (c) International Admissions; (d) International Partnerships; (e) International Scholar Services; (f) International Student Services; and (g) Study Abroad. The head of each area was interviewed for approximately 90 minutes.

In my research, I used NVivo, the qualitative analysis software, to analyze interview transcripts and archival documents. I coded the documents and transcripts with the four stages in the Shewhart cycle (i.e., Plan, Do, Check, Act) as a set of pre-formed themes into which to divide responses. Then, under each stage of the Shewhart cycle, I added sub-phases based on the internationalization circle, the conceptual framework articulated previously (see Figure 4). The archival documents were analyzed and coded in the seven international areas (i.e.,

Administration, Curriculum Internationalization, International Admissions, International Partnerships, International Scholar Services, International Student Services, and Study Abroad). In order to comprehend how each international area performed in the internationalization cycle, I created a rubric that measured the engagement level of each international area, as reflected in the interviews and archived documents, at each stage and each phase, see Table 1.

Table 1

Rubric Template

Name of Stage (Number of Phase)	Dimensions	Level of Engagement H: High M: Middle L: Low	Evidence	
			In Interviews	In Documents

To ensure internal validity, I started the chain of evidence two years ago when the research topic was initiated, and I utilized interview transcripts and archival documents as sources of evidence. I also employed pattern matching, a clear research framework, theory triangulation, and logic models during the data analysis stage. The external validity was achieved by providing a clear rationale for the case study selection and details on the case study context. I used a case study protocol and developed a case study database/audit trail for transparency and replication to achieve reliability.

Research Finding

Overall, CCU's internationalization process was congruent with De Wit's (2002) internationalization circle and operated as a continuous cycle. Some international units had an explicit plan and followed the Shewhart cycle (i.e., Plan-Do-Check-Act) systematically as a part of institutional planning, whereas some units did not operate on the cycle for various reasons. Four broad pre-formed thematic categories were organized from the narratives of OIA directors participating in the interviews and the reviewed documents. Internationalization planning was introduced first, providing descriptions of how CCU analyzed the context and identified priorities. The second category examined how CCU implemented its internationalization initiatives and activities, followed by the third category representing CCU's current status of internationalization assessment and outlining the universal challenges and CCU's upcoming plan of assessment. The last category is related to the reinforcement system, describing how CCU developed incentives to motivate faculty and students and how CCU worked with stakeholders to integrate internationalization into teaching, research, and service.

CCU's Position on the Internationalization Circle

Detailed analysis of the external and internal context. Higher education institutions must analyze the external and internal contexts and review relevant documents, which include policies at international, national, local, and institutional levels, as the preparation for its internationalization planning. The analysis of results from the first phase provides solid ground for the internationalization process at CCU. The seven interviewees consulted during the

research all presented mid to high levels of engagement in the analysis of external and internal contexts before international activities were operationally defined.

Full awareness of the need, purpose, and benefits of internationalization. CCU conducted a needs analysis of internationalization and developed awareness of how internationalization benefits faculty, staff, students, the institution, and the community, as articulated in the interviews and document analyses. Five international areas showed high awareness of need, purpose, and benefits of internationalization, while two displayed awareness at a mid-level.

Strong commitment. Internationalization is not an institutional task for a campus unit or a group of people. It needs commitment from all stakeholders, senior administrators, faculty, staff, and students. CCU shows an exceptionally strong commitment to internationalization as well as challenges, reflected in all interviews and documents. The commitment to internationalization by OIA administration and institutional leadership was evident in CCU's 2014 Strategic Plan and CCU's Present-Day Statement on Internationalization. As stated one of CCU's internationalization documents, "CCU will become a global campus and will partner with the City as it become a global city. We will accomplish these aims through effective international partnerships; international opportunities for students, faculty, and staff; and development of our students as global citizens" (CCU, n.d.). In addition, OIA's Annual Report since 2011 has commitments that are articulated in each international unit.

Clear identification of priorities and strategies. Once commitment is obtained, institutions can start to examine current resources and identify strategies and objectives. Interviews from five international units clearly determined the needs and resources, explicit purpose and objectives, identification of priorities, and strategies. All of the documents—two strategic plans, annual reports from 2011 to 2014, and the Study Abroad White Paper—have statements and goals, objectives, and strategic initiatives specified. For example, under each goal in the OIA Annual Report from 2011 to 2016, there are multiple objectives, and under each objective, strategic initiatives follow.

Active implementation of initiatives and activities. Once analysis is completed, commitment is obtained, and priorities are made, institutions can start to take actions to put those initiatives into practice. CCU's internationalization principles and the activities they inspired were clearly written in strategic plans and annual reports. In each annual report since 2011, CCU's Office of International Affairs (OIA) has identified academic activities and services that were accomplished during the reporting year listed under each objective, and a list of activities planned for the upcoming year, in a systematic and organized format. This annual report is applied as a compass for the seven directors of international divisions, all of whom mention the OIA plan during the interviews. The annual plan is what divisions use to develop their divisional plans. For example, The Study Abroad White Paper has an exceptional elaboration on CCU's Study Abroad Program strategies and plan of implementation (e.g., developing a task force, starting a peer outreach program, utilizing social media, and centralizing marketing strategies).

Improved systematic assessment of internationalization initiatives. The critical element that is often ignored in campus internationalization is assessing the impact of internationalization activities and strategies and applying the findings toward program improvement. During Phase 7, many issues and challenges appear in the CCU documents and interviews. Those documents and interviews indicate that CCU is facing challenges similar to other institutions. There is varied evidence of assessments and quality enhancement written in the annual reports and in interviews with the directors. Regardless, as all directors commented, assessment is the most challenging task, one that requires the development of metrics. The Director of Admissions shared a remark from a conference presenter to show how international educators feel about assessment: “In God we trust, but all others must provide data.” In terms of how assessment planning is reflected in documents, the Study Abroad White Paper is a comprehensive document that includes a section titled, “Using Data for Strategic Decision-Making, Assessing Learning, and Developing a Research Agenda,” with a series of strategies for assessment listed.

Developed system of incentive, recognition, and awards. Providing incentives and recognition to participants is a necessary strategy to enhancing campus internationalization that is advocated by many in higher education institutions. To encourage faculty and students to be engaged in international activities, a system for incentive and recognition is /needed. At CCU, incentives, recognition, and rewards for faculty members’ participation in internationalization efforts were used to encourage buy-in, as indicated during the interviews a and as documented in the Study Abroad White Paper and OIA annual reports .Those incentives appeared to be in the areas of study abroad, curriculum internationalization, and international partnerships, but not in other international areas. CCU has funding for faculty or academic staff to enhance collaborative international research and collaboration activities, grants to faculty or academic staff to support school-approved undergraduate student recruitment, and grants to stimulate additional funding for international activities.

Integration of internationalization in teaching, research, and service. Integration is the key factor to institutionalizing internationalization in the system rather than maintaining a stand-alone strategy. This section articulates how CCU integrates international perspectives into the institution’s mission, teaching, research, and service. OIA annual reports since 2012 include objective initiatives on how to integrate international perspectives into major initiatives and planning efforts at CCU. For example, OIA supports the following campus projects: (a) CCU’s Research, International, Service, Experiential (RISE) Program; (b) development and implementation of a Global Learning Track for CCU’s Assessment Institute; (c) leadership of campus-wide committees, such as the Study Abroad Committee, Partnership Committee, and faculty interest groups to promote internationalization; (d) effective collaboration with Enrollment Services and other units to increase international student enrollment and retention; (e) engagement with a robust set of outreach activities that result in large numbers of contacts; (f) support for the internationalization of general education and campus-wide initiatives; (g) support for the internationalization of school and departmental curricula; and (h) continued assistance to

faculty, schools, and other units in developing specific international collaborations of interest to them. To clarify, these integration activities are the outputs of OIA's leadership on campus internationalization rather than outcomes or a direct effect. The outcomes of internationalization initiatives should be reflected in faculty teaching and student learning.

Strengths of CCU's Internationalization Process

Two prominent strengths were reflected through CCU's internationalization process: (a) institutional commitment and (b) a culture of internationalization. CCU's strong commitment to internationalization began around 2000, and over the past 15 years, CCU has made systematic and consistent efforts to internationalize campus through teaching, learning, research, and service. Evidence of this is presented by numerous CCU and OIA archival documents, national internationalization awards, and interviews with OIA area directors. In 2007, OIA established its inaugural strategic internationalization plan, named "Strategic Plan for a New Era of Internationalization." Sequentially, the strategic internationalization plan was integrated into the university-wide strategic plan in 2014, named the CCU 2020 Strategic Plan. What is more, in the past decade, in order to prepare for an up-to-date strategic internationalization plan, OIA collaborated with ACE Internationalization Laboratory twice to conduct comprehensive evaluation on its internationalization initiatives. Data collected from the one-year long evaluation provided solid foundation for OIA to draft its internationalization plan. CCU's institutional commitment was also diffused to all schools and key administrative units, as shown in the recent international vision statement by OIA (2016) in this document. In terms of integrating internationalization into student learning, CCU's RISE Program and CCU's Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL) are two evidences of institutional commitment. With the increased number of international students and scholars on campus, with more CCU students studying abroad, with clear internationalization strategies stated in CCU strategic plan, and with CCU's involvement into City's global connections, the culture of internationalization at CCU will undoubtedly flourish.

Challenges in CCU's Internationalization Process

CCU is a higher education institution that is known for its assessment culture. Nevertheless, CCU faces challenges in assessing the impact of internationalization initiatives, the same difficulty facing other higher education institutions in the U.S. Campus internationalization was a new phenomenon two decades ago in higher education, and internationalization assessment subsequently emerged after that, making it still a fledgling process. CCU is currently using a combination of existing assessment tools and new tools still in the development process to assess program outcomes and has significantly improved its international assessments in the past decade as shown in documents and interviews.

Recommendations

Recommendation to Higher Education Institutions

The research findings indicate the two strengths CCU strived for were institutional commitment and culture of internationalization. CCU made a commitment to internationalization at the end of 20th century, which has been consistent and has led to the program's current achievements. These strong commitments from faculty, staff, students, and administrative leaders, ultimately cultivate the success of its culture of internationalization. With this culture, internationalization is integrated into the University's mission and is immersed in various University functions. For higher education institutions in the U.S., the top lesson drawn from CCU's journey is the value of commitment and a strategic internationalization plan. In CCU's case, the commitment was not made by the top leadership alone but had diffused into all schools and key administrative units. Secondly, Regardless of the widely accepted concept of internationalization, each institution is unique in terms of its atmosphere, context, and demands. Institutions are thus recommended to develop their own definitions that fit their institutional context. Higher education institutions should have their own definitions of internationalization, and definition of related terms, such as global learning and intercultural competence. CCU developed its own definition of internationalization in 2007, addressed in its inaugural internationalization plan, which provided direction and led the campus to actions. Institutions' strategic internationalization plan should not be compartmentalized and conducted only via the Office of International Affairs. It needs to be integrated into the university-wide strategic plan, as CCU did, to truly achieve the mission of internationalization, i.e., to integrate international perspectives into teaching, learning, and service.

Last but not least, I highly recommend that institutions which have never reviewed their internationalization processes comprehensively adopt De Wit's (2002) model to evaluate the process phase by phase. For initiations that do not possess a comprehensive internationalization plan yet, De Wit's model is uniquely suited to guiding the planning process. The previous sections provide ample rationale for De Wit's organization model's appropriateness for assessing internationalization processes. To summarize, De Wit's model reviews the internationalization process holistically to meet the needs of 21st higher education.

Recommendation for Further Research

As stated in the preceding section, further research needs to be conducted to measure the actual outcomes of internationalization—the impact on teaching, learning, research, and service. Assessment of global learning outcomes is an area of interest drawing great attention, and much research is being conducted (Green, 2012; West, 2013), but few studies have been done to examine the effectiveness of internationalization on other critical components of higher education, including teaching, research, and service. For example, what are the outcomes of faculty international engagement? How may faculty engagement impact teaching and research? This question is critical, because more and more literature encourage faculty involvement, and state faculty are the front runner for global learning. However, some faculty are demotivated due to little incentive and the lack of connection between international work and tenure and promotion. If research proves that faculty's international engagement contributes to teaching and learning significantly, perhaps some institutions will consider including international

engagement as one of their criteria for tenure and promotion. This type of outcome may be acquired by assessing a students' course portfolio, a faculty's teaching portfolio, students' exemplary achievement, and faculty's publications. Another question that needs to be explored is, "How does the increased international student enrollment influence the American classroom culture and reshape teaching and learning?" While international educators consistently advocate for increased international student enrollment for the purpose of globalizing curriculum and campus culture, some opponents argue that international students are a burden to faculty and create barriers for classroom communication. A qualitative or quantitative research study could investigate the bottom line and provide data to international educators.

Limitations of Research

This study addressed the research gap in the field of international assessment by exploring the campus internationalization process and examining how the process approach impacts the effectiveness of internationalization. The research findings suggest that the organization model based on the process approach by De Wit (2002), the internationalization circle, is a comprehensive instrument to guide campus internationalization processes and lead the development of such a process from innovation to institutionalization. Nevertheless, this research only studies the process and is a single case study. De Wit's internationalization circle is useful to assess the workings of CCU, a comprehensive urban research university, but may be a poor fit to assess a small liberal arts college located in a rural area, which may have a different organizational structure and may not have a supportive local community with interest in international activities. Multiple case studies are recommended to verify whether De Wit's model is universally able to assess internationalization processes. Future researchers may use Carnegie classifications on degree-granting colleges and universities as a base to decide which type of institutions they want to conduct a study on. As far as research method, I used only a descriptive single case study. Future researchers may want to apply different research methods other than case study, for example, quasi-qualitative or quantitative research methods, to produce more robust and compelling data.

Third, there might be a limitation in how my interview protocols were semi-structured, and the questions were generated based on the phases of De Wit's (2002) internationalization circle. If the interview questions had not been structured, I might have collected more fluid data, and some new and unexpected information might have occurred during the interviews. In addition, my interviewees were all heads of OIA units, chosen because they were familiar with CCU internationalization strategies, OIA organizational structure, and various policies and procedures. If I had interviewed other staff than unit heads, however, I may have heard different reflections.

References

American Council on Education. (2012a). *Mapping internationalization on U.S. campuses: 2012 edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/2012-Mapping-Internationalization-on-U-S--Campuses.aspx>

- American Council on Education. (2012b). *Mapping internationalization on assessment tool*. Retrieved from <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/MappingInternationalizationonUSCampuses2012-survey.pdf>
- American Council on Education. (n.d.). *CIGE model for comprehensive internationalization*. Retrieved from <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/CIGE-Model-for-Comprehensive-Internationalization.aspx>
- Beerkens, E., Brandenburg, U., Evers, N., Van Gaalen, A., Leichsenring, H., & Zimmermann, V. (2010). *Indicator projects on internationalization—approaches, methods, and findings: A report in the context of the European project “Indicators for Mapping & Profiling Internationalisation” (IMPI)*. Retrieved from http://www.impi-project.eu/pdf/full_indicator_projects_on_internationalisation-IMPI%20100511.pdf
- Brandenburg, U., & Federkeil, G. (2007). *How to measure internality and internationalisation of higher education institutions: Indicators and key figures*. Center for Higher Education Development (CHE).
- De Wit, H. (2002). *Internationalization of higher education in the United States of America and Europe: A historical, comparative, and conceptual analysis*. Chestnut Hills, MA: Boston College, Center for International Higher Education and the Program in Higher Education.
- De Wit, H. (2009). Measuring success in the internationalisation of higher education: an introduction. In H. De Wit (Ed.), *Measuring success in the internationalisation of higher education* (pp. 1-8). European Association for International Education (EAIE).
- De Wit, H. (2010). *Internationalisation of higher education in Europe and its assessment, trends and issues*. Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO). Retrieved from http://www.nvao.net/page/downloads/Internationalisation_of_Higher_Education_in_Europe_DEF_december_2010.pdf
- Deardorff, D., De Wit, H., & Heyl, J. D. (2012). Bridges to the future: The global landscape of international higher education. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, J. D. Heyl, & T. Adams (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* (pp. 457-485). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Deardorff, D., & Van Gaalen, A. (2012). Outcomes assessment in the internationalization of higher education. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, J. D. Heyl, & T. Adams (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* (pp. 167-189). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Green, M. F. (April 2012). Universities must be clear and honest about internationalisation. *University World News*. Retrieved from <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2012041114440954>

- Green, M. F., & Marmolejo, F. (2012). The internationalization of higher education: Future prospects. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, J. D. Heyl, & T. Adams (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* (pp. 439-455). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hudzik, J. K., & Stohl, M. (2009). Modeling assessment of the outcomes and impacts of internationalisation. In H. de Wit (Ed.), *Measuring success in the internationalisation of higher education* (pp. 9-22). European Association for International Education (EAIE).
- Hudzik, J. K., & Stohl, M. (2012). Comprehensive and strategic internationalization of U. S. higher education. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, J. D. Heyl, & T. Adams (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* (pp. 61-80). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodeled: Definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8(5), 5-30. doi:10.1177/1028315303260832
- Knight, J. (2008). *Higher education in turmoil: The changing world of internationalization*. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Knight, J. (2012). Concepts, rationales, and interpretive frameworks in the internationalization of higher education. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, J. D. Heyl, & T. Adams (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* (pp. 27-42). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Olson, C., Green, M., & Hill, B. (2005). *Building a strategic framework for comprehensive internationalization*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- Palomba, C. A., & Banta, T. W. (1999). *Assessment essentials: Planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Rumbley, L. E., Altach, P. G., & Reisberg, L. (2012). Internationalization within the higher education context. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, J. D. Heyl, & T. Adams (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international higher education* (pp. 3-36). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Tague, N. (1995). *The quality toolbox*. Milwaukee, WI: ASQ Quality Press.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2006). *A test of leadership: Charting the future of U.S. higher education*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/final-report.pdf>
- West, C. (2013). *Leveraging accreditation and quality assurance in international higher education*. Retrieved from http://www.nafsa.org/uploadedFiles/Chez_NAFSA/Find_Resources/Internationalizing_Higher_Education/Network_Resources/International_Education_Leadership/Leveraging%20Quality%20Assurance%20Intern%20HigherEd.pdf

About the Author

Dr. Ling Gao LeBeau is Director of International Programs and Services at Western Carolina University (WCU). She provides strategic vision, leadership, advocacy, and expertise on international education and services. She leads and implements campus-wide internationalization initiatives. LeBeau is active in AIEA and NAFSA and presents and publishes on issues of international higher education. Ling LeBeau holds a PhD in Higher Education from Indiana University Bloomington. LeBeau's research interests include: global learning, curriculum internationalization, international partnerships, assessment, and mobility.

The Impact of Study Abroad on College Students' Intercultural Competence and Personal Development

Gita Maharaja, Ed.D.
Duquesne University

Abstract

Today's interrelated and interconnected world demands that college students develop the intercultural competence to meet the challenges of the 21st century. In response to this challenge, the number of American students participating in study abroad has been increasing. Many studies have explored the benefits of studying abroad, yet there are few qualitative studies that investigated its impact on college students' intercultural competence and personal development. This qualitative study explores the impact of a semester-long study abroad on the development of intercultural competence and personal growth of 150 college students who have studied in different countries. Findings of this study shows that study abroad may enhance intercultural competence and personal development, reflected in the participants' personal essays on their living experience. They gained a better understanding of their own and other countries' culture and cultural differences, increased their level of self-confidence, global-mindedness, patience, assertiveness, maturity, self-awareness, flexibility and adaptability.

Keywords: intercultural competence; adaptability; study abroad; intercultural sensitivity; personal development; cross-cultural

With the growth of globalization and multinational corporations in the 21st century, higher education institutions need to ascertain that students are developing the competencies to adjust to and remain competitive in the rapidly changing and highly competitive global marketplace. Leaders in international education recognize the transformative nature of study abroad programs in developing students who become interculturally sensitive and *intellectually* prepared to take their place in the world.

The most recent statistics from *Open Doors* indicates that the number of students participating in study abroad programs continues to grow as reflecting a 38 % increase from 205,988 in 2004-2005 to 329,339 in 2015-2016 (*Open Doors*, 2018). With this increase, it is crucial for stakeholders including students, administrators, faculty, and parents to find out interested whether a study abroad experience helps students to develop the skills needed for the global community and to succeed upon graduation. In the past, this belief was supported by Vande Berg (2001) pointing out that consumers were looking for warranties that their investment in education would develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills for them to succeed upon graduation. Nowadays, educators and administrators in higher education are not only interested to know if an overall education is a fruitful expense but also if the investment in a study abroad program adds to skills needed for the competitive global market. Proponents of international

education and internationalization in higher education agree that the development of intercultural skills is crucial to the success of American students competing in the global workplace (Deardoff, 2006).

Higher education institutes recognize the need to assess the learning outcomes of students studying abroad. The American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) (2013) and other scholars stress the importance of exploring whether the students' investment reaps positive results, among which an enhancement students' abilities to recognize, understand and respect cultural differences and students' personal development. A number of studies which will be discussed in the literature review have investigated the impact of study abroad on students' change in attitudes, cross-cultural awareness, language acquisition, global-mindedness, personal development, and intellectual level (Tarrant, 2010; Engle & Engle, 2004; Kitsantas, 2004; Kitsandas & Meyers, 2002). Other studies have investigated how a study abroad experience makes a difference in students' intercultural communication, intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural adaptability using a quantitative research method (Nguyen 2017; Scally, 2015; Rust, Forster, Morris & Niziolek, 2013; Stebleton, Siria & Cherney, 2013; Anderson & Lawron, 2011; Nguyen, Biderman, & McNary, 2010; Pedersen, 2010; Zarnick, 2010; Clarke, Flaherty, Wright & McMilen, 2009; Maharaja, 2009; Kehl, & Morris, 2008; Rexeisen, Anderson, Lawton & Hubbard, 2008; Williams, 2005; Engle & Engle, 2004, and Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). Few studies on this topic have used a qualitative research method (King, Perez, & Shim, 2013 and Marx & Moss, 2011). However, there is a dearth of in-depth qualitative studies investigating the impact of a semester-long study abroad experience on the intercultural sensitivity and personal development simultaneously focusing on students' reflective self-reports on their experience. Vande Berg reinforced this fact by stating that there is a dearth of studies related to more in-depth studies in intercultural effectiveness (Vande, Berg, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of a semester-long study abroad program on the intercultural competence and personal development of students at a research-intensive university. For the purpose of this study, intercultural competence refers to the ability to develop an understanding of one's own and host culture, cultural differences, and one's own personal changes after a study abroad experience. This qualitative study is an extension of the researcher's doctoral dissertation, a quantitative study that investigated the impact of a semester long study abroad program on the intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural adaptability skills of students at the same university. The results of pre and post quantitative study indicated that the study abroad experience had a positive impact on the participants' intercultural competence and personal development. The rationale behind this qualitative study is to supplement the quantitative results with in-depth and rich data from reflective self-reports of the same students on their intercultural competence and personal development using the same conceptual frameworks as the quantitative study. It aims at providing insight of how the students viewed their host and own culture, cultural differences and personal growth. Finally, the study also aims

at narrowing the gap between qualitative and quantitative research studies in this area of research.

Significance of the Study

The statistical reports, *Open Doors* (2018), published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) indicate that study abroad participation has been growing steadily in the past ten years, reflecting a 52% increase from 205,988 in 2004-2005 to 313,415 in 2014-2015. Statistics in *Open Doors* (2018) reveal European countries were listed as the common study abroad locations with 55% of American students studying in Europe in 2014-2015 and about 34 % of undergraduates participated in a ‘semester abroad’ in 2014-2015. The same source lists the leading destinations in descending order of American undergraduates’ participation in 2016 as follow: United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, China, Ireland, Australia, Costa Rica, Japan, South Africa, and Mexico.

As the number of students participating in study abroad programs continue to grow in higher education, stakeholders including students, administrators, faculty and parents are interested to find out whether a study abroad experience helps students to develop the skills needed in a global community. The assessment of study abroad programs in any university or college will assist the administration in analyzing the effectiveness of their programs in terms of cost, quality and learning outcomes. The outcome-based approach of planning and implementing study abroad programs necessitates an evaluation of the learning experience. The increasing costs and the limited resources available to manage private and state-funded post-secondary academic institutions in the United States warrant the need for assessment to justify the existence of present and the implementation of future study abroad programs. Paige, Cohen and Shively (2004) support this argument by stating, “In an era of ever-greater accountability and cost-benefit analysis, hard evidence is being demanded to demonstrate that investments in various forms of education, including, study abroad, are worthy ones that are realizing their learning objectives.” (p. 53).

With the rise of students studying abroad, institutions in higher education have established goals and learning objectives for students studying abroad. Specific objectives for study abroad programs might vary from one higher education institution to another, yet profession and career development, personal growth and cultural understanding are common to most programs (AIFS, 2013). Consequently, assessment of whether those objectives are met is important for all stakeholders. To this effect, Vande Berg (2007) suggests that U.S. study abroad professionals should aim at designing programs that meet the students’ goals and expectations of their experience overseas.

The study seeks to provide administrators and educators in the field of international education with data that will help to evaluate the effectiveness of a semester-long island study abroad program on college students’ development of intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural adaptability skills. It is hoped that this study will be of relevance to educators and administrators who are involved in the design, implementation, management and evaluation of study abroad programs. The literature reveals that the desired learning outcomes for college and university

students include an understanding of cultural differences and the development of intercultural skills to adapt to our global world. In order to comprehend how a study abroad experience contributes to the fulfillment of these outcomes, it is necessary to carry out more studies in that area. Finally, this study will contribute to a pool of research studies related of a study abroad experience on the cognitive, affective and behavioral development of college students.

Literature review

The literature review will cover the following sections: the goals of study abroad, an explanation of the concept of intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity focusing on an understanding of cultural differences, Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) as the conceptual framework for intercultural competence, Kelley & Meyer's Cross-cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) as a construct for personal development, and finally an overview of selected research on the impact of study abroad on intercultural competence and personal development.

Goals of Study Abroad

A study conducted by the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) (2013) surveyed alumni who have studied abroad from 1990 to 2010 to find out about their learning goals and outcomes. They were summarized as follows: "impacted my knowledge of another culture (92%), developing skills and intercultural competencies which contributed to obtaining my first job after graduation (56%), and my ability to adapt in diverse workplace environments (80%)" (p. 6). Additionally, the alumni reported that the study abroad experience highly affected their "self-development and personal values". Those were "acceptance of difference in others, tolerance of ambiguity, self-awareness, confidence in new people, and greater independence and self-confidence (p. 13)". The results show that students have expected goals that they would like to achieve from their study abroad experience.

With the rise of students studying abroad, institutions in higher education have established goals and learning objectives for students studying abroad. Specific objectives for study abroad programs might vary from one higher education institution to another, yet academic, personal and intercultural competencies are common to most programs (Stier, 2003). Study abroad has been one of the strategies implemented by administrators of higher education for responding to the call for internationalization of higher education and for providing students with opportunities to acquire competence in facing diversity in our global world. Such competence would enable them to have an understanding of their own culture, as well as to develop an appreciation for the backgrounds, interests and points of view of others. Over the last two decades, there have been a number of a number attempts to investigate the goals of study abroad in higher education. The literature reveals that most research on desirable goals of study abroad focus on career development, better understanding of cultural differences, language learning, personal growth, global-mindedness, cross-cultural, and intercultural competence growth (Carlson, Burn, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1990; Gillipsie, 2002 & Orahod, Kruze &

Pearson, 2004; Kehl & Morris, 2008; and Allen (2010). In addition, Dwyer (2004) has chartered the goals of study abroad as follows: academic, career development, intercultural development, personal and social growth.

The goals of study abroad change with time to meet the needs of institutions in higher education (Hoffa, 2010). Scholars view the experience as a stimulus to intellectual, perceptual understanding and personal growth. This approach of identifying the goals of study abroad is summarized by Hoffa (2010) as follows: “(1) creating a global outlook with other nations focusing on opportunities to develop global understanding, perspectives, and knowledge; (2) enhancing career preparation by learning cross-cultural and workplace skills needed in today’s global job market; and (3) fostering intellectual and personal development” (p. 13).

Other scholars have explored how a study abroad experience is an emotional, cultural and intellectual journey (Stier, 2003) in which the students embark on a cultural journey that becomes enriching through interaction with and reflection on cultural differences and peculiarities. Like Stier, Hopkins (1999) believed that students are given an opportunity to reflect on their assumptions of others and of self. Study abroad gives the students the opportunity to find themselves inwardly as well as outwardly and to reconcile their views of themselves and their assumptions with the new cultural environment, with the process of experiential learning leading to self-development.

Study abroad is one of the ways for students to develop or enhance empathy for other cultures and favorable attitudes towards other people. Knowledge about cultural differences, empathy for other cultures, the ability to have interactive coping skills and foreign language competency are becoming increasingly important (Lambert, 1994). Similar to Lambert, other scholars believe that the development of intercultural skills, including intercultural sensitivity, has become a significant goal of study abroad programs in higher education (Mahoney & Schamber, 2004).

The above literature suggests that the learning goals of study abroad could be summarized as intellectual and personal development, international understanding, and enhancement of global competence, cross-cultural skills and intercultural competence. This review does not suggest that other goals have not been identified by other scholars. For the purpose of this study, it is important to focus on how scholars have analyzed the goals of study abroad with respect to students’ changes in intercultural competence and personal development. The next section will cover a discussion of how scholars have interpreted these two concepts.

Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Sensitivity: An understanding of Cultural Differences

Intercultural competence is defined under different terms in the literature review. For the purpose of this study, intercultural competence is referred to intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993). A distinction between the terms intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity is important. Intercultural competence refers to the external behaviors that an individual manifests when living in another culture, whereas intercultural sensitivity refers to the developmental process that dictates the degree of an individual’s cognitive ability to deal with cultural

differences (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003). According to Hammer et. al. (2003), the level of intercultural competence increases with increasing degree of intercultural sensitivity. Furthermore, the term *intercultural sensitivity* also relates to the concept of intercultural communication competence because of the need for interaction to occur during the developmental process of intercultural sensitivity. To this effect, Bennett (1986) states that “the development of intercultural sensitivity demands attention to the subjective experience of the learner” (p. 179).

Scholars have interpreted the understanding of cultural differences through different contextual situations. Edward T. Hall (1976), often known as the father of the field, first published works that were related to intercultural communication and cross-cultural training. In his book *Beyond Culture* (1976), Hall shares his knowledge of how our experience is molded by culture. His analysis of the effects of space and time and other non-verbal behavior on human interaction led to further research in culture learning and the impact of such learning in training programs. The goals of these programs were to provide individuals with the skills to comprehend and respond appropriately to new situations and to gain a better understanding of cultural differences.

Understanding of cultural differences is also enhanced by the knowledge, skills and motivation needed to interact with other cultures. Appropriateness (appropriate behavior) and effectiveness in cross-cultural interactions are achieved when these three elements co-exist. In other words, the scholars agree that effectiveness of intercultural communication has to be viewed with a holistic approach combining the individual’s knowledge, skills and motivation (Wiseman, Hammer, & Nishida, 1989).

Adaptability skills are also important in the process of understanding cultural differences. Adaptability is viewed as the core of intercultural communication competence and as a determinant of how individuals will change their cultural ways and learn new ones (Kim, 2001). Kim adds that adaptability implies that individuals apply different skills and behaviors under challenging circumstances. Hence, an individual with effective intercultural skills has an understanding of cultural communication differences, the ability to deal with those challenges and the motivation to demonstrate those skills.

The development of intercultural sensitivity has also been analyzed by Chen and Starosta (1996) as an integral part of the process of building intercultural communication competence. They list the three components of the process of acquiring intercultural communication as intercultural sensitivity (affective), intercultural awareness (cognitive), and intercultural appropriateness (behavioral), including verbal and non-verbal skills. The authors argue that successful intercultural communication requires the interactants’ intercultural awareness by learning the similarities and differences, while the process of achieving awareness of cultural similarities and differences is enhanced by intercultural sensitivity.

Other scholars argue that an individual’s ability to function effectively in any cultural environment is directly related to his or her acknowledging and responding appropriately to the values of the people (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994). These scholars add that the awareness of culture

and an appreciation of cultural differences are possibly enhanced through cross-cultural training prior or during foreign travel to assist in people's adjustment to new cultures. Landis and Bhagat (1996) point out that an individual's sensitivity to cultural differences along with the ability to adapt to a new culture is becoming increasingly important in our global economy. Overseas assignments and frequent interactions among people of different cultures have necessitated the ability to adapt our behaviors appropriately to cultural differences.

The concept of intercultural sensitivity as described by Bennett (1993) is a developmental process during which individuals are emotionally involved in another culture and effectively interact with people of other cultures. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1993) is based on a continuum from *ethnocentrism*, which assumes that "the worldview of one's culture is central to all reality" (p.30) to *ethnorelativism*, which assumes that "cultures can only be understood relative to one another and that particular behavior can only be understood within a cultural context" (p.46). The scholar points out that the key to this development of intercultural sensitivity is the process along the continuum. The next section of the literature review covers the conceptual framework and construct that were used for this study.

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS): Conceptual Framework for Intercultural Competence

For the purpose of this study, Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1993) was used as a theoretical framework. According to this theory, an individual's development of intercultural sensitivity occurs through a process of understanding, constructing and experiencing cultural differences. Hence, this model was appropriately chosen to determine whether students would be developing an understanding of their own culture, of the host culture and of cultural differences during a semester-long study abroad experience.

The concepts of *ethnocentrism* and *ethnorelativism* are at the core of Bennett's DMIS (1993, 1986), refer to Table 1, below. The model is based on the assumption that each stage would be indicative of a particular cognitive structure and certain kinds of attitudes and behavior would typically be associated with each configuration of worldview (Hammer et. al., 2003, p. 13). Denial, Reversal and Minimization, the first three stages are on the ethnocentric end of the continuum with a worldview that 'one's culture is central to all reality' (Bennett, 1993, p.30). The last three stages, Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration are on the ethnorelative end with a worldview that 'cultures can only be understood relative to one another and particular behavior can only be understood within a cultural context' (Bennett, 1993, p. 46). Denial represents a worldview in which cultural difference is not an issue. Cultural difference is either not experienced at all, or it is experienced with a kind of undifferentiated attitude (Bennett, 1993). Defense is a stage when cultural difference is viewed as a threat to 'one's own sense of reality and thus to one's identity' (Bennett, 1993, p. 35). Defense is characterized by a position of 'cultural superiority' or of 'reversal' whereby an individual may consider the host culture superior to their own, while denigrating their own. The stage of Minimization emphasizes cultural similarities instead of differences between individuals from different cultures. An individual at the stage of Acceptance has more respect and acceptance for cultural difference.

An individual at the Adaptation stage adds new skills and attitudes to his or her worldview. The individual becomes more competent in his or her ability to communicate in other cultures and to act according to the rules dictated by them. Cultural empathy is a characteristic typical at that stage (Bennett, 1993). Finally, in the stage of integration, although rarely achieved, an individual has developed a multiple identity and does not belong to a particular cultural group.

Table 1
Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

The Ethnocentric Stages		
I. Denial	II. Defense	III. Minimization
A. Isolation	A. Denigration	Physical Universalism
B. Separation	B. Superiority	Transcendent Universalism
	C. Reversal	
The Ethnorelative Stages		
IV. Acceptance	V. Adaptation	VI. Integration
Respect for Behavioral Difference	A. Empathy	A. Contextual Evaluation
Respect for Value Difference	B. Pluralism	B. Constructive Marginality

Source: From *Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of Intercultural sensitivity* (Bennett, 1993).

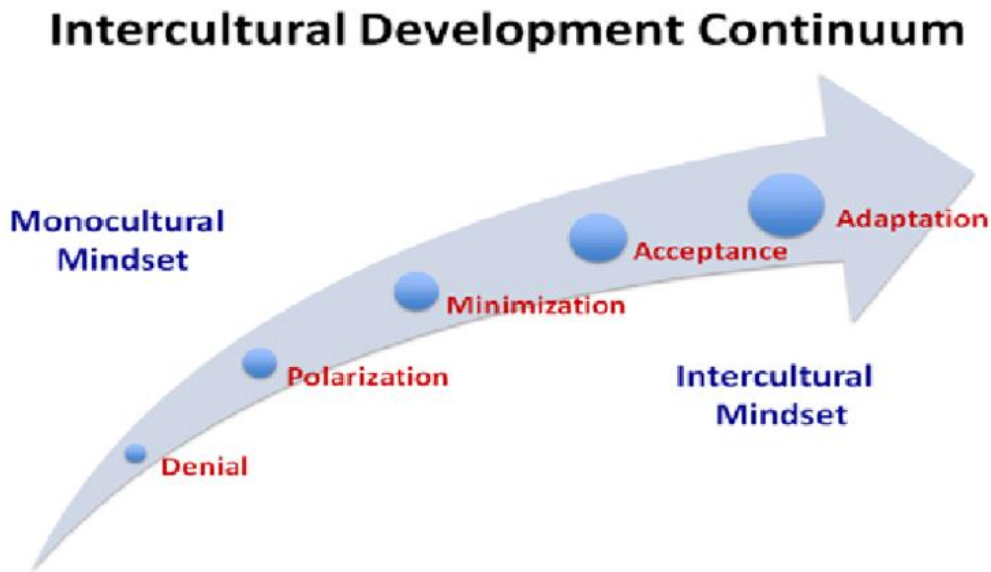
It is important to point out Bennett's DMIS was later changed to replace the "defense" stage by "polarization" and "integration" stage was eliminated to reflect stages of intercultural development from monocultural to intercultural mindset (Hammer, 2012), refer to Figure 1 below.

Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI): Construct for Personal Development

This study uses a construct by Kelly and Meyers's Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) (1995) as the framework to explore the impact of study abroad on the students' personal development. The reliability and validity of this construct were supported by scholars who tested the inventory through a series of factor analysis and the Cronbach coefficient of internal consistency analysis (Nguyen, Biderman, & McNary, 2010 and Kraemer & Beckstead, 2003). The four dimensions of the CCAI construct are summarized below in Table 2.

Figure 1

Intercultural Development Continuum



Source: Hammer, M. (2012). The Intercultural Development Inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence In M. Vande Berg, R.M. Paige, & K.H. Lou (Eds.), Student Learning Abroad (ch.5, pp.115-136).

Table 2

Description of CCAI scales

Emotional Resilience	Measures the ability to deal with stressful feelings in a constructive way along with a positive attitude.
Flexibility/Openness	Measures the ability to listen to others, to become acquainted with people of other cultures and to try to understand their worldview.
Perceptual Acuity	Measures the ability to perceptually be attentive to verbal and non-verbal cues and the ability to communicate interpersonally.
Personal Autonomy	Measures the ability to deal with cultural conflict independently and successfully and to be self-directed.

In summary, individuals, who possess flexibility and openness lack rigidity, are nonjudgmental, enjoy diversity and feel comfortable with people of other cultures. Individuals who are perceptually acute are attentive to verbal and nonverbal cues, interpersonal relations, and communication styles. Such individuals are also empathetic, adaptable and able to shift their

cultural worldview. Autonomous individuals have a strong sense of identity and can deal with cultural conflicts successfully. They are self-directed, have clear personal values, and respect themselves and others. In addition, they tend to set up their goals and make their own decisions (Kelley & Meyers, 1995). The next section will cover few research studies that have used the DMIS conceptual framework, CCAI construct and others to explore the impact of study abroad to assess intercultural competence and personal development.

Overview of the impact of study abroad on intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity and personal development

This section of the literature review reveals that so far very few studies have investigated both the intercultural competence and personal development in a qualitative study. Several studies have used the DMIS conceptual framework and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) based on that framework to explore the impact of study abroad on students' intercultural competence. A summary of those studies and other studies that have used others instruments to explore the same topic follows.

The results a pre and post- test quantitative study show statistically significant increase in the IDI scores after the study abroad experience indicating a positive development in intercultural competence experience (Rust, Forster & Niziolek, 2013). The findings of qualitative using the DMIS framework revealed that participation of students in a teacher education program abroad increased intercultural development (Marx & Moss, 2011). Another quantitative study by Pedersen (2010) compared the pre and post scores of the IDI for three groups of students and revealed that the group who was involved in activities for developing intercultural competence showed a statistically significant difference in the post scores compared to the second group not involved in the activities and the third who stayed home. Similarly, another quantitative study using the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI) and IDI investigated students' intercultural development during abroad study as compared to campus. The post-test results of students in a study abroad program showed greater gains in intercultural development than their on-campus counterparts on both instruments (Anderson, P. H & Lawton, L., 2011).

Findings from a quantitative study using the DMIS framework and IDI revealed that the students studying abroad acquire greater intercultural proficiency, more openness to cultural diversity and higher level of global mindedness than students who did not. The students perceived themselves as being more open to intercultural communication and more approachable after the experience, suggesting personal growth (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright & McMillen, 2009). Another pre and post quantitative study with a control group using the IDI and CCAI instruments revealed that the positive change in intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural adaptability skills of students studying in an "island" type study abroad program compared to the group who did not (Maharaja, 2009). The results of another pre and post quantitative longitudinal study on study abroad and intercultural development by Rexeisen, Anderson, Lawton & Hubbard (2008) did not indicate conclusive findings that study abroad resulted in a long-term significant overall increase in intercultural competence.

Patterson (2006) explored the impact of a short-term program on intercultural sensitivity of students who studied abroad and those who did not. The results indicated an increase in the pre and post data analysis. Another pre and post-test quantitative study by Williams (2005) explored the impact of study abroad on the cross-cultural adaptability and intercultural sensitivity of study using the CCAI construct and concluded that students who studied abroad had a higher level of cross-cultural adaptability skills at the beginning and end of the experience compared to those who did not study abroad. Another study by Engle and Engle (2004) investigated impact of the duration of a study abroad program using the DMIS conceptual framework and IDI instrument and concluded that students in a year-long program enhances their intercultural competence as compared to students who participated a semester-long study abroad program. The findings of another mixed method study using the same conceptual framework and instrument revealed that the intercultural sensitivity development level was higher for students in a 16-week- program as compared to a seven-week one (Mendez-Lopez-Portillo, 2004).

The results of a quantitative study using the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) on the impact of short-term study abroad programs associated with intentional programmatic structures demonstrated significant effects on students' overall intercultural competence. It supported the need for well-defined activities during the stay overseas (Nguyen, 2017). Another scholar examined the validity of the development of intercultural competencies of students participating in a three different language programs in Spain: direct enrollment abroad, American Centers and third-party enrollment. . This mixed research study conducted pre and post-tests employing Freed's (2004) Language Contact Profile and post one-one one interviews. This exploration suggested that the direct enrollment in a Spanish university offer students a more complete and life changing experience in their intercultural competence (Scally, 2015). Another quantitative study explored the impact of international travel activities, namely service learning, cross-cultural experiences, and internship broad on college students' global and intercultural competencies for five different programs using the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey at the Center for Studies in Higher Education at the University of California. Overall, the study showed significant development in those competencies after the experience (Stebbleton, A.; Soria, K. & Cherney, B., 2013). Zarnick (2013) conducted a quantitative pre and post-test study on short-term study abroad of one week on the development of intercultural sensitivity. The analysis of the data collected from the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) instrument showed minimal change in that area and concluded that duration of study abroad is a limitation. Another quantitative study explored the effect of a short-term and semester-long study abroad on students' global-mindedness using the Global-Mindedness Scale. Statistically significant differences were found indicating that the global-mindedness scores of students who completed a semester-long program were higher than those who completed a short-term study abroad program and those who plan to study abroad.

A mixed research study on how college students experience intercultural learning through different approaches and features indicated that participation in study abroad experience and engaging in personal reflection enhance intercultural learning (King, P.M., Perez, R. J & Shim,

W., 2013). Finally, the findings of another mixed approach research using the DMIS framework for the qualitative analysis and IDI instrument for collecting statistical data reveal that the teacher education study abroad program enhanced intercultural development. In conclusion, the summary of the different quantitative and mixed approach research supports the argument that study abroad experience positively affects intercultural competence and personal growth.

Methodology

The study under discussion was undertaken to explore and describe changes in a group of 150 male and female junior and senior undergraduates who attended a research-intensive university and participated in a semester-long (14-16 weeks) study abroad program in both English (60%) and non-English speaking countries (40%). The countries in descending order of attendance are United Kingdom, Australia, Ireland, Spain, Austria, France, Greece, Mexico, Chile, Vienna, Argentina, China, Costa Rica, India, Japan, Thailand, Russia, Belgium, and Germany. Participants were enrolled in different schools and disciplines within the university. This qualitative study utilized a research design that included the lived experiences of college students who have participated in a semester long study abroad. Creswell (2012) states that methods of data collection within a phenomenological study can include interviews, focus groups, and written or oral self-reports of participants' experience. As Creswell (2014) points out the phenomenological research design allows for in-depth data collection from either written or oral narration of experiences. For the purpose of this study, the researcher collected essays written by students upon their return back to campus after a semester long study abroad from different countries around the world. The essays addressed the following four questions related to their experience in the host country:

Research Questions

- How has studying abroad affected your perceptions of your native culture?
- How has studying abroad affected your views about the host culture?
- How has studying abroad affected your thoughts about cultural differences?
- How has studying abroad affected your personal development?

Data Collection

Documental essays completed by students after their return to the home campus were used to collect data. Those documents were experiential description of students' stay in a host country. Participants responded to the above questions designed to elicit how their study abroad experience helped them to gain an understanding of their own culture, the host culture, and cultural differences as well as how their experience affected their personal development.

Data Analysis

A content analysis was completed to collect pronounced themes from students' responses to the above questions. The analysis consisted of a matrix system of recording each student's responses to the four questions. The deductive data were read several times, the relevance of the data to the questions were identified, and the words, phrases; paragraphs were coded to into

multiple themes and categories. The coding and analysis were related to the six stages of Bennett’s DMIS and Kelly and Meyers’s Cross-Cultural Adaptability four skills construct. Data were also analyzed through an inductive process uncovering emergent patterns of students’ understanding of cultural differences and changes in personal development. Those were also coded and recorded in a matrix system. The purpose of the analysis was not to focus on each student’s individual development of intercultural sensitivity and personal development, but to describe how the group responses were supported by the conceptual framework and construct of the study.

Results and Discussion

The prominent theme that emerged from the data is that study abroad has an impact on students in acquiring a better understanding of one’s own and another culture and gaining a better appreciation of cultural differences. The majority of the students described how their views of themselves changed through the lived experience in a different culture. The results are reported and discussed in light of the four main aspects of their experience that the students wrote about in their essay. The following table is a summary of the main themes derived from the data analysis for each question.

Table 3
Summary of Results

Question	Percentage Answered	Theme Areas
How has studying abroad affected your perceptions of your native culture?	Out of 150 responses, 71% directly addressed the question.	Critical view of own culture (“Defense” stage of DMIS) Appreciative understanding of host culture Understanding of Host views of American culture
How has studying abroad affected your views about the host culture?	Out of 150 responses, 80% directly addressed the question.	Awareness in behavioral, value, external factors and differences Host culture similar to own culture (“Minimization” stage of DMIS) Perception of Value; Host country being ‘family oriented’ vs consumerism
How has studying abroad affected your thoughts about cultural differences?	Out of 150 responses, 80% of the students directly addressed the question	Strong acknowledgement of cultural differences Improved empathy, greater appreciation and respect for other of host culture Better understanding and Acceptance of differences (“Acceptance” stage of DMIS) Open-mindedness; change in world view and better appreciation of own culture

<p>How has studying abroad affected your personal development?</p>	<p>Out of 150 responses, 98% of the students directly addressed</p>	<p>Personal growth -65% felt feelings of increased independency; maturity; flexibility, perseverance, assertiveness (CCAI skills construct) -58% developing a higher sense of one's self -72 % open-mindedness about cultural differences 62% - Attention to verbal and non-verbal communication clues and styles</p>
--	---	---

Perceptions of Native Culture

One of the dimensions described by Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1993) is learning about one's own culture. Out of 150 responses, 71 % directly addressed the question of how study abroad affected the way they see their own culture. The data shows that the majority of the students developed new perceptions of their native culture after their study abroad experience. These perceptions included students' critical views of their own culture, descriptions of host culture views about American culture and better appreciation of their own culture.

Some students have expressed how studying abroad have become more critical of their own culture. One student reported:

'Studying abroad has negatively affected my view of America and has opened my eyes to the way that other countries view the United States. I feel as though that the United States is such a fast-paced country, placing much emphasis on convenience and materialism. I have never realized how much petty drama America drives on, with all the reality – TV and celebrities, and materialistic images.'

Similarly, another student noted:

'I got a totally new view of American culture. Americans are not exactly looked on favorably throughout the rest of the world, from what I've learned from foreigners. The worst part of my entire trip was returning home, not because of my time abroad was over, but because of the way I was treated by people at the Los Angeles airport. They were rude, and I was accustomed to being helped out when I needed.'

These views support Bennett's DMIS Model's ethnocentric stage, in particular the "Defense" phase when an individual may consider the host culture superior to their own, while denigrating their own. Several students from Australia and England expressed their view of how the host culture was much better than their own in terms of personal characteristics of Americans and materialistic consumption. One student wrote

'I found Americans to be less friendly, more rushed and more uptight in mannerism. I like the Australian's way of life much better.'

The data reveal that many students became aware of how other cultures have stereotype views of the American culture and do not want to live like people in America. The stereotypical idea of an American by other cultures was described through words as 'rich', 'spoiled', 'arrogant', and 'superior', 'uncaring' and 'selfish'. A student reflected:

'I got a totally new view of American culture. Americans are not exactly looked on favorably throughout the rest of the world, from what I have learned from foreigners. We are looked at as loud and arrogant, and in ways some of us are. I've learned that people in other countries believe that all Americans think we are better than everyone else is. By forcing myself to come in contact with a culture I wasn't accustomed to, I have come to accept cultural differences; some cultures don't want to live as we do.'

Relatively fewer students expressed a better appreciation of their own culture as compared to a more critical view of their own culture. Most of those students studied in Spain, Mexico and Argentina. One student noted, *'after being in Argentina for a semester, I now appreciate my own country even more, despite all of the problems that exist.'* Still another student wrote, *'I am much more appreciative of the American culture and all that we are offered after I experienced life in Russia.'*

In summary, students' views changed while they were abroad expressing either a more critical view or a better appreciation of their native culture. It seems that students who returned from English-speaking countries became more critical in their analysis whereas students who returned from non-English speaking countries became more nationalistic.

Perceptions of Host Culture

Of the total number of responses, 80% directly answered the question of how study abroad affected the way they view the host culture. They described how they have changed their perceptions and gained insights about the host culture and its people. Most students related their view of differences on behavioral, value and external factors. The majority of the students expressed the feeling that people of the host culture were much more 'easy going', 'relaxed', 'friendlier', 'happy-go-lucky', 'nicer', 'laid-back', 'affectionate' and 'simpler' than the people in the United States. Many students reported how they believe other cultures are more family-oriented compared to American culture. Others noted that Americans are 'workaholics' in pursuit of 'materialistic consumption.' Referring to external differences, one student who came back from Australia pointed at how, *'there's less noise, less busy cities and less attention given to the non-essentials of the world'*. Many responses were supported by Bennett's DMIS stage of Defense characterized by reversal whereby students consider the host culture better than their own. One student noted:

'Australians care about the people surrounding them. If you request information in any restaurant, any store, any public place, people with smiling faces are willing to help you. No one is pushy or trying to rush you through your day. The attitude is very pleasant. We could definitely take some lessons from the Australians!'

Many students described how their stereotype views of the host culture were replaced by different ones. These responses reflect a movement from an ethnocentric stage of minimization to an ethnorelative stage of Acceptance and Adaptation. Those students recognized their stereotype views and constructed a different worldview. One student wrote:

'I went to Calcutta expecting to find a hellhole of human suffering and agony, but what I found instead were a whole lot of people just like the people I might find anywhere else. Many were less fortunate than people anywhere else, but that didn't make them a different kind of people; that just made them less fortunate. There wasn't a class of 'sufferers' as I half expected there to be, there were just people going about their business and doing what they had to do in order to survive. I'm ashamed to admit but I think I went to India with a romanticized idea about poverty-equating poverty with the nobility of suffering-only to discover how ridiculous my own thinking was.'

Still another student pointed out, *'I had a stereotype view of British people as being snobbish and racist. I now find them as incredibly diverse and void of racism'*. Referring to the same idea, another student observed, *'As far as people are concerned my preconceived notions are far from reality. I perceived Londoners to be very snobbish, unfriendly and cold. Truthfully they are friendly, down-to-earth, warm hearted people.'* Few students who studied abroad in Ireland expressed how their preconceived views of Irish people changed from originally casting them as being all 'red headed' and 'individualistic' to being 'diverse' and 'far from individualistic.'

It is worth noting that the same students who answered the previous question about how they perceive their native culture responded to how they perceive the host culture. The answers to both questions by the same students may reflect the DMIS stage of "minimization". This stage emphasizes cultural similarities instead of differences between individuals from different cultures.

Perceptions of Cultural Differences

The data reveal that 80% of the students directly addressed the question of how study abroad affected the way that they think about cultural differences. While comparing the responses to the DMIS, the majority of the students was beyond the stage of Denial and acknowledged the existence and importance of cultural differences. Many students expressed feelings that the study abroad experience gained a better appreciation of, a greater respect for and acceptance of cultural differences. The responses illustrated developmental growth in intercultural sensitivity from a stage of Minimization to that of Acceptance revealing an interest in to engage in conversation with people of the host culture, to learn about different ways of life,

and to understand a new perspective. Students developed empathy by challenging their beliefs about other people and putting themselves in the shoes of their host. One student related her experience about cultural differences as follows:

‘Although it is easy to look at another culture and disapprove, really the correct way is to understand the differences based on the host culture and see how it compliments. We can only judge other countries norms in relation to other overall culture. There really is not one ‘true’ way of doing things and one person’s own personal views cannot really change another cultures so really the only thing to do is accept the differences and adapt as best as possible.’

Another student noted *‘each new entity opened my mind greatly and changed my perspective on the world around me and the people who inhabit it. Previously, I had a very ethnocentric point of view and I eventually accepted differences as a change of pace.’* Other students reflected on how their acceptance of cultural differences developed a better appreciation of your own and other cultures.

Although most of the students identified differences rather than similarities among people and recognize that differences are necessary and positive, several students were at a stage of Minimization on the DMIS and *‘bury difference under the weight of cultural similarities’* (Bennett, 1993, p. 41) and identified more similarities than differences. One student shared their views of similarities by noting, *‘while a number of qualities ‘typical’ of an American could be considered negative, offensive, or rude, I have learned that such qualities exist in all people hailing from all countries’* and another reflected *‘people are still very similar in their basic desires, at least that is how it seems to me now.’*

In summary, the majority of the students have stated in some form or the other that they have a better appreciation for cultural differences and have learned to respect other cultures. They have also learned that in spite of the fact that people from different cultures have unique customs, values, rituals and communication styles, people around the world share common traits.

Personal Development: View of Oneself

The data indicate that 98% of the students directly addressed the question of how studying abroad affected the way they see themselves. The deductive method of comparing data to Kelly and Meyers’s Cross-Cultural Adaptability Skill sets supported the findings that students developed personal autonomy, emotional resilience, flexibility/openness and perceptual ability. Personal autonomy and emotional resilience are characteristics most commonly identified in the responses.

The analysis reveals that about 65% of the students expressed their feelings about becoming more independent as a result of their experience. One student described:

‘I became more independent when I realized that other than my roommate I knew no one and I could not always rely on her to hold my hand through everything. I found myself taking public buses alone to the places I needed to go to, and organizing a trip to go skydiving even when I was with people I hardly knew. I

truly stood on my own two feet for the first time in my life and I was not scared to do so.'

Still another student noted, *'After my travels this summer, I have a new found feeling of independence. I see myself as more confident now and more independent – it is almost a sense of invincibility as I am ready to take on challenges and face new experiences, no matter what they may be'*. Another student was differently explicit about his development of independence and stated, *'the perfect example of my independence is finally I broke down and cleaned my bathroom for the first time.'* Others related their independence as successfully dealing with finance, air tickets, and transportation, making their own choices, traveling on their own and so on.

Scholars often suggest that the opportunity to study abroad develops increased confidence in students (Kelley and Meyer's, 1995; Cushner and Karim, 2004). This argument was supported by the data showing that about 58% of students reported that they gained or developed a higher level of self-confidence. One student wrote, *'I have gained confidence simply by living on my own for five months in a new environment surrounded by a language in which I was not fluent.'* Similarly, another student remarked:

'I went to England completely and utterly scared to death. I didn't know what to expect and I was counting the days until I could return in June. I have never been good with being away from home. Yes, I was spoiled. I could hardly imagine being anywhere without being able to see my parents for a few months. I gradually started to rely on myself rather than my mom and dad. Once I saw that I could survive I felt confident.'

Many students who studied in non-English speaking countries reported that they built upon their confidence by being in a country of a different language and *'had to learn how to live, eat, study and work in a different country.'* One student reflected, *'in my case, residing in Chile brought about a personal awareness and positive change from within. The initial difficulty experienced with the language developed in me a stronger sense of confidence and motivation.'* The analysis of the essays suggests that 72 % of the students express their thoughts about being more open-mindedness from the experience. One student wrote, *'study abroad has helped me to be very independent and open-minded... I have learned how to open myself and become close with people.'* Another trait that was commonly identified along with openness was flexibility and adaptability. Many students believed that they have become more adaptable because they were able to deal with uncertainties, culture shock, discomforts and personal anxieties. To this effect, one student wrote, *'living in a foreign country without all of the comforts and amenities of home made me more adaptable and independent'*. Another noted, *"I am more flexible about entertaining skeptical ideas, whereas I would have previously disposed of those without much contemplation."*

It is worth mentioning that 62% of the student's responses related on how they learned to "live in unfamiliar surroundings", "comfortable to be the different one out of the group", "overcome their fear of communicating in a foreign language" and pay attention to "verbal and

non-verbal communication styles". These responses may refer to perceptual acuity, one of Kelley and Meyers's cross-cultural adaptability skills and to the DMIS's stage of Acceptance and Adaptation. These responses may also suggest that the students' intercultural communication skills were enhanced while abroad.

Finally, the inductive analysis of changes in personal development reveals that many students reported learning new things about themselves, consequently, adding a different perspective to their lives. They described the changes using words as: 'perseverance', 'transformative', 'self-sufficient', 'maturity', 'calm', 'relaxed', 'patient', 'risk-taking', 'spontaneous', 'assertiveness', 'self-awareness', and 'global-minded'. This analysis is supported by scholars who suggest personal development is a process involving personal growth, maturity, evolution and expansion of oneself (Kelley and Meyers, 1995; Kauffman & al, 1992; Hopkins, 1999). To summarize his or her study abroad experience, change in worldview and change in oneself, a student wrote:

'To sum my study abroad experience, it has really helped me to see myself as part of a much greater and more significant whole. Problems can be solved simply by seeing the bigger picture; it's all about perspective. I can read about this in my psychology textbooks all I want, but to see it and experience it first-hand been one of the most transformative experiences of my life.'

Overall, the data provided rich information focusing on Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity Development (DMIS) and Kelley and Meyer's construct of Cross-cultural Adaptability Skills (CCAI). The common themes that were derived from the students' essay may suggest that the majority of the students developed a better appreciation and understanding of their own and host culture after a semester-long studying abroad. They also suggest that the students developed transformative skills such as cultural adjustment, open-mindedness, flexibility, personal autonomy, perceptual acuity, perseverance, and independence. The data has changed the participants understanding of their own and host culture as well as cultural differences. Furthermore, students reported the change in their personal development and learned more traits about themselves through their experience.

Limitations of the Study

Research limitations should be considered in the interpretation and generalization of the data. The results may not be generalized to other institutions with different student populations. The research design did not include a control group that consequently could not minimize the threats of internal validity.

Another limitation of this study is the dependence on students' self-reported analysis of their experience, known as indirect as opposed to direct assessment measure. To this effect, Creswell (2014) points out that phenomenological research approach has its limitation on how data is being collected and analyzed.

The data represented students' perceptions of their native culture, host culture, cultural differences and themselves after their study abroad experience. A pre- and post-study would have provided valuable information that would have enhanced our understanding of the degree of their enhancement of intercultural competence and personal development. Finally, a longitude investigation on the impact of study abroad on the participants would provide an insight on how students internalized their intercultural learning several months after their return. Those limitations may be considered as implications for future research.

Conclusion

In summary, the findings of the study suggest that a study abroad experience has a positive impact on students' their intercultural competence and personal development. They concur with the results and provide more in-depth data to support the results of the quantitative study conducted by the researcher on that topic using the same DMIS conceptual framework and CCAI construct. Developing intercultural competence is a necessity in this global community where it is imperative to gain respect for, knowledge of and understanding of other cultures. From educators' and educational leaders' standpoint, this study is useful in their decision-making about the importance of international education. The results imply that efforts to support semester-long study abroad programs should continue.

References

- Abrams, I. (1979). The impact of Antioch education through experience abroad. *Alternative Higher Education*, 3, 176-187.
- Allen, H. W. (2010). What shapes short-term abroad experiences?: A comparative case study of students' motives and goals. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14(5), 452-470
- American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) (2013). *AIFS Study Abroad Outcomes: A View from Alumni 1990-2010*. Report published by AIFS, Stanford, CT.
- Anderson, P. H & Lawton, L (2011). Intercultural Development: Study Abroad Vs On-Campus Study. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 86-108.
- Bennett, M. J. (1986). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental approach to training for intercultural sensitivity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, p. 179-196.
- Bennett, M.J. (1993). 'Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity.' In: R.M. Paige (ed.), *Educational exchange for the intercultural experience*, 21-71. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Brislin, R. W. & Yoshida, T (Eds.) (1994). *Improving intercultural interactions: Modules for cross-cultural training programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Carlson, J. S., B.B. Burn, J. Useem, & D. Yachimowicz (1990). *Study Abroad: The Experience of American Undergraduates*. New York: Greenwood Press.

- Chen, G. M. & Starosta, W.J. (1996). Intercultural communication competence. A synthesis. In B. R. Burleson & A. W. Kunkel (Eds.). *Communication Yearbook*, 353-383.
- Clarke III, I, Flaherty, T.B, Wright, N.D & McMillen, R.M. (2009) . Student Intercultural Proficiency from Study Abroad Programs. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 31(2), 173-181.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hill.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dwyer, M. (2009). Charting the impact of study abroad. *International Educator*, 13, 14-17.
- Cushner, K. & A.U. Karim (2004). 'Study abroad at the university level'. In: D Landis, J. M. Bennett & M. J. Bennett (eds.), *Handbook for intercultural training*, 147-165. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dearoff, D. (2006). 'Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10: 241-261.
- Engle, L & Engle, J. (2004). Assessing Language Acquisition and Intercultural Sensitivity Development in Relation to Study Abroad Program Design. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, X, 219-236.
- Freed, B. F. ; Dewy, D. P.; Segalowitz, N. & Halter, R. (2004). The Language Contact Profile. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 26, 349-356.
- Gillipsie, J. (2002). 'Colleges need better ways to assess study abroad programs.' *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 48(43), B20.
- Gingerich, K.E. (1998). *The impact of study abroad and didactic cross-cultural coursework experiences on the development of white racial consciousness and cultural sensitivity*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas.
- Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday.
- Hammer, M. (2012). The Intercultural Development Inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence In M. Vande Berg, R.M. Paige, & K.H. Lou (Eds.), *Student Learning Abroad* (ch.5, pp.115-136). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M.J. & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relation*, 27, 421-433.
- Hoffa, W. W. (1996). *Study abroad: A parent's guide*. NAFSA: Association of International Educators: Washington, D.C.
- Hoffa W.W. (Ed.). (2010). A history of U.S. study abroad: 1965-present. A special edition of *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*.
- Hopkins, J.R. (1999). 'Study abroad: A form of experiential education.' *Liberal Education*, 85(3), 36-41.

- Kehl, K. & Morris, J. (2008). Differences in Global-Mindedness between Short-Term and Semester-Long Study Abroad Participants at Selected Private Universities. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 67-79.
- Kelley, C. & J. Meyers (1995). *Cross-cultural adaptability inventory*. Minneapolis, MN: National Computer Systems.
- Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- King, P.M., Perez, R. J & Shim, W (2013). How College Students Experience Intercultural Learning: Key Features and Approaches. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 6(2), 69-83.
- Kitsantas A. (2004). Study Abroad: The role of college students' goals on the development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding. *College Student Journal*, 38, 441-449.
- Kitsantas, A. & Meyers, J. (2002). Studying Abroad: Does it enhance student cross-cultural awareness? *Educational Resources Information Center*, ED 456-648.
- Kraemer, T & Beckstead, J. (2003). Establishing the Reliability of Using the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory with Physical Therapists Students. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*, 17(1), 27-31.
- Landis, D. & Bhagat, R. (1996). *Handbook of Intercultural Training*. Thousand Oaks., CA: Sage.
- Lambert, R. (1994). *Educational Exchange and global competence*. Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE).
- Maharaja, G. (2009). *An "Island" Study Abroad Program and its Impact on the Intercultural Sensitivity and Cross-Cultural Adaptability of its Participants: Perspectives from a Research-Intensive University*. Doctoral degree dissertation, Duquesne University.
- Mahoney, S. L., & Schamber, J. F. (2004). Exploring the application of a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity to a general education curriculum on diversity. *The Journal of General Education*, 53(3-4), 312-334.
- Marx, H & Moss, D (2011). Please Mind the Culture Gap: Intercultural Development During a Teacher Education Study Abroad Program. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 62(1): 35-47.
- McCabe, L. T. (2001). Globalization and internationalization: The impact on education abroad programs. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 5(2), 138-145.
- Medina-Lopez-Portillo, A. (2004). Intercultural Learning Assessment: The Link between Program Duration and the Development of Intercultural Sensitivity. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, X, 179-199.
- Nguyen, A.(2017). Intercultural Competence in Short-term Study Abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, XXIX (2), 109-127.
- Nguyen, N..T., Biderman, M.D. & McNary, L.D. (2010). A Validation study of the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 14(2), 112-129.

- Open Doors (2018). *Fast Facts: Report on International Educational Exchange*. Institute of International Education. Available at <http://open.doors.iienetwork.org/>.
- Orahood, T., Kruze, L & Pearson, D.E. (2004). The Impact of Study Abroad on Business Students' Career Goals. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 117-130.
- Paige, R. M. , Cohen A.D., & Shively, R. (2004). Assessing the impact of a strategies-based curriculum on language and culture learning abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 10, 253-276.
- Patterson, P.L. (2006). Effect of study abroad on intercultural sensitivity. Dissertation for Doctor of Education, University of Missouri, United States.
- Pedersen, P. (2010). Assessing intercultural effectiveness outcomes in a year-long study abroad program. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34, 70-80
- Rexeisen, R.J., Anderson, P.H., Lawton, L. & Hubbard, A.C. (2008). Study Abroad and Intercultural Development: A Longitudinal Study. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 1-19.
- Rust, K.G, Forster, B. & Niziolek, A. (2013). Study Abroad and Intercultural Coursework: Their Effects on Change in Intercultural Competence. *International Research and Review: Journal of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars*, 3(1), 3-13.
- Scally, J. (2015). Intercultural competence development in three different study abroad program types. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 24(2), 35-59.
- Stier, J. (2003). 'Internationalization, ethnic diversity and the acquisition of intercultural competencies.' *Intercultural Education*, 14(1), 77-91.
- Stebleton, A.; Soria, K. & Cherney, B. (2013). The High Impact of Education Abroad: College Students' Engagement in Intercultural Experiences and the Development of Intercultural Competencies." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Aboard*, 1-24.
- Tarrant, M.A. (2010). A conceptual framework for exploring the role of studies abroad in nurturing global citizenship. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14(5), 433-451.
- Teichler, U. (2004). The challenging debate on internationalization. *Higher Education*, 45(1), 5-26.
- Vande Berg, M. (2001). 'The assessment of learning outcomes in study abroad.' *International educator*, 10(2): 31.
- Vande Berg M. (2007). Intervening in the Learning of U.S. Students Abroad. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3/4), 392-399.
- Williams, T. R. (2005). Exploring the impact of study abroad on students' intercultural communication skills: Adaptability and Sensitivity. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 9, 356-371.
- Wiseman, R. L., Hammer, M. R., & Nishida, H. (1989). Predictors of intercultural communication competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 13, 349-370.
- Zarnick, B. E. (2010). Short-term Abroad Programs and the Development of Intercultural Sensitivity. Master Program Dissertation, Loyola University, Chicago.

About the Author

Dr. Gita Maharaja, coordinator of academic advising and faculty member at Duquesne University has been teaching business related courses and conducting research in various areas namely cross-cultural awareness, intercultural competence, study abroad, international business, and economics. She holds a Doctoral degree in Education in the Leadership and Instructional Technology program from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA., with her dissertation on “An Island Study Abroad Program and its impact on the Intercultural Sensitivity and Cross-cultural Adaptability of its participants: Perspectives from a Research-Intensive University”. She is a member of the Trainer Corps team of the National Association of International Educators (NAFSA) and has led workshops on the “Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication” for international educators at national conferences. She is an active scholar and has presented her work at several U.S. and international conferences.

Improving International Students' Cultural Skills through a School-Based Program

Yue Zhang, Ph.D.

Santa Clara University

Martha A. Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D.

Syracuse University

Abstract

This study evaluated an on-campus leadership and culture program that helps newly arrived international students with their cross-cultural adjustment. The international student participants completed an acculturation survey at both the beginning and the end of the program. We found that factors causing these international students to have stressful adjustment experiences included the new environment, perceptions of discrimination, worry about access to opportunities due to cultural differences, and feelings of discomfort with others. Many program participants experienced positive changes in their adjustment to the new environment. The results suggest, however, that not all international students would benefit from participating in the program. The findings provide important insights for on-campus programs that aim to facilitate international students' cross-cultural adjustment.

Keywords: international students, acculturative stress dimensions, program evaluation, university services for international students

A large number of students from other parts of the world travel to the United States to study. According to the Institute of International Education (IIE) Network, in the 2015-2016 academic year, the United States received the largest number of such students yet: a total of 1,043,839 international students enrolled that year in American colleges and universities (Institute of International Education [IIE] Network, 2016), a figure that represents an 84.8% increase over a decade ago.

The experience of coming to the United States to pursue an academic degree can be exciting for international students, who are often striving to fulfill personal and career goals. Earning a U.S. degree may win them a lucrative job, considering that the U.S. is recognized for high quality in global education rankings (Hazelkorn, 2015). These educational experiences are important to international students because they can provide opportunities to learn new things, interact with people from different backgrounds, and increase students' understanding of the world and cultural competence, which will better prepare them to be competitive in today's global economy (Soria & Troisi, 2013).

At the same time, American universities and colleges benefit greatly from recruiting international students, since they are valuable financial and intellectual capital, as well as an important component of U.S. universities' workforce (e.g., as international teaching and research

assistants) (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). These individuals also enrich American campuses with their diverse heritage and cultural perspectives, and thereby contribute to the development of multicultural awareness and appreciation for both local and other international students (Harrison, 2002).

Although international students' coming to the U.S. to study is appealing and beneficial to both themselves and American universities, their different backgrounds can make them likely to experience difficulties and challenges when adapting to a new country (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). It is not unusual for students coming from abroad to face language barriers and difficult adjustments and to feel inferior by comparison to other students, even discriminated against, while they are going through the cross-cultural adaptation process (Wan, 2001; Tochkov, Levine, & Sanaka, 2010; Yeh & Inose, 2003). U.S. faculty and administrators should be particularly concerned about students who come from cultures that are significantly different from that of the U.S.; their academic and professional success can be affected, to a certain extent, by their ability to learn, understand, and operate in an American educational, professional, and social context that can have significantly different expectations than the contexts of their prior upbringing.

Considering the high influx of international students to American universities, scholars in higher education have called for universities to provide necessary service and program help to international students to facilitate their adaptation and success (Murphy, Hawkes, & Law, 2002). On-campus programs such as orientations, workshops, and counseling centers have worked to provide useful information, activities, and services for international students to prepare them for living and studying in the U.S. However, international students come from different cultural backgrounds, and consequently, have different needs as they confront diverse challenges, all of which may cause stressful experiences associated with cross-cultural adjustment (Sumer, Poyrzli, & Grahame, 2008; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Scholars have investigated international students' possible stressors due to cross-cultural adjustment through collecting qualitative and quantitative data from these students, but not yet reach to agreement. For example, European students may not consider English barrier a stress source in their life in the US while for some Asian students, this is a significant challenge that may cause acculturative stress. The inconsistency in reporting international students' acculturative stress experiences may pose challenges to university programs trying to facilitate their transition period by helping them deal with stress experiences due to cross-cultural adjustment. Furthermore, few studies have evaluated the performance of university programs that aiming at reducing international students' concerns and adjustment problems. Whether they are effective in supporting these students' successful transition is not yet well understood. Based on this consideration, the purpose of this study is to determine if a carefully crafted leadership and culture program can reduce cross-cultural adjustment stress and help international students both perform better and feel better about their experience living and studying in the U.S.

Literature Review

Acculturative Stress

People from different cultural backgrounds who come to a new culture for a long-term stay (e.g., immigration to another country) have to undergo many adaptations and changes, such as learning a new language and acquiring familiarity with the social norms needed to fit into the environment (Wei et al., 2007). The changes that these individuals have to make can pose excessive psychological demands, which can cause a unique type of distress called *acculturative stress* (Allen, Amason, & Holmes, 1998). Acculturative stress has emerged as an important type of stress among international students, and it has been found to be linked to serious mental illnesses, such as anxiety and depression (Parr & Bradley, 1992; Sakurako, 2000).

Much of the academic research about international students' cross-cultural adjustment has used Berry's acculturation model (2005) to understand students' acculturative stress. Berry's (2005) model suggests that cross-cultural adaptation is a process of psychological and behavioral changes in life that result from a meeting of cultures. The psychological changes pertain to one's modified beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes, while the behavioral changes relate to external behavior toward those typical of the mainstream or host society. In this study, we focus on the psychological dimension, specifically on individuals' perceptions of stress due to cross-cultural adaptation (e.g., their perception of unfamiliarity with social cultural customs) (Lee, Koeske, & Sales, 2004; Castillo et al., 2007). In the adaptation process, the more an individual fits with the new culture, the less likely it is for him or her to perceive these changes as difficulties. If, on the contrary, the demands for change are perceived as an overwhelming challenge, stressed individuals may perceive the experience of living in a new society negatively (Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015).

Many international students have in common challenges involving language difficulties, financial problems, adjustments to a new educational system, homesickness, adjustments to social customs and norms, and, for some, racial discrimination (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). However, whether and to what extent they perceive these issues as acculturative stress vary from person to person. Wu et al., who investigated international students' challenges and adjustment issues in U.S. universities, found that Chinese students report stressful experiences arising from uncomfortable social interactions or language barriers (Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015). Similarly, a study of Korean students found that their stressful experiences stemmed mainly from social isolation and marginalization (Lee, Koeske, & Sales, 2004). Compared to Asian students, European students in the U.S. reported having an easier time interacting with Americans and, thus, they had fewer problems with social interactions (Trice, 2004; Lee & Rice, 2007). This may happen because European countries and the U.S. share some cultural attributes. In this respect, Kim and Sherman (2007) found that European and U.S. cultures both value self-disclosure, emotional support, and responsiveness in conversation. McWhirter and Darcy (2003) found that the adaptation of Asian students into American society was negatively affected by their tendency to be less open and their greater desire to display resilience compared to their European counterparts. These findings demonstrate that international students' experiences of acculturative stress differ from culture to culture.

Dimensions of Acculturative Stress

Studies among the population of short-term (e.g., international students) and long-term (e.g., immigrants) cross-cultural residents have shown that acculturative stress is a multidimensional construct. It may include stress due to having moved to a different environment (Caplan, 2007), a perception of discrimination, encounters with rejection, homesickness (e.g., regarding family, home, friends, or food), the burden of family obligations, and worries about opportunity deprivation (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Table 1 below, presents the different dimensions of acculturative stress. It shows that researchers have not come to a consensus on the underlying dimensions of acculturative stress. However, common dimensions appear to be stress due to: (1) social interaction (Abouguendia & Noels, 2001; Caplan, 2007; Joiner & Walker, 2002), which is often affiliated with language barriers and perceptions of discrimination (Caplan, 2007; Fuertes & Westbrook, 1996; Kim-Bae, 1999; Lay & Nguyen, 1998; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994), (2) homesickness (Yu et al., 2014; Kim-Bae, 1999; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994), and (3) financial anxieties (Abouguendia & Noels, 2001; Caplan, 2007).

Table 1

Dimensions associated with acculturative stress

Study	Dimensions	Sample
Yu, Chen, Li, Liu, Jacques-Tiura & Yan, 2014	Rejection, Identity threat, Opportunity deprivation, Self-confidence, Value conflict, Cultural competence, and Homesickness	International students in China
Caplan, 2007	Instrumental/Environmental (e.g. financial, language barriers, lack of access to health care, unemployment); Social/Interpersonal (e.g. loss of social networks, loss of social status, family conflict); Societal (e.g. discrimination/stigma, legal status, political forces)	Latino immigrants
Fuertes & Westbrook, 1996	Environmental (e.g. subtle or overt acts of racism), attitudinal (e.g. difficulties stemming from being distant from families, friends, or heritage culture), family factors (e.g. conflicts with the families' values or expectations)	Hispanic college students
Sodowsky & Lai, 1997	Cultural competence	Asian immigrants
Joiner & Walker, 2002	Social, attributional, familial and environmental acculturative stress	African American university students
Abouguendia & Noels, 2001	General (e.g. lack of money), family (e.g. overburdened with traditional family duties and obligations), ingroup (e.g. People from my ethnic group not understanding my use of our native language) and outgroup (e.g. My fluency in English being underestimated by people from other ethnic groups) hassle.	University students in Canada who were immigrants (born outside of Canada, excluding refugees and international students) and children of immigrants born in Canada

Kim-Bae, 1999	Homesickness/longing for people and customs of homeland, language-related difficulties in the home and school, discrimination-related events, intergenerational conflict; in-out group peer stress	Vietnamese-American adolescents
Lay & Nguyen, 1998	In-group and out-group hassles	Female university students who were Vietnamese immigrants to Canada
Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994	Perceived discrimination, homesickness, fear, guilt, perceived hatred, and stress due to change (cultural shock)	International students

The researchers listed above have primarily examined dimensions of acculturative stress among immigrants (Caplan, 2007; Sodowsky & Lai, 1997), minority college students (Fuertes & Westbrook, 1996; Joiner & Walker, 2002), and international students living in countries other than the U.S. (Abouguendia & Noels, 2001; Lay & Nguye, 1998). For example, a study by Yu et al. (2014), which examined European international students' cross-cultural adjustment in Chinese universities, found that for these students, acculturative stress can be deconstructed into seven dimensions: rejection, identity threat, opportunity deprivation, low self-confidence, value conflict, cultural competence, and homesickness. However, limited research has been conducted to explore the underlying dimension of acculturative stress among international students in the U.S. Ye's (2005) work appears to be one of few studies that have systematically investigated these dimensions. Ye examined East Asian international students from a large, southeastern U.S. university and found five dimensions of acculturative stress: fearfulness, perceived discrimination, perceived hatred, homesickness, and culture shock. While the population is slightly different, compared to other populations, as shown in Table 1, the type of challenges, international students experience in the US, overlap with those of other sojourning populations. The importance of focusing on the stressor that affect international students is because, at this early in their lives and with opportunities that a US education can afford them, failing to address these challenges can have a vicious circle where their inability to adequately cope, can further undermine their confidence and leave them highly vulnerable not only to fail academically but also to instances of depression or worse.

University Programs for International Students

Given the evidence we have about the stressful experiences that many international students have, some universities have implemented programs to facilitate these students' cross-cultural adjustment. On-campus programs of this sort can be categorized into individual-based and group-based programs. Individual-based services rely on one-on-one interactions, usually following a mentoring model, whereby a new international student is paired with a domestic student or an experienced international student (Thomson & Esses, 2016). Thomson and Esses (2016) examined one of these peer-mentorship program at a large university in Eastern Canada, where the program paired up each participating international student with a Canadian student. The pairs met weekly throughout a semester and had the freedom to find activities they enjoyed together. The mentor-mentee pairs were encouraged to explore the campus and the local

community and to practice English for the benefit of the international student. The study interviewed the program participants and reported that participating new international students experienced positive changes in their sociocultural and psychological adaptation. However, although it appears that the program was helpful for the international students, it suffered from a lack of structure. It was difficult for the researchers to determine what activities were done and how the activities involving international students and their local mentor Canadian students may be helpful to facilitate international students' better cultural adjustment. This lack of structure made it difficult to provide recommendations or advice to other peer programs aiming to help international students.

Another type of school-based program is group-based initiatives, such as workshops or orientations. Some on-campus workshops designed for international students focus on common problems, such as their unfamiliarity with the new educational system. In this area, Chen and Ullen (2010) studied a workshop at the State University of New York at Albany, aimed at helping international students succeed academically by teaching them about the research process and plagiarism. Researchers interviewed the participants and found that those who participated in the training showed significant improvement in both of these areas. Another study (Behrens, 2009) evaluated the effectiveness of a workshop to help international students prepare for job interviews and work in the U.S. The workshop focused on communication strategies in the interview process. It also included practice with interview questions and answers, which provided participants with strategies for handling job interviews. The positive feedback demonstrated that the program had successfully satisfied the participants' needs in this area. However, while these workshops may be useful in assisting international students with their academic and working abilities in the new environment, they do not appear to address international students' cultural and psychological adjustment, which is also important to their success.

Besides workshops, universities commonly have orientations for international students to acquaint them with the campus and the community. These on-campus orientations are widely used to provide information regarding academic policies and requirements for both international students and non-international students. They might also provide information on course registration procedures and on the various majors, minors, and specialties provided by the colleges and academic departments. Other orientation programs make international students aware of the various resources that are available to them, such as financial aid, health care services, on-campus events, and international student organizations (Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015). In addition to these face-to-face orientations, some universities have used web-based portals to prepare international students to live in their new country even before they depart from their home country (Jeon-Huh, 2015; Murphy, Hawkes, & Law, 2002). These orientation programs provide useful information that can ease the adjustment to living and studying in the U.S. In this respect we were unable to find empirical research about the effectiveness of these types of intervention. However, we suspect that it is unlikely to be effective to address these students' acculturation process. Over the course of only a few days at the beginning of a semester they receive information about academic expectations, general university as well as

visa requirements, health care insurance, and, if time permits, a bit about cultural adjustment. Although the orientation programs might be informative and potentially helpful to internationals to settle down in the new environment, the information provided is overwhelming and potentially causing even more stress..

On-campus orientation programs or workshops provide useful information regarding living and socialization in the U.S. They can help international students improve their language communication skills and address their concerns regarding the adjustment process (Eland, 2001). However, acculturative stress is multidimensional and varies from person to person, which poses challenges for any university trying to design programs to help international students cope with stress. In doing so, they need to take into account their participants' needs and differences. Because of the scarcity of findings on the effectiveness of school programs trying to facilitate international students' cross-cultural adjustment, more research is necessary. This study is, thus, trying to fill this gap by assessing the effectiveness of a Leadership and Culture Program at Syracuse University, whose objective is to help international students reduce stress and concerns due to cross-cultural living.

The Leadership and Culture Program

The Leadership and Culture Program, the focus of this research, is an orientation program comprised of ten face-to-face sessions that took place during the students' first fall semester. The program was free, and it bore no credits. The sessions took place every Friday from 2:00-5:00 pm. Friday was selected because it is a day of the week when few classes are scheduled, and we wanted to reach the greatest number of students. The decision to offer the class for free was not unprecedented, because a similar leadership program had been offered to students in the past in a similar format—three hours on Fridays for ten weeks.

The program was experiential, with activities to be done within and outside of the classroom. Group discussions, games, simulations, role-plays, and many other activities placed the students in typical situations where they would encounter or interact with locals and people from other countries. The activities included, for example, bringing program participants together with a class from a different demographic in order to improve their cultural understanding and holding receptions for them to practice their social networking skills with locals.

The main objectives of the program are: (1) to make students aware of the cultural differences between the U.S. and their own countries to ease uncertainty about academic, social, and professional expectations, (2) to help students develop skills through activities in and outside of the classroom to facilitate a smoother transition into American culture and the university setting, (3) to provide an opportunity for international students to develop rich personal relationships with American students and other international students, and (4) to both teach students leadership principles and tools for coping in multiple contexts and to help students apply these principles.

Each week, the students were asked first to complete a chapter of required reading (Garcia-Murillo, 2013), an online module, and an outside assignment. They reported the results

of their assignment in a personal online journal that only the faculty member could read and comment on. For example, the first module of the program was about building confidence. The students read the chapter in the book on this subject, which presented research from psychology and economics. It explained, for example, what confidence is, how it is manifested, and what one can do to build confidence. The assignment for this module was to ride an elevator and speak to the person inside. The reason the students were asked to do this on an elevator is that it limits the amount of interaction in the event that the conversation does not go well. It gave the students the opportunity to experiment with talking to strangers, something they will need to do when they are entering a new environment and know few, if any, people. The students reported these encounters in their weekly journal. The results were overwhelmingly positive, not only because the students did well in these short encounters, but also because they experimented with having similar conversations at the bus stop or in the bus itself on their rides home. They commented on the positive experiences they had had, despite having been afraid of initiating conversation. During the class meeting, the students discussed the skills they had learned from the readings, the online module, and their practice. They were organized into groups to discuss things that were unfamiliar to them, with the objective of making them comfortable, for example, with offering an opinion. They were asked to complete complex mazes to illustrate the notion of persistence when they were ready to give up. Every class ended with a reflection on the activities, challenges, and the things they had learned. For some sessions, alumni were invited to speak, to share their experiences and offer advice. The last session lasted an entire morning and culminated with a keynote speaker and a lunch.

The topics covered in the program were based on research about the challenges that international students face. When the Leadership and Culture program was originally designed, the modules included were based on research by Landrum (2010), who identified a series of skills students should have before entering the workplace. Specifically, he included abilities such work well with others, set priorities, and allocate time efficiently to meet deadlines and handle conflict maturely, etc. Because their research focused on American students, the program was expanded to include modules where international students would need additional training. It is for this reason that the focus of this research does not have a one to one correspondence with the acculturation challenges listed above, as the program had a larger scope. The topics included for the program are listed in Table 2, below.

Table 2

Topics Included in the Program

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Building confidence | • Cultivating cultural understanding |
| • Managing time across cultures | • Setting goals |
| • Communicating across cultures | • Working with others |
| • Managing conflicts | • Becoming a leader |
| • Building social capital | • Enhancing creativity. |

Based on the objectives of the Leadership and Culture Program, we designed our study to evaluate its effectiveness at helping international students cope with acculturative stress experiences. The study was guided by the following research questions:

Research question 1: What are the major acculturative stress experiences that today's international students at our institution are facing?

Research question 2: Based on the dimensions of acculturative stress, did the Leadership and Culture Program help to reduce the participants' stressful feelings due to cross-cultural adjustment?

Methodology

Participants

An e-mail invitation was sent to all admitted international students during the late summer of 2015. All students holding an F-1 visa (a student visa) or a J-1 visa (a temporary educational exchange visitor visa) with an interest in the Leadership and Culture Program were eligible to join. The program was also advertised during the first week of the general international student orientation to recruit students. The study's purposes and instruments were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at XXX University. A total of 25 participants were enrolled in the program. However, nine participants were excluded from the analysis, because 80% of the data they were asked to contribute were missing in the final analysis. Thus, in the final sample, 16 participants in the treatment group were compared with 39 randomly selected international students in the control group.

The control and treatment groups completed survey measures at two times, a pre-test in September 2015 and a post-test in December 2015. The average age was 25.9 years for the treatment group and 24 years for the control group. In the treatment group, nine students (56%) were female and seven (44%) male; in the control group, 23 students (59%) were female and 16 (41%) male. In both the treatment group (N= 18) and the control group (N= 33), most of the students were from Asia (East Asia or South Asia). The remaining small percentage contained international students from Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Regarding their field of study, control group students were mostly in computer science or engineering-related programs (N= 13), economics or business (N=11), or information management (N=6), with the remainder in other programs (N= 8). In the treatment group, thirteen students were in information management and two were enrolled in media studies, and the rest three students did not identify their field of study. The demographic information about the two groups is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Demographic Statistics for the Control and Treatment Groups.

Variable	Control Group	Treatment Group
Age	23.9 (SD= 3.5)	25.9 (SD=5.0)
Gender		
Female	23(59%)	9 (56%)
Male	16(41%)	7 (44%)
Home country		

China	21	2
India	9	7
Taiwan	1	-
South Korea	1	-
Georgia	1	-
Czech Republic	1	-
Singapore	1	-
Columbia	1	-
Iran	2	-
Algeria	1	-
Indonesia	-	7
Tunisia	-	1
Germany	-	1
Haiti	-	1
Japan	-	2
<hr/>		
Field of Study		
Accounting/Economics/Business related fields	11	-
Computer/Engineering	13	-
Medicine	1	-
Geography	1	-
Information Management	6	13
Design/Arts	2	-
Math	1	-
Nutrition science	1	-
International relations	1	-
Media studies	1	2
<hr/>		

Measurements

Demographics. The study contained items asking for the participants' age, gender, home country, and current field of study. Based on their responses, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics were coded as STEM fields, and social science, business, and other majors were coded as non-STEM fields. Students were also asked to indicate the academic degree they were pursuing: a four-year college degree, a master's degree, a doctoral degree, or a professional degree.

Acculturative Stress. The measure of acculturative stress reflects international students' cross-cultural adjustment regarding the degree of difficulty that participants encounter in everyday social situations because of cultural differences. We chose Sandhu and Asrabadi's (1994) Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS) scale to measure participants' acculturative stress level because of its wide use among researchers studying international students and because of its high reliability and validity (Ye, 2005; Ye, 2006a). The original ASSIS consists of 36 items, measuring international students' perceived discrimination, homesickness, perceived hate/rejection, fear and stress due to change, guilt, and other non-specific concerns. We selected 13 items for this study, based on the purpose and design of the

topics in the Leadership and Culture Program (see Table 3 for the items included). Respondents to the ASSIS rate their agreement or disagreement with each of the items on a five-point Likert scale that ranges from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). A lower score represents a lower level of perceived stress due to acculturation, indicating a better outcome of adjustment and adaptation. The instrument was administered to both the control and treatment group participants at the beginning (pre-test) and at the end of the program (post-test). The reported Cronbach's alpha for the 13-item scale was 0.875 for pre-test and 0.879 for post-test, suggesting a high degree of consistency for the scale.

Analysis

We first conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the 13-item acculturative stress scale to detect its underlying dimensions, with a Varimax rotation approach using SPSS version 23.0. The dimensions of acculturative stress represent specific stress experiences due to cross-cultural adjustment. We then labeled each dimension by its conceptual meaning.

To identify the impact of the Leadership and Culture Program on international students' cross-cultural adjustment, we first regressed the pre-test scores of each dimension of acculturative stress on its post-test score for the control and treatment groups. Then we compared the regression lines across the two groups. We plotted the estimated regression line to depict the two groups' scores on each dimension of acculturative stress, from pretest to posttest. It was expected that for each dimension of acculturative stress, when the groups had the same values on the pre-test scores, the treatment group would have lower acculturative stress scores on the posttest. The comparisons of the two groups' posttest scores for each dimension of acculturative stress were conducted through a series of independent t-tests.

Next, we followed up with a post hoc analysis to quantify the effect size of the mean difference between the control and treatment groups, using Cohen's *d* value. We also conducted a G*Power analysis to suggest sufficient sample sizes for the control and treatment groups, using an alpha of 0.05 and a power of 0.8 (Faul et al., 2013), maintaining the same ratio of sample size of control over treatment groups.

Results

The EFA of the 13 items of acculturative stress revealed four factors that account for 68.52% of the variance in acculturative stress. The number of factors was determined by Kaiser's criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (Kaiser, 1960), a screen-plot test showing the number of data points above the "break" (Costello & Osborne, 2005), and the theoretical meaning of factors (Field, 2009). Items whose loading coefficients were less than 0.40 or which were double-loaded were deleted (Stevens, 2002). Table 3 presents the factor loading for each dimension of acculturative stress. As is shown, four constructs emerged as international students' most significant stressful experiences due to cross-cultural adjustment: (1) adjustment to the new environment, (2) perception of discrimination, (3) worry about opportunities due to cultural differences, and (4) feelings of discomfort with others.. The factor *adjustment to a new environment* contained six items with factor loadings ranging from .487 to .752. The second

factor, *perception of discrimination*, contained three items with factor loadings ranging from .738 to .870. The third factor, *worry about opportunities due to cultural differences*, contained two items with factor loadings of .614 and .900. The last factor, *feelings of discomfort with others*, contained two items with factor loadings of .662 and .851. Table 4 lists the factor loadings for the EFA of the acculturative stress scale and the Cronbach value for each factor. Cronbach values indicate whether or not the items used to measure a specific acculturative stress dimension possess an acceptable ($> .60$) internal consistency (Cortina, 1993).

Table 4

Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis of Acculturative Stress Subscales

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
1. I don't feel comfortable adjusting to new cultural values.	.752	.322	-.152	.240
2. I feel sad living in unfamiliar surroundings.	.735	.370	.058	.056
3. I feel guilty that I am living a different lifestyle here	.709	.209	.301	-.174
4. I don't feel a sense of belonging here.	.590	.590	.359	.370
5. I miss the people and country of my origin	.570	.570	.039	.161
6. I worry about my future for not being able to decide whether to stay here or to go back.	.487	.230	.302	.212
7. People show hatred toward me nonverbally.	.210	.870	.031	.020
8. Others are sarcastic toward my cultural values.	.323	.795	.200	.010
9. I feel angry that I am considered inferior here	.183	.738	.115	.186
10. Many opportunities are denied to me because of my cultural background.	.155	.060	.900	.043
11. I feel that my status in this society is low due to my cultural background.	.180	.456	.614	.373
12. I feel intimidated to participate in social activities.	.045	.202	.041	.851
13. I feel insecure here.	.462	-.091	.219	.662
Cronbach alpha value	.818	.805	.686	.600

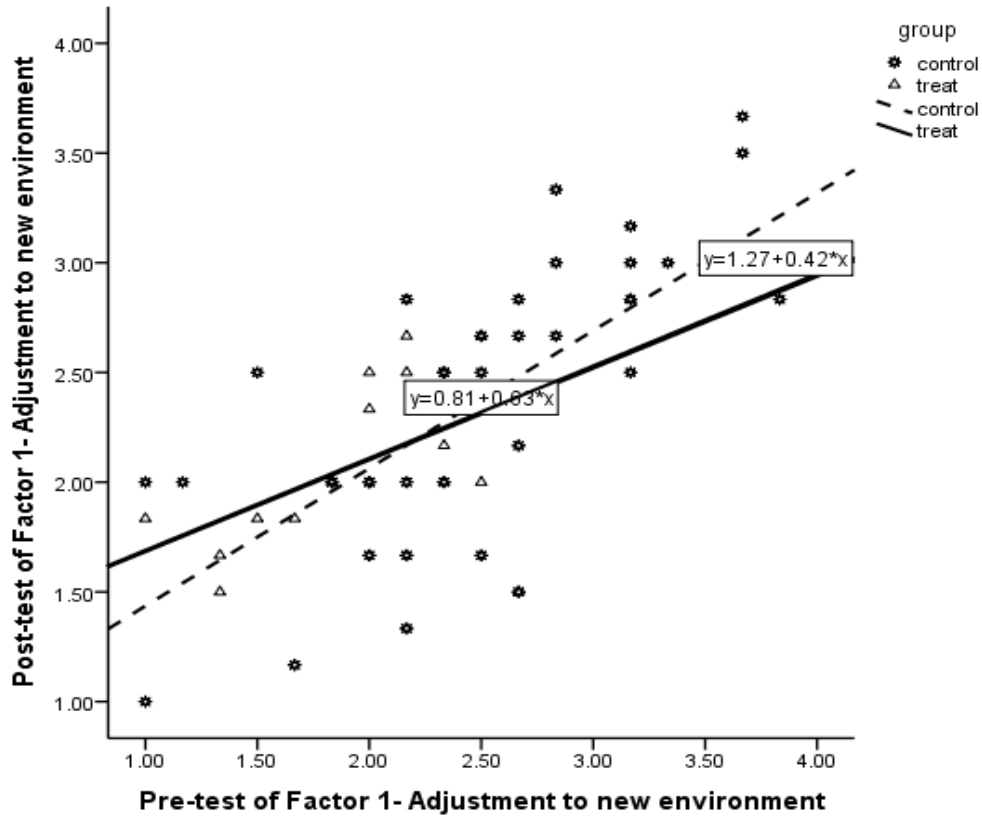
Note. Factor 1 is Adjustment to new environment. Factor 2 is Perception of discrimination. Factor 3 is Worry about opportunity due to cultural differences. Factor 4 is Feeling of discomfort with others.

Group Comparisons. For factor one, *adjustment to a new environment*, the two regression lines representing the treatment and control groups intersect when x equals 2.19, indicating that

for students in both groups who reported pretest scores greater than 2.19, the treatment group has a lower acculturative stress score associated with adjustment to the new environment on the posttest.

Figure 1

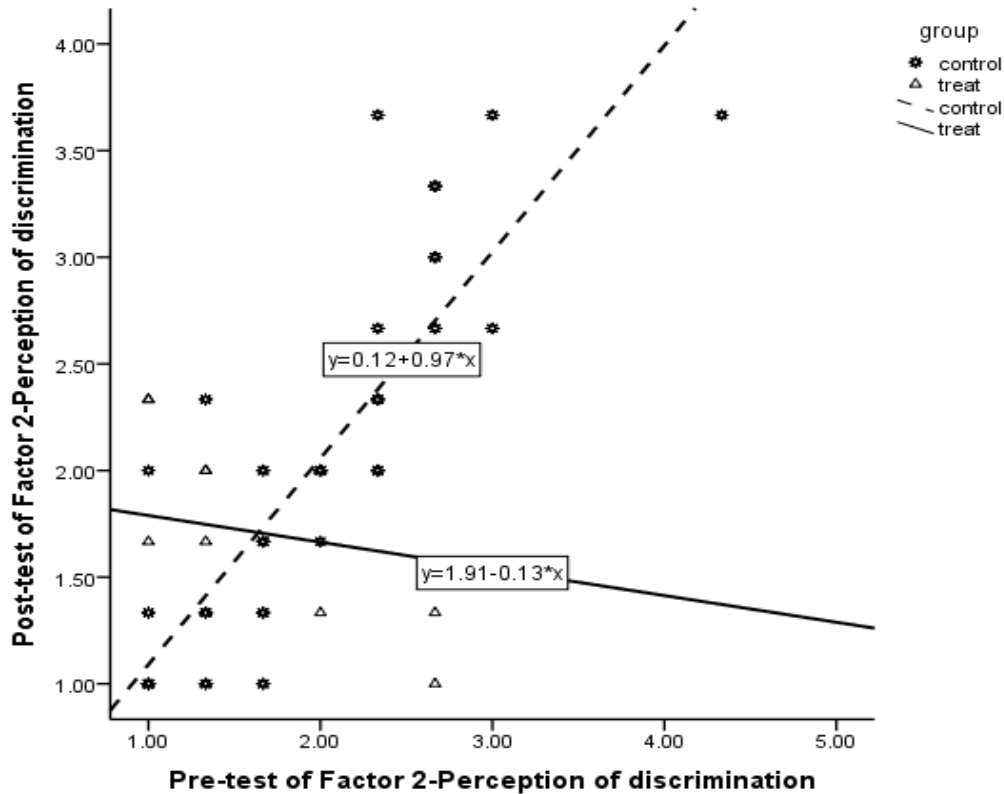
The estimated regression line of the two groups' score on adjustment to new environment from pretest to posttest.



For factor two, *perception of discrimination*, the two regression lines representing the treatment and control groups intersect when x equals 1.62, indicating that for students in both groups who reported the same pretest score greater than 1.62, treatment group shows a lower acculturative stress score associated with perception of discrimination in posttest.

Figure 2

The estimated regression line of the two groups' score on the perception of discrimination from pretest to posttest.

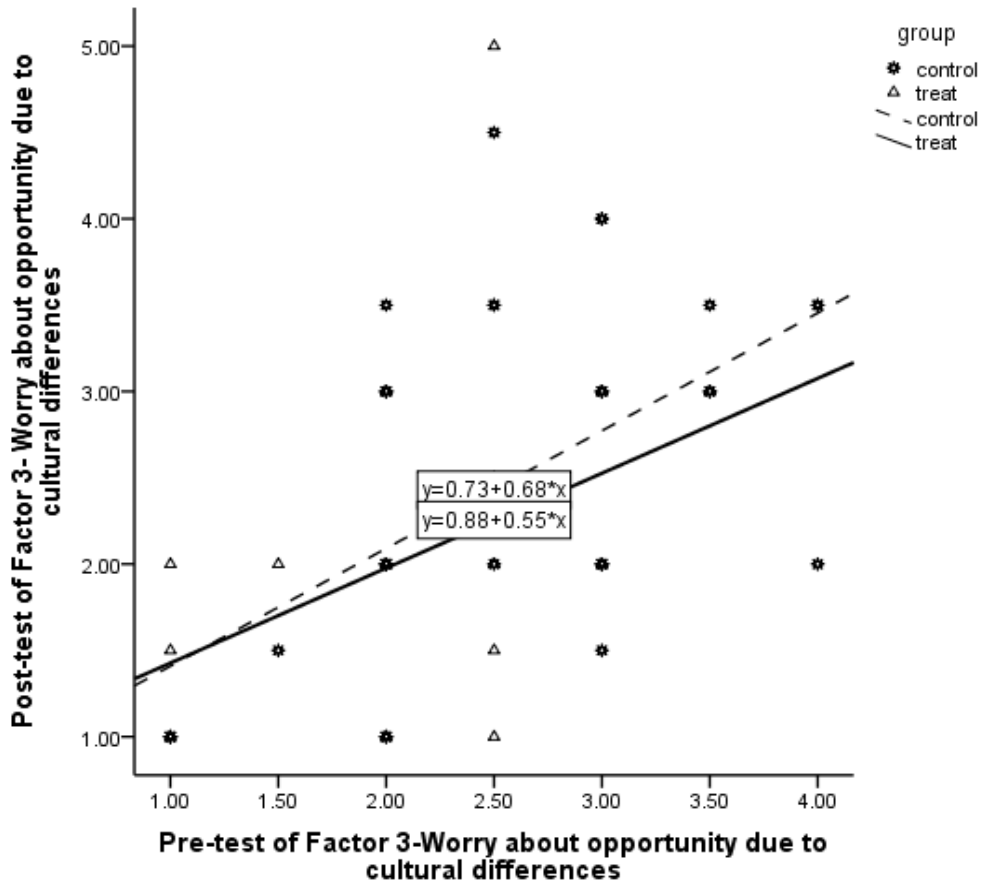


For Factor 3, *worry about opportunities due to cultural differences*, the two regression lines, representing treatment and control groups, intersect when x equals to 1.15, indicating that for students in both groups who reported the same pretest score greater than 1.15, treatment group shows a lower acculturative stress score in posttest, coming from worrying about opportunities due to cultural differences. See Figure 3 below.

For Factor 4, *feelings of discomfort with others*, the two regression lines, representing treatment and control groups, had an intersection when x equals to 1.76, indicating that for students in both groups who reported the same pretest score greater than 1.76, treatment group shows a lower acculturative stress score due to feelings of discomfort with others in the posttest.

Figure 3

The estimated regression line of the two groups' score on opportunities due to cultural differences from pretest to posttest.



We then selected cases with pretest scores greater than the intersections and performed a series of independent t-tests to explore differences across the treatment and control groups in the posttest scores for each acculturative stress factor. Table 4 presented a summary of independent t-tests results for group differences in the posttest scores for each factor. As is shown, for factor one (*adjustment to a new environment*), the treatment group's posttest score was significantly lower than that of the control group ($t(29) = 2.12, p < .05$). For factor two (*perception of discrimination*), factor three (*worry about opportunities due to cultural differences*), and factor four (*feelings of discomfort with others*), there were no significant differences between the treatment and control groups in the posttest scores for acculturative stress (see Table 4).

Figure 4

The estimated regression line of the two groups' score on feelings of discomfort with others from pretest to posttest.

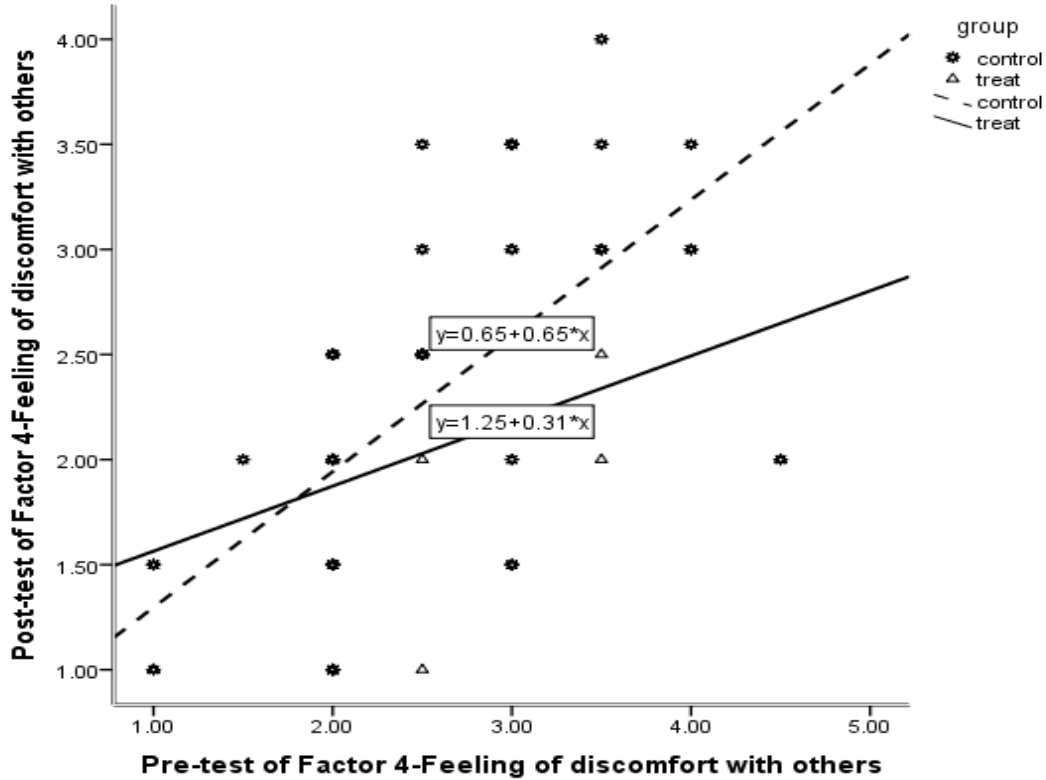


Table 4

Independent T test for each acculturative stress factor in posttest across control and treatment group

Factors	Group	N	Mean	t(df)	Cohen's d	Effect size
Factor 1. Adjustment to new environment	Control group	25	2.69	2.12(29)*	0.99	Large (>.8)
	Treatment group	6	2.19			
Factor 2. Perception of discrimination	Control group	35	2.09	1.01(45)	0.34	small to medium (0.2-0.5)
	Treatment group	12	1.83			
Factor 3. Worry about opportunities due to cultural differences	Control group	37	2.41	0.93(50)	0.29	small to medium (0.2-0.5)
	Treatment group	15	2.13			

Factor 4. Feeling of discomfort with others	Control group	34	2.41	0.52(43)	0.21	small (0.2)
	Treatment group	11	2.28			

Post Hoc Power Analysis. To test whether the non-significant results were due to a lack of statistical power, we conducted a post hoc power analyses using G*Power (Faul et al., 2013) with power ($1 - \beta$) set at 0.80 and $\alpha = .05$, two-tailed. We also further determined the sample sizes needed for the treatment and control groups for an effect of this size to be detected (80% chance) as significant at the 5% level. In the G*Power analysis, the study set the sample size ratio between the two groups to be equal to the ratio of samples in the actual study. The power analysis revealed that in order for the effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.34$) of factor two to be detected (80% chance) as significant at the 5% level, a control group sample of 221 and a treatment group sample of 75 would be required. For the effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.29$) of factor three to be detected (80% chance) as significant at the 5% level, a control group sample of 339 and a treatment group sample of 135 would be required. For the effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.21$) of factor four to be detected (80% chance) as significant at the 5% level, a control group sample of 709 and a treatment group sample of 227 would be required.

Discussion

The objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Leadership and Culture Program at XXX University, which was designed to assist international students' cross-cultural adjustment and adaptation in the U.S. Based on prior research findings on international students' challenges and difficulties in the U.S., the program included topics like building confidence, cultural understanding, and communication, among others. To help newly arrived international students in the fall semester of 2015, the program assessed the participants' acculturative stress experiences and conducted a factor analysis to identify students' specific acculturative stress dimensions and adjust the topic coverage in the program. The activities in the program were designed to increase international students' cross-cultural understanding and to reduce uncomfortable feelings arising from their cross-cultural adjustment.

With regard to the first research question, we found four factors that caused stressful experiences for these students: (1) adjustment to a new environment, (2) perceptions of discrimination, (3) worry about opportunities due to cultural differences, and 4) feelings of discomfort in interacting with others. Among these factors, feelings of discomfort in interacting with others and perceptions of discrimination are consistent with prior studies examining underlying dimension of acculturative stress (Abouguendia & Noels, 2001; Caplan, 2007; Joiner & Walker, 2002; Fuertes & Westbrook, 1996; Kim-Bae, 1999; Lay & Nguyen, 1998; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994); however, these were conducted among immigrant population and populations of minority college students. There is a lack of research examining dimensions of acculturative stress among international students. This study contributes to the literature in this regard. Considering that a large proportion of international students in this study were Chinese students, we found dimensions similar to those found by Ye (2005) among East Asian international

students, namely, fearfulness, perceived discrimination, perceived hatred, homesickness, and culture shock.

Based on the four identified acculturative stress factors, we evaluated the program's effectiveness at reducing students' stress feelings for each factor. For a certain group of international students, the Leadership and Culture Program reduced stressful experiences related to the adjustment to a new environment; however, we found that not all the participants benefited from attending the program. The program is more likely to benefit participants who report moderate to high stress levels on the acculturative stress scale than those who report no stress to moderate stress. To explain this discrepancy in the outcomes for these two groups, we argue that the no/moderate stress group may have started their cross-cultural living in comfort, without realizing its potential challenges and difficulties, only to gradually recognize later that the adjustment to a new culture is not going to be as easy as what they may have expected. In contrast, the moderate/high stress group may have been aware that adjusting to a new environment was going to be difficult, so that they were looking for coping resources, such as participating in this program.

In terms of other acculturative stress factors, such as perceptions of discrimination, worry about opportunities due to cultural differences, and feelings of discomfort with others, the program showed a potential to reduce stressful experiences for a certain group of international students, although the treatment group did not show a significant decrease in these aspects compared to the control group. It is possible that these types of acculturative stress require longer-term interventions for international students to become psychologically comfortable with the environment and at ease in social interactions. It may take more than one semester's time to get over their discomfort. Although the program includes topics such as cultural understanding, communication across cultures, and working with others, participants may need more time to digest the information in the context of the reality of cross-cultural living. Another factor that may have contributed to the non-significant results may have been the limited sample size. Considering that there were only 16 participants in the treatment group and 39 in the control group, the analysis may not have had enough power to reach statistical significance. However, we provided a G*power analysis as a complementary analysis, which suggested sample sizes for recruiting participants for the treatment group and control group. A similar type of program may consider the suggested sample sizes, which would require significant efforts to recruit more participants particularly when the program is voluntary and they may either feel, correct or not, confident about their abilities or shy from it fearing additional stress from yet another responsibility.

Implications

Given that international students may experience various forms of psychological stress due to cross-cultural living, university programs should pay attention to students' acculturative stress experiences. Although the documented school-based programs have focused on helping international students improve their English competency (Sherry, Thomas, & Chui, 2010) and clarifying important academic and work issues in the U.S. (Chen & Ullen, 2010; Behrens, 2009), they are missing the crucial aspect of psychological adjustment. This study thus provides some

insights about the manner in which these students experience this acculturative stress and how they differ in the ways they overcome these challenges after being exposed to a program. Moreover, we identified, and then assessed, specific aspects of their acculturative stress experiences, with the aim of incorporating this information into the program design to better meet our international students' needs in the future.

The Leadership and Culture program used diverse activities (e.g., in-class and out-of-class activities and assignments) and various techniques (e.g., small group discussion, video and audio materials, etc.) to engage new international students and maximize the benefits. The Leadership and Culture program can benefit from further development to continue to address these specific challenges on a greater scale and then target those who are more vulnerable.

Limitations

Although we believe this study provides important insights into the effects that a semester-long program can have on new international students, we recognize that the study exhibits important limitations. First, the relative ineffectiveness of the program in reducing students' perception of discrimination, worry about opportunities due to cultural differences, and feelings of discomfort with others might be due to the limited sample size and, thus, the lack of statistical power. We conducted a G*power analysis and suggested sample sizes to maintain power to address this problem in the future. Second, given that the program was voluntary, the participants may not have represented the entire international student body, since only those who were interested in the program participated. In addition, the sample was not randomly selected; most of the students in the treatment group came from the graduate program of one of the authors. Therefore, a sample bias may exist and the results may not be generalizable to a larger international student population. Third, the program lasted only one semester, but cross-cultural adjustment may be a long-term process. Our study cannot tell whether the ineffectiveness of the program was due to its short duration, and the results might have been different if the program had been longer. Thus, there is room for further experimentation with interventions and program duration.

Conclusion

When international students come to the U.S. to study, the new academic, social, and cultural environments may require them to learn new skills to operate competently. Their unfamiliarity with these norms may cause them to feel stressed. At a time when education is experiencing increasing cultural diversity, it is crucial that our schools be ready to provide services to help international students better adjust and adapt to their new cultural environment. This study provides preliminary evidence that a ten-week leadership and culture program can have a positive impact on international students' adjustment and adaptation to studying and living in the U.S. While we believe that a semester-long program like this can be beneficial to international students, additional studies to understand, at a higher level of granularity, international students' acculturative stress responses to programs like this will be necessary.

References

- Abouguendia, M., & Noels, K. A. (2001). General and acculturation-related daily hassles and psychological adjustment in first- and second-generation South Asian immigrants to Canada. *International Journal of Psychology, 36*(3), 163–173.
- Allen, M. W., Amason, P., & Holmes, S. A. (1998). Social support, Hispanic emotional acculturative stress & gender. *Communication Studies, 49*(2), 139-157.
- Behrens, D. (2009). Interview practice U.S. style: A workshop for international students. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 46*(4), 182-184.
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*, 697-712.
- Caplan, S. (2007). Latinos, acculturation, and acculturative stress: A dimensional concept analysis. *Policy, Politics, & Nursing Practice, 8*(2), 93-106.
- Castillo, L. G., Conoley, C. W., Brossart, D. F., & Quiros, A. E. (2007). Construction and validation of the intragroup marginalization inventory. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*(3), 232–240.
- Chen, Y.-H., & Van Ullen, M. K. (2011). Helping international students succeed academically through research process and plagiarism workshops. *College & Research Libraries, 72*(3), 209–235.
- Cortina, J. M. (1993). What is coefficient alpha? An examination of theory and applications. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*, 98–104.
- Costello, A. B., & Osborne, J. W. (2005). Best practices in exploratory factor analysis: Four recommendations for getting the most from your analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation, 10*(7), 1-9.
- Eland, A. J. (2001). Intersection of academics and culture: The academic experience of International graduate students. *Dissertation Abstract International, 62*(03), 909A, (UMINo. AAT 3010549).
- Institute of International Education. (2016). Open doors 2016 “Fast Facts” International Students in the U.S. [http:// www.iie.org/Why-IIE/Announcements/2016-11-14-Open-Doors-Data](http://www.iie.org/Why-IIE/Announcements/2016-11-14-Open-Doors-Data)
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A.-G. (2013). G*Power Version 3.1.7 [computer software]. Universität Kiel, Germany. Retrieved from <http://www.psych.uni-duesseldorf.de/abteilungen/aap/gpower3/download-and-register>
- Field, A. P. (2000). *Discovering statistics using SPSS for Windows: Advanced techniques for the beginner*. London: Sage.
- Fuertes, J. N., & Westbrook, F. D. (1996). Using the social, attitudinal, familial, and environmental (S. A. F. E.) acculturation stress scale to assess the adjustment needs of Hispanic college students. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development Special Assessment and Diversity, 29*, 67–76.
- Garcia-Murillo, M. A. (2013). *Leadership and culture*. Jamesville, NY, Crysalus.
- Hazelkorn, E. (2009). Rankings and the battle for world-class excellence: Institutional strategies and policy choices. *Higher Education Management and Policy, 21*(1), 55–76.

- Harrison, P. (2002). Educational exchange for international understanding. *International Educator, 11*(4), 2-4.
- Jeon-Huh, A. (2015). *Exploring the influence of the pre-departure orientation on the undergraduate international students' cultural and academic adjustment at Drexel University: The example of students from China* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA.
- Joiner, Jr., T. E., & Walker, R. L. (2002). General and factorial construct validity of a measure of acculturative stress in African-Americans and Anglo-Americans. *Psychological Assessment, 14*, 462-466.
- Kaiser, H. F. (1960). The application of electronic computers to factor analysis. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 20*, 141-151.
- Kim-Bae, L. S. (1999). Cultural identity as a mediator of acculturative stress and psychological adjustment in Vietnamese American Adolescents. *Dissertation Abstract International, 62*(03), 909A, (UMINo. AAT 9937409).
- Kim, H. S., & Sherman, D. K. (2007). "Express yourself": Culture and the effect of self-expression on choice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*(1), 1-11.
- Landrum, R. E., Hettich, P. I., & Wilner, A. (2010). Alumni perceptions of workforce readiness. *Teaching of Psychology, 37*(2), 97-106.
- Lay, C., & Nguyen, T. (1998). The role of acculturation-related and acculturation non-specific hassles: Vietnamese-Canadian students and psychological distress. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 30*, 172-181.
- Lee, J., & Rice, C. (2007). Welcome to America? International student perceptions of discrimination. *Higher Education, 53*, 381-409.
- Lee, J. S., Koeske, G. F., & Sales, E. (2004). Social support buffering of acculturative stress: A study of mental health symptoms among Korean international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 28*, 399-414.
- Murphy, C., Hawkes, L., & Law, J. (2002). How international students can benefit from a web-based college orientation. *New Directions for Higher Education, 117*, 37-43.
- Parr, G. & Bradley, L. (1992). Directors' perceptions of the concerns and feelings of international students. *College Student Journal, 25*, 370-376.
- Sakurako, M. (2000). Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of International Students. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 78*(2), 137-144.
- Sandhu, D. S. & Asrabadi, B. R. (1994). Development of an acculturative stress scale for international students: Preliminary Findings. *Psychological Reports, 75*, 435-448.
- Sherry, M., Thomas, P., & Chui, W. H. (2010). International students: A vulnerable student population. *Higher Education, 60*(1), 33-46.
- Smith, R. A. & Khawaja, N. G. (2011). A review of the acculturation experiences of international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 35*, 699-713.
- Sodowsky, G. R., & Lai, E. M. (1997). Asian immigrant variables and structural models of cross-cultural distress. In A. Booth, A. C. Crouter, & N. Landale (Eds.), *Immigration and family: Research and policy on U.S. immigrants* (pp. 211-234). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Stevens, J. P. (2002). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences* (4th ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Sumer, S., Poyrazli, S., & Grahame, K. (2008). Predictors of depression and anxiety among international students. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 86*, 429–437.
- Thomson, C., & Esses, V. M. (2016). Helping the transition: Mentorship to support international students in Canada. *Journal of International Students, 6*(4), 873–886.
- Tochkov, K., Levine, L., & Sanaka, A. (2010). Variation in the prediction of cross-cultural adjustment by Asia-Indian students in the United States. *College Student Journal, 44*(3), 677–689.
- Tomich, P. C., McWhirter, J. J., & Darcy, M. U. A. (2003). Personality and international students' adaptation experience. *International Education, 33*(1), 22–39.
- Trice, A. G. (2004). Mixing it up: International graduate students' social interactions with American students. *Journal of College Student Development, 45*(6), 671–687.
- Wan, G. (2001). The learning experience of Chinese students in American Universities: A cross-cultural perspective. *College Students Journal, 35*, 28–44.
- Wei, M., Heppner, P. P., Mallen, M. J. Ku, T. Y., Liao, Y.H., & Wu, T. F. (2007). Acculturative stress, perfectionism, years in the United States, and depression among Chinese international students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 54*, 385–394.
- Wu, H., Garza, E., & Guzman, N. (2015). International Student's Challenge and Adjustment to College. *Education Research International, 2015*, 1–9.
- Ye, J. (2005). Acculturative stress and use of the Internet among East Asian international students in the U.S. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 8*(2), 154–161.
- Ye, J. (2006a). Traditional and online support networks in the cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese international students in the United States. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 11*(3), 863–876.
- Yeh, C. J., & Inose, M. (2003). International students' reported English fluency, social support satisfaction, and social connectedness as predictors of acculturative stress. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly, 16*, 15–28.
- Yu, B., Chen, X., Li, S., Liu, Y., Jacques-Tiura, A. J., & Yan, H. (2014). Acculturative stress and influential factors among international students in China: A structural dynamic perspective. *PloS ONE, 9*(4), 1–8.
- Zhang, J., & Goodson, P. (2011). Predictors of international students' psychosocial adjustment to life in the United States: A systematic review. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 35*(2), 139–162.

About the Authors

Yue Zhang is a Postdoc scholar in the Psychology Department at Santa Clara University. Her research focuses on adolescents' development, school functioning and environmental factors in association with children's outcomes. She also has research interest among international students.

Martha A. Garcia-Murillo is a Professor of Information Studies at Syracuse University. Her research expertise is about the impact of technology and public policy. She is also an expert in theory construction and has written and led workshops on the subject at multiple conferences and universities.

The Drop-Off: Pedagogy for Study Abroad Educators Fostering Intercultural Competence

Tammera R. Maloney, B.A. and Taryn E. Asbury, B.A.
Irish Studies Program, Taylor University in Greystones, Ireland

Abstract

In the pursuit of developing intercultural competence in students studying abroad, effective experiential learning strategies are sought by study abroad educators. This article presents an implementation of one such strategy called “The Drop-Off” (Batchelder, 1993). The Drop-Off involves small groups of students who explore a previously unknown town in order to develop an understanding of the history and culture of that town. The purpose of the Drop-Off is for student groups to discover how to best utilize the targeted skills of observation and conversation by asking appropriate questions, listening and acquiring facts about a town previously unknown. These skills are integral to developing the core components of intercultural competence for appropriate and meaningful interactions across cultures. Implemented over two semesters in Ireland with 35 first-semester college freshmen, this pedagogy, accompanied by extensive preparation and guided reflection, may have contributed to a significant mean change in score from pre- to post-Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) for the combined semesters. This article details the process in its entirety from preparation to execution to discussion and final assignments.

Keywords: study abroad; developing intercultural competence; Drop-Off; Intercultural Development Inventory; experiential learning strategies; first semester freshman study abroad.

“I learned that I no longer want to be a tourist in Ireland; I want to be part of the Irish community.” –Wes

Study abroad provides the ideal setting to introduce students to new practices for learning, a time to break out of the traditional academic mindset of required seat-time, lectures and textbooks. The study abroad experience presents a unique opportunity to discover hands-on, real-life strategies for enhancing communication skills and problem solving processes.

Originally designed by Donald Batchelder, *The Drop-Off* (Batchelder, 1993, pp. 135-141), is an experiential learning strategy which encourages direct exploration and involvement in a previously unknown community either in one’s home country or abroad. The Drop-Off consists of small groups of students who are assigned a town to explore in order to develop an understanding of the history and culture of that town. The purpose of the Drop-Off is for the student groups to discover how to best utilize the targeted skills of observation and conversation by asking appropriate questions, listening, and acquiring facts about their assigned town. These

skills are integral in the development of the core components of intercultural competence for appropriate and meaningful interactions across cultures.

Batchelder's article was discovered while the program director was reviewing references from related articles on experiential learning strategies. The purpose of this article is to chronicle and share our implementation of Batchelder's original idea as one strategy for fostering intercultural competence during a semester abroad program over two fall semesters in Ireland for first semester freshmen. The first attempt during Fall Semester One of introducing and implementing the Drop-Off was a shorter version of what would later evolve into a tiered approach to the exercise. The second iteration, during Fall Semester Two, incorporated additions and improvements to the original exercise.

The co-authors of this article write from the perspectives of facilitator/director-in-residence and student participant of the initial drop-off endeavor for our study abroad program. We hope to provide a practical framework for study abroad educators who wish to replicate the Drop-Off with their own students from conceptualization to execution. Detailed within this article, the reader will come to understand our preparation methods and expected results; the process – including participants, town selection, pre-activity assignments and student directives; debriefing procedure and questions for each of the Drop-Off activities; and follow-up assignments for the half-day, full-day and overnight Drop-Off experience. Finally, our hope is that the reader will find the information in this article worthwhile for replicating the Drop-Off experience in a setting of their choice and realize positive student growth in intercultural competence through this experiential learning method.

Primary Goal of The Drop-Off

“Our group had an almost two-hour conversation with a retired history professor named Tom. This experience was informative and enjoyable as he not only gave our group information about the history of [our town], but he also provided us with an Irishman's perspective on the problems that are facing Ireland.” –Caitlin

The overarching goal of the Drop-Off activity is to foster growth in intercultural competence. This is evidenced by the students' growth on the Intercultural Development Continuum as measured by the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI ®). The IDI, developed and owned by Mitchell R. Hammer, Ph.D., IDI, LLC, “is a 50-item cross-culturally generalizable, valid and reliable assessment of intercultural competence” (Hammer, 2012/2013, p. 26). The IDI was the assessment instrument of choice for our program because it is “well-reputed, widely used, easily administered, and independently evaluated....As a theory-based test, the IDI meets the standard criteria for a valid and reliable psychometric instrument” (Engle, J., Engle, L., 2015).

The Intercultural Development Continuum

The Intercultural Development Continuum provides a framework for understanding IDI scores. The outcomes we desired for each semester abroad were an increase in students' intercultural competence through advancing along the continuum from a monocultural

mindset towards an intercultural mindset. Table 1 provides a brief description for each of the five orientations and the score range within each orientation. For a more thorough understanding of the IDC, a link has been provided in the reference section of this article.

Table 1
Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC™) Scale

Monocultural Mindset			Intercultural Mindset	
Denial [55-70*]	Polarization [71-85*]	Minimization [86-115*]	Acceptance [116-130*]	Adaptation [131-145*]
Little recognition of more complex cultural differences	Judgmental orientation; “us & them”	Highlights cultural commonalities that mask deeper recognition of cultural differences	Recognizes cultural commonality & difference in own & other cultures	Able to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior to cultural context

*Indicates score range within each of the 5 orientations of the IDC

Hammer defines intercultural competence as “the capability to shift cultural perspective and appropriately adapt behavior to cultural difference and commonalities. This capability is conceptualized in terms of a range of orientations along the Intercultural Developmental Continuum (IDC™) of intercultural competence,” as shown in Table 1 (Hammer, 2012/2013, p. 26). The IDI was adapted by Hammer (Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M.J., & Wiseman, R., 2003, p. 421) from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) by Milton Bennett (1986). The IDC identifies a continuum of five orientations from the Monocultural mindset of Denial and Polarization, thru the transitional stage of Minimization to the Intercultural mindset of Acceptance and finally Adaptation. It is important to emphasize that growth in intercultural competence is life-long and varies widely across cultures.

In his explanation of the IDI, Hammer (2012) suggests that students in the Denial stage engage in increased interaction with people from other cultures in order to better understand cultural differences and similarities. This face-to-face interaction “promotes learners’ openness and curiosity toward the target culture and raises cross-cultural awareness” (Lee, 2011, p. 90). Students who learn to listen openly, observe freely, and engage in nonjudgmental interactions, begin to foster an understanding of cultural differences.

Definitions

Taken from the wider body of study abroad literature for the purposes of the Drop-Off activity, definitions of terms adopted for this article are included in Table 2.

Table 2
Definitions of Terms Adopted for the Drop-Off

Term	Definition
Study Abroad	“An activity offered within higher education in a myriad of shapes and sizes by the highly diverse group of higher education providers

	and support organizations that so uniquely enrich the U.S. educational landscape” (Wanner, 2009, p. 81).
Study Abroad Experiences	“Events or actions that take place during study abroad including culture learning” (Hoff, 2008, p. 55).
Experiential Education	The Association for Experiential Education defines this term as a “philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities” (What Is Experiential Education, n.d., para. 2, 2017).
Intercultural Competence	“Most often viewed as a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, J., 2008, p. 97). We embrace this definition, while acknowledging that intercultural competence is complex, ongoing and varies among experts worldwide in the field of study abroad. Components of intercultural competence include tolerance of ambiguity, cultural empathy, cognitive complexity, humble curiosity, humility and suspension of judgement (Crabb & Maloney, 2016). Development of the components of intercultural competence are cultivated and not achieved serendipitously. The Drop-Off, as an experiential learning strategy, provides a laboratory for recognizing and rehearsing these components thereby learning to shift one’s frame of reference in a cross-cultural setting.

The Drop-Off as a Strategy for Fostering Intercultural Competence

“Some of the main skills we employed were money management...analytical observations (not only observing things, but also considering the meaning or cause of what we observe), time management...social skills (starting conversations with random people), teamwork, or figuring out who is best suited for different tasks...and decision making, since the members of our group did not always agree on everything.” –Peyton

Conceptualizing the Drop-Off

The originator and director of our Irish Studies Program envisioned a highly experiential approach to learning abroad and sought literature on experiential learning methodologies. Within the literature, the Drop-Off article was discovered. In collaboration with the director-in-

residence, the program director combined critical experiential learning components with the Drop-Off activity and altered the idea to fit our Irish Studies Program. The over-arching goal was to foster growth in intercultural competence in our student participants.

The participants were not to simply identify current habits of a town, but to peel back the layers of history and to ask the question, “why?” They were to uncover the source, the root of where and how their assigned town began. This was accomplished through participation in one overnight Drop-Off experience (Semester One) and expanded to three separate experiences including a half-day, full-day, and overnight Drop-Off in sequence (Semester Two). Each of these experiences provided opportunities for the students to practice the skills of observation, conversation with townspeople, listening, and acquiring facts about a town never before explored, while working as a team to problem solve in a new environment. Acquiring an understanding of a town’s culture and history in a relatively short period of time became the primary task.

After completing the overnight Drop-Off during Semester One, we recognized that a tiered approach would enhance the experience and added the half-day and full-day Drop-Off prior to the overnight experience for Semester Two. Both semesters incorporated guided classroom discussion both before and after each experience along with the presence of an on-site cultural mentor.

The three-tiered approach of participation in a half-day, full-day, and overnight Drop-Off experience for Semester Two introduced students to alternate modes of learning in a less intimidating and more gradual way than the overnight only Drop-Off experience of Semester One. As the creator of the Drop-Off explains, “The drop-off requires the participants to walk up to a variety of people, open conversations politely, show respect, seek information, modify their behavior, and make contact at a basic human level. The whole process of cross-cultural entry and reaching out to people comes into play” (Batchelder, 1993, p. 138).

While classroom learning is necessary and important, experiential learning is equally impactful. Darla Deardorff (2011) explains, “Beyond integration of intercultural competence outcomes within courses, it is important to understand that intercultural learning is transformational learning, which requires experiences (often beyond the classroom) that lead to this transformation” (p. 70). Through participation in the Drop-Off, students would have the opportunity to rehearse the concepts introduced and discussed in the classroom prior to Drop-Off experience (Semester One), building upon each experience (Semester Two).

Guided classroom discussion (pre- and post- Drop-Off) is fundamental and may add to student growth as discussions elicit responses and observations regarding their experiences. During all Drop-Off experiences of both semesters, the development of cultural humility, curiosity, and openness was encouraged through intentional engagement in observation and conversation with residents about their town. While participation in the Drop-Off is an excellent first step in fostering growth, simply having the experience is not enough. Results are revealed after practicing objective observation and nonjudgmental listening, then followed up with structured and guided discussion of the experience.

Finally, the on-site presence of a cultural mentor to guide students through their experiences is an important component of not just the Drop-Off but the entire study abroad experience. “Effective cultural mentoring means engaging learners in ongoing discourse about their experiences, helping them better understand the intercultural nature of those encounters, and providing them with feedback relevant to their level of intercultural development” (Vande Berge, Paige & Lou, 2012, p. 53). In fact, during the study abroad semester, cultural mentoring has been identified as one of the most influential factors in fostering intercultural competence (Hammer, M., 2012, p. 133). Our rendition of cultural mentoring was real-time, face-to-face and on-going throughout the semester and further intensified during the Drop-Off preparation and debriefing during both semesters. As a fundamental component of the experiential education paradigm, the cultural mentor serves to facilitate student learning through guided reflection in order to make meaning of their experiences. (Vande Berge, Paige & Lou, 2012, p. 38).

Experiential Education and the Drop-Off

Over the course of the Irish studies program, the program director conducted an ongoing review of the literature on experiential learning methodologies in order to compile an arsenal of activities designed to increase students’ intercultural competence and awareness of transferable skills while studying abroad.

Experiential education, by definition, fits neatly within the study abroad experience. The Drop-Off, as an experiential educational methodology, and inclusive of preparation and reflection, provides sojourners the opportunity to develop the skills of observation, conversation, listening, knowledge-gathering, problem-solving, team-building and intercultural competence. This new avenue of experiential learning enhances skills and content taught in the typical classroom setting. “Learning happens and is seen on at least two levels: There are physical changes in the brain as a person is processing information and there is a potential change in behavior that the learner can perform” (Richlin, 2006, p. 25). Within higher education and study abroad, educators use a variety of methodologies to stimulate the learning process. Commonly used methods are lectures, laboratories, small group work, research projects (Atkins, Brown, 2002, p. 225) and on-line learning. The traditional college course is based on students sitting in a classroom listening to lectures, taking notes, and regurgitating information for a final exam. However, an increasing amount of empirical literature promotes the importance of active and experiential learning, which involves purposeful engagement between students and class content in order to develop meaningful connections with the material. This change in educational perspective shows that “no longer supplemental to the acquisition of content, experiential approaches are considered fundamental to meaningful learning” (Lewis & Williams, 1994, p.5). Lewis and Williams (1994) further elaborate that educators are moving from the image of students being passive receivers of knowledge, to a humanistic model based on constructing and utilizing meaningful experiences. They explain that work environments require flexibility, adaptability, and the ability to transfer knowledge and skills from one experience to another. Therefore, “Educators are being held accountable for what learners know and are able to do. The

pressure for accountability has caused educators to design competency-based measures of learning and experiential techniques for assessing learner outcomes” (Lewis & Williams, 1994, p. 5).

Furthermore, Lewis and Williams (1994) explain that action learning was designed to encourage students and employees to better respond to change (also known as active or experiential learning) and that this concept follows a systematic methodology. It begins with students identifying their assumptions, and goes on to assess these assumptions against available evidence. Finally, students reconstruct their assumptions based on new knowledge and skills they have obtained, continuously testing and revising them as new experiences are encountered. Instead of relying on a professional to hand them information, this style of learning encourages students to become instigators of their own education, asking them to attain the knowledge they feel is necessary based on the needs at hand (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

The Drop-Off needed to be a holistic method of learning, focused on understanding cultural differences, applying in-class history lectures to real-life environments, using teamwork to accomplish an assignment, and understanding the personal, long-term implications of the knowledge gained. From the experience students could learn to identify and develop skills transferable to future learning and working: “When learning is conceived as a holistic adaptive process, it provides conceptual bridges across life situations such as school and work, portraying learning as a continuous, lifelong process (Kolb, 2014 p. 33). In order to promote the transfer of skills and knowledge, certain components must be included in the activity.

The Drop-Off experiences are valuable, provided that debriefing occurs offering meaning to the knowledge gained. Students were guided through all debrief sessions - the overnight experience for Semester One and each of the three experiences of Semester Two. The debriefing occurred in the classroom and in a timely manner (optimally within a day or as few days as possible of the experience). Experiential learning is often grounded in the constructivist approach, which states that “meaning is not inherent in experience. Rather, knowledge is socially constructed as people observe and interpret it” (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002, p. 44). Therefore, team work and problem solving in a new environment is of paramount importance. Lee (2011) analyzed student reactions to blog groups, providing further support for team-based experiential learning: “students believed that they benefited from reading each other’s blog entries through which they gained different cultural perspectives and further reflected on their own” (p. 97). Working with others allows students to exercise their problem-solving skills while being introduced to others’ perspectives, which fosters humility and the suspension of judgment, both components of intercultural competence.

Unfolding The Drop-Off

Preparation

Preparation for the Drop-Off (for both semesters), began with classroom discussions, activities and assignments (listed in the ‘assignments and activities prior to the Drop-Off’ section of this article). Batchelder’s article, *The Drop-Off* (Batchelder, 1993, pp. 135-141), was

introduced to help students begin to understand the evolution of a town. Discovering the culture, history and development of their assigned town would be the crux of the Drop-Off activity.

In order to move beyond the Minimization stage on the IDI, one must become culturally self-aware and able to recognize patterns in differences and similarities. Knowledge of and interaction with other cultures is the first step in being able to shift one's cultural framework and behavior patterns (Hammer, 2012). To guide students in "pushing them further back in time" in the history of the town, it is helpful for them to be "turning over a few good questions in their minds" (Batchelder, 1993, p. 139). Establishing a specific goal and questions regarding the economy, landscape, politics, behaviors, beliefs, layout, and artifacts stimulate interest in valuable knowledge as opposed to surface level tourist information (Batchelder, 1993). This level of in-depth interaction with the culture requires students to "critically examine culture, not just accumulate facts and knowledge about a culture," which is a more productive method in increasing intercultural competence (Perry, 2011, p. 457).

Initiating conversations with B&B owners, shopkeepers, restaurant staff, and other locals, students not only gain unique insights into the town's culture, but they may also be exposed to one or more cultural "incidents". According to Storti (2007), these are "unsuccessful interactions" and further defined as "a cross-cultural encounter to have gone wrong whenever one or more of the parties is confused, offended, frustrated, or otherwise put off by the behavior of any of the other parties" (p. 26). Prior to the Drop-Off, Semester One and Semester Two students read and participated in guided discussion of Storti's book in order to understand cultural "incidents." Students were also led in a classroom discussion on why and how asking questions about a town's economy, landscape, politics, behaviors, beliefs, layout, and artifacts reveals valuable knowledge about a town and its history. These preparations readied the students with a critical-thinking mindset for the Drop-Off .

Expected results – 1: employing new knowledge.

One goal of the Drop-Off is to ignite in students the desire to employ this technique in their own hometown or any other new locations they encounter. Knowledge gained through the Drop-Off experience is best utilized when students test their own learning techniques and translate them to relevant situations in their own life (Deardorff, 2011). Experiencing these learning techniques in multiple settings allows for a more comprehensive understanding as well as the ability to translate the methods to a wider range of situations (Batchelder, 1993). The application of techniques used in alternate contexts reinforces skills to increase intercultural competence.

Expected results – 2: obtaining transferrable skills.

An additional goal for the Drop-Off experience is that students identify transferable skills applicable not only while learning about another culture, but also at home, in the workplace, and with interpersonal relationships. Knowing how to deal with and adapt to cultural differences is an aspect of the Adaption stage of the IDI (Hammer, 2012). The notion of transferable skills is

initiated, tested, and discussed during this three-part experiential learning process (preparation, execution and debriefing). As “students become conscious of their approaches to others and to life situations. They begin to be aware that there are some important skills involved and that they can personally develop and master these skills” (Batchelder, 1993, p. 138). In the end, the goal is for students to desire to discover the “why” of people, experiences, and places; to see there is a deep history behind why things are the way they are; and to practice the skills learned on the Drop-Off during future intercultural situations as well as in their native culture.

Expected results – 3: measureable gains on the IDI.

Our Irish Studies program was originally developed as a living learning community. Every course, every activity, every trip, was intentionally designed to provide opportunities to increase the students’ intercultural competence. The addition of the Drop-Off activity, we believed, could maximize the students’ chances of increasing their scores on the IDI both individually and collectively.

Process

“Using the museum as a knowledge base, we planned the rest of our trip around what we learned.”-Alexis

The process of incorporating the Drop-Off into the students’ study experience abroad unfolded gradually over each of the two semesters referenced in this article. A description of the participants, the in-class preparation required for the students and the student directives for carrying out the actual Drop-Off group experience follow below. Participation in and completion of the classroom lectures, discussions, assignments and activities, followed by the Drop-Off and debriefing, fulfilled the requirements for a course on living cross-culturally.

Participants

Referenced in this article over the course of two fall semesters, 35 total freshman students participated in the university’s freshman Irish studies program and in the Drop-Off experience (Table 3, below). Students were enrolled in a North American faith-based university located in the mid-west. Each of these students chose to begin their college tenure as part of the university’s first-semester study abroad program in Ireland.

Table 3
Summary of Participants of the Drop-Off Over Two Semesters

<i>Semester</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Fall Semester 1	23	18	5
Fall Semester 2	12	9	3
Total	35	27	8

Students from both semesters consented to take the Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI) pre-departure and again at the conclusion of the semester abroad. The director in residence obtained IDI Qualified Administrator (QA) status between Semester One and Semester Two and therefore provided the second semester group of student participants with a 30-minute individual feedback session to discuss their placement on the continuum as measured by the IDI and an explanation of the customized Intercultural Development Plan (IDP). While both semesters completed the IDI pre-departure and post semester abroad, the second semester students received additional individualized discussion and planning on how they could intentionally increase their intercultural competence throughout the semester based on their IDI score. This may have been a factor in the larger gain from pre- to -post IDI scores for Semester Two as compared to Semester One. The reader will find in Table 4 of the Results Section of this article further explanation of the gains in intercultural competence as measured by the IDI for each semester.

Identifying the Towns.

Preparing students (both semesters) to be “dropped off” in a previously unknown town began with a classroom introduction of Batchelder’s article, “The Drop-Off” (1993) and included discussion of the process of the development of a town. To prime students to collect deep, meaningful information about the town which they would soon be exploring, we asked them questions to turn over in their minds and to carry with them as they explored. Questions such as, “who came there first, why they chose the place, what they did to survive, how long they lived, how they amused themselves, how the place gradually grew and changed, etc.” (Batchelder, 1993, p. 140) would prove beneficial.

Towns were chosen by the director in residence using the following criteria:

- Reasonable proximity to the other towns – number of towns used varied according to number of students per semester
- Size – minimally, large enough to have accommodations, yet not too large
- Time of year - some towns “close down” during the off season
- Region of the country – regions were changed from Semester One to Semester Two to keep the experience unique for each semester
- Safety – all towns were vetted for safety of tourists.

Assignments and activities prior to the Drop-Off.

Prior to the overnight Drop-Off (for both semesters) and in addition to the introduction and discussion of Batchelder’s article, a variety of other important assignments and activities were assigned, addressed in class and graded. These included:

- Pre-semester administering of the Intercultural Development Inventory
- Students identified a preliminary list of their personal goals and fears for the semester
- Activity: Self Awareness: Identity Tag Game (Bernardo & Deardorff, 2012, pp. 151-154)

- Two in-class lectures covering an overview of intercultural competence with guided discussion
- Storti (2007) book assignment, *The Art of Crossing Cultures*, read and answer chapter questions (created specifically for our program) followed by in-class guided discussion (covered during two class times over several weeks)
- Explanation and discussion of Deardorff's O-SEE (Observe, State, Explore, Evaluate) technique (Bernardo & Deardorff, 2012, pp. 58-60)
- Activity: Introduce Core Concepts: Four Analogies (Bernardo & Deardorff, 2012, pp. 61-68)
- Activity: Understanding Differences: The Form and Strange Situations (Bernardo & Deardorff, 2012, pp. 81-83) (Bernardo & Deardorff, 2012, pp. 91-97)
- Activity: Written description of and reflection on a personal "critical incident" (an experience where a misunderstanding or uncomfortable interaction occurred due to cultural differences)
- Review and guided discussion of personal goals, fears and strategies for accomplishing goals and overcoming fears (midway through the semester)
- Activity: Drop-Off experience
- Activity: Drop-Off debrief (following overnight for Semester One and following each of the three (half-day, full-day and overnight) Drop-Off's for Semester Two)
- Maintaining an "Engaging Culture" journal throughout the semester which included: first impressions and reactions assignment; notes from class discussions; thoughts, observations and questions about the culture; notes from guided tours of sites visited; notes from their Drop-Off experience(s)

Student directives for the Drop-Off.

Across every Drop-Off experience (half-day, full day and overnight for Semester Two, overnight only for Semester One), the directives remained consistent with the exception of duration of the Drop-Off.

- The facilitator divided students into groups of 4-5 members per group based upon the following criteria: personality types (i.e. extroverts paired with introverts); no current roommates within the same group; and known friends were divided among different groups.
- Towns were pre-determined according to the previously stated criteria, however locations were not revealed to the groups until immediately before departure for the half-day and full-day Drop-Off experience (Semester Two).
- Transportation for the half-day and full-day (Semester Two) Drop-Off were via the local railway system.
- A coach was hired for transportation to the overnight Drop-Off locations. As an added challenge, students' groups and towns were not revealed until actual arrival in the

assigned town (Semester One and Two). For the overnight Drop-Off (both semesters), the students were collected the next day at a predetermined time and location.

- All individual (smart) phones were collected and each group given one (dumb) emergency phone. No computers or tablets were permitted. This approach was adopted in order to encourage teamwork and prompt students to make face-to-face contact with each other and the townspeople to obtain information, as opposed to searching for information on the Internet. Additionally, no group-to-group contact was permitted.
- Students were asked to bring actual cameras, if they owned one, to document the experience in the absence of phone cameras.
- An envelope of cash was given to each group – enough to provide for their needs based on the length of the Drop-Off. Factors taken into consideration were lodging and meals and miscellaneous expenses. One person per group, who became known as the treasurer, was assigned to disperse cash, track and collect receipts for all expenses incurred during the experience. The treasurer then returned receipts and change for meals, lodging and miscellaneous expenses to the facilitator upon return of the group.
- Groups were instructed regarding pick-up locations or required return times.
- Safety instructions were reviewed and a reminder given to care for one another and appropriate behavior was expected by all group members at all times.
- Students were reminded that they were expected to adopt and maintain a group mentality: in their communications with each another and with the people of their town; in the management of expectations for their group; and for problem-solving amongst the group throughout the experience.
- Students were reminded to practice humble curiosity and the O-SEE (Bernardo & Deardorf, 2012) skills learned in gathering facts, details, and information about the history, culture, character, mood, politics, social issues, and religion of their assigned town.
- Groups were reminded that feelings of disequilibrium are quite normal due to the novelty of the experience and the cultural differences.
- All participants were encouraged to embrace every part of their Drop-Off and to strive for a wonderful and memorable experience.

Further thoughts on organizing the Drop-Off.

Students were to spend the allotted time in their respective assigned towns gathering information from a variety of sources including: interpersonal interactions, tourist boards, pubs, coffee shops, museums, monuments and plaques, churches, hostel and B&B owners and one group even went to a barber shop. No clues were given prior to the experience as to the best way or place to garner information. Students were to uncover the distinctive and unique qualities of their assigned town by investigating how the history, geography, economy, religion, etc. impacted the past and current culture of their town. Team members budgeted and managed their funds to pay for food, lodging and miscellaneous expenses. Groups that demonstrated maximum

productivity planned, problem-solved and prioritized their time and resources. Ideally all Drop-Off experiences should be completed within the first half of the study abroad term.

Debriefing

“Megan organized all of our ideas into a tentative schedule...I kept track of the money...Grant was the optimist who kept spirits high and was always pushing us to do anything spontaneous. Matt brought his Boy Scout skills into practice by always being prepared...and carried his backpack containing all of the essentials wherever we went. Overall, everyone had an equal say in whatever we did and I think we balanced each other well.” –Mara

Almost immediately, students in both semesters were eager to share initial reactions to their experience both personal and group. The director-in-residence encouraged this informal debriefing opportunity. However, a critical component of the Drop-Off, the formal debrief, occurred the day following the experience (or as soon thereafter as possible). During both semesters, the facilitator created a relaxed classroom atmosphere by providing hot drinks, a snack and arranged the classroom so that “town groups” could sit together for reflection. Small notebooks were given to each town group. We prioritized allowing ample time for the participants to respond to questions as town groups and as individuals within the larger group. All questions were first discussed within the “town groups” and then shared amongst the larger group. Debrief questions became more in-depth as the number and length of the Drop-Off experiences increased. Questions for discussion included:

Following the half-day experience (Semester Two).

- List your observations of the town.
- What facts did your group learn about the town?
- What strategies did you use to learn about your town?
- What skills did you/your group use during the experience?
- What did you learn about yourself as part of a team?

Following the full-day experience (Semester Two).

- What are two take-aways from this experience?
- What processes did your group use to learn about your town?
- Think about the processes your group employed that were effective? What did you try that was not effective? How did you have to adapt to gain a better understanding of your town?
- What questions did you develop about your town? What did you want to find out? What did you hope to find out but did not? What were other questions, not only from the objectives, did you asked along the way as you adapted?
- How do you feel about yourself as a result of the experience? (Affective)
- What conclusions do you have about yourself as a result of the experience? (Cognitive)

- What did you learn about your town?
- What was similar/different about your town and your previous town (or your home town)?
- What was similar/different about your town and our base town in Ireland?
- What was distinctive/unique about the culture of the town you visited? Use O-SEE to support your responses.

Following the overnight experience (Semesters One and Two).

- What are two take-aways from the experience?
- What skills did you or the group use during the experience?
- What skills did you develop and/or use for the first time during the experience?
- What processes did you use that were effective? Not effective?
- How do you feel about yourself as a result of the experience? (Affective)
- What conclusions do you have about yourself as a result of the experience? (Cognitive)
- What questions did you develop about your town? What did you want to find out?
- What did you learn about your town?
- How did you work together as a group? What characterized your group?
- What did you learn about yourself as part of a team? What were the group members' roles? What did each member bring to the group?
- What was similar about the culture and people of the town you visited and your home town?
- What was unique or a distinctive aspect about your town using O-SEE (Bernardo & Deardorff, 2012, pp. 58-60) to support your responses?
- What did you do better this time than on the previous Drop-Off's (Semester Two)?

Assignments

To encourage the participants to reflect on the skills they employed and to discover deep appreciation for their Drop-Off town(s), written reflections – while flexible in a majority of the content – were required. Responses contained two elements, “(a) information about the town and how it was derived and (b) a description of the personal learning and investigation process, with specific reference to the cross-cultural skills involved and how they were used” (Batchelder, 1993, pp. 137-138). The reflection assignment requirements increased with the length of the Drop-Off experiences.

The half-day Drop-Off experience assignment (Semester Two). Town groups were assigned to submit a *collective* written (three pages minimum) response:

- Identify a distinctive aspect of their assigned town
- Document facts discovered about their town; supporting all responses with observations.

The full-day Drop-Off experience assignment (Semester Two). Students were assigned to submit an *individual* written (three pages minimum) reaction to the experience and to incorporate:

- Facts, details and information about the town studied
- Personal learning processes utilized and developed
- Include a minimum of three O-SEE examples.

The overnight Drop-Off experience assignment (Semesters One and Two). The overnight Drop-Off was, in a sense, a capstone experience for the students both as groups and individuals. The assignment requirements following the debrief incorporated two components.

Individual reflective paper. A three pages written response to the following:

- What did you learn about yourself as part of this group? In what ways did you have to learn to adapt within the group? (Cognitive focus)
- How do you feel about yourself as a result of the experience? (Affective focus)
- What conclusions do you have about yourself as a result of the experience?
- Personally, what did you come to appreciate and understand about Ireland or the Irish from this experience?
- How have you grown in your listening, observing, relating skills from this experience?
- How are you becoming more ethno-relative and/or less ethnocentric?

Group presentation.

- A presentation lasting 5-7 minutes
- Present all the facts about your town discovered while the group was there in an organized, informational and engaging format (no internet information or internet images accepted) and include the following:
 - O-SEE examples to support your facts
 - A unique aspect about the culture of your town compared to other towns in this country you have visited
 - Information about your town: religion, history, politics, economy, geography, etc.
 - Your overall group reaction to this experience.

Results

“The spirit of this tourist town cannot be understood by reading pamphlets or merely watching the day to day activity – it can only be found in engaging the people of [our town] ...” –Group response

A comparison of the pre-and post-IDI scores over two semesters of freshmen studying abroad is shown in table below. We wondered whether or not there would be a mean gain in the scores over the course of the semester. Every activity – both in and out of the classroom – was designed to aid student growth in intercultural competence. It is

not unreasonable to suggest that the Drop-Off activity played a role in providing students the skills needed to move along the continuum toward a more intercultural mindset.

Table 4

Comparison of Pre-and Post-IDI Scores: First Semester Freshmen Abroad

<i>Semester</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Pre-IDI M</i>	<i>Pre-IDI SD</i>	<i>Post-IDI M</i>	<i>Post-IDI SD</i>	<i>Significance 2-tailed t-test</i>	<i>Cohen's d</i>
S1	23	84.274	14.269	96.934	14.282	0.000***	0.887
S2	12	83.85	6.258	106.535	15.319	0.000***	1.939
Total	35	84.128	12.019	100.226	15.142	0.000***	1.1776

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4 shows pre-test and post-test scores of intercultural competence as measured by the IDI of two freshmen first-semester study abroad groups using a Repeated Measures and Within Subjects Design. We hypothesized that the Drop-Off exercise could be an impetus to growth on the IDI for S1, S2 and the groups combined. Our results indicated a 12.660 mean point gain for S1 which moved this groups' developmental orientation from the cusp of minimization to the middle of minimization. Semester 2 also began at the cusp of minimization and moved solidly into minimization with a 22.672 mean point gain. The total of the combined groups mean change in score was a gain of 16.098 points, again moving from the cusp of minimization to the mid-point of minimization. Minimization is considered to be a transitional orientation between a monocultural and intercultural mindsets. Statistically significant gains for all groups of students (*sig.* 0.000; $p < .001$) are shown in table 4 indicating growth towards intercultural competence as measured by the IDI.

Conclusions

We conclude that a tiered approach: half-day followed by full-day and culminating with the overnight sequence for the Drop-Off, provides students the opportunity to practice and gradually build upon skills acquired. Since our own understanding of the process developed from Semester One to Semester Two, we adjusted the experience by adding the additional, shorter Drop-Off experiences during Semester Two. We recognized that the overnight Drop-Off experience of Semester One would benefit from less of a "sink or swim" approach experiential learning so, Semester Two emphasized more of a gradual approach to learning how to derive information about an unknown town. Our adjustments took into greater consideration the season of the year and weather, town sizes and the differing personalities of the whole group of students each semester.

Secondly, the Drop-Off exercise is replicable and can be repeated with a variety of group sizes. While we only used this exercise in one country, we found it easy to change locations and adjust to a different number of students from Semester One to Semester Two. After familiarizing oneself with Batchelder's (1993) article and carefully choosing suitable towns, a program

director should be well prepared to facilitate the preparatory activities, the actual Drop-Off and the debriefing.

Finally, we conclude that the Drop-Off exercise for both semesters, utilizing the preparatory assignments and activities and followed up with debriefing, may be a successful strategy to increase post-IDI scores therefore demonstrating an increase in students' intercultural competence. A by-product of Batchelder's (1993) original intent for the exercise (field-testing theoretical concepts on the origins of communities), the Drop-Off "participants found themselves experiencing many of the same feelings and personal reactions which they would later encounter overseas in the cross-cultural situation" (p. 135-136). Leveraging the opportunity to help students articulate reactions to cross-cultural experiences such as the Drop-Off through guided reflection, will increase intercultural competence.

As an experiential learning strategy, and accompanied by thoughtful preparation and reflection, the Drop-Off is an excellent pedagogical strategy for fostering growth in intercultural competence.

Discussion

During the overnight Drop-Off experience, the director-in-residence remained in close proximity to all the assigned towns (approximately within an hour drive). Semester One was our first attempt at facilitating the Drop-Off so we stayed in a nearby town as an extra precaution. The students only knew that we were "a phone call away in case of emergency", and not where we were lodging. The students discussed in this article were first-semester freshmen and the overnight Drop-Off occurred midway through the semester abroad. Timing of this activity within the semester also influenced our decision to remain within an hours drive. Students did not indicate that they knew where we were staying or that this affected their experience in any way.

Batchelder did not address the issue of facilitator proximity to the students during the Drop-Off, however, the article was written 25 years ago and times have changed. Personally, the director felt a great responsibility for the students' safety and accountability to their parents and the university. Pragmatically, our Semester One overnight Drop-Off was on the other side of the country – we needed to stay in the same region as we would be collecting the students the next day. We remained vigilant in our responsibility to each student, their families, the university and the program at all times throughout the semester.

Execution of the Drop-Off during Semester One was a big undertaking in planning and preparation. As facilitator, I felt a sense of relief and satisfaction upon completion. This satisfaction was affirmed during the debriefing time as the students revealed their experiences and knowledge gained, then further affirmed by the group gains in intercultural competence as measured by the IDI. Even after the conclusion of the semester and after returning to the home campus, students enthusiastically talked about the Drop-Off activity with future program participants, making the experience a "selling point" of the Irish Studies program.

Implications for Future Studies

An implication for future study might include a compilation of themes from the students' assignments that indicate what specific factors may have contributed to the shift in their frame of reference. Another study might investigate how students may (or may not) apply the components of intercultural competence – tolerance of ambiguity, cultural empathy, cognitive complexity, humble curiosity, humility and suspension of judgement – specifically to the Drop-Off activity.

Yet another implication for future research might be a study of the increase in self-efficacy as a result of the Drop-Off. As one student testified, “I knew that I had not only the desire, but the capability to carry out an adventure, and I want to do it again. Just the fact that I was unsupervised in another country could have been frightening, but it only made me more happy with myself and my group.” Throughout the remainder of the semester, students verbally expressed an increased confidence and enthusiasm for face-to-face interactions with the townspeople as a result of their Drop-Off experience recounting the Drop-Off experience as one highlight of their study abroad semester.

References

- Atkins, M., & Brown, G. (2002). *Effective teaching in higher education*. Routledge.
- Batchelder, D. (1993). The Drop-Off. In Gochenour, T. (Ed.), *Beyond experience: An experiential approach to cross-cultural education* (pp. 135-141). Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Bernardo, K. & Deardorff, D. K. (Eds.). (2012). *Building cultural competence: Innovative activities and models*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Bennett, J. M. (2008). Transformative training: Designing programs for culture learning. In M.A. Moodian (Ed.), *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Understanding and utilizing cultural diversity to build successful organizations* (pp. 95-110). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bennett, J. M. (1986). Towards ethnorelativism: A development model of intercultural sensitivity, pp. 27-70. In R. M. Paige, ed., *Cross-cultural orientation: New conceptualizations and applications*. Boston, MA: University Press of America.
- Crabb, L. & Maloney, V. (2016, June). *Intercultural competence: components and learning strategies within study abroad*. Poster session presented at the conference of the 2016 NAFSA: Association of International Educators, Denver, CO.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2011). Assessing intercultural competence. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2011(149), 65-79.
- Engle, J. & Engle, L. (2004). Assessing language acquisition and intercultural sensitivity development in relation to study abroad program design. *Frontiers: The interdisciplinary journal of study abroad*, 10, 219-236.
- Hammer, M. (2012). The Intercultural Development Inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence. In M. Vande Berg, R.M. Paige, & K.H.

- Lou (Eds.), *Student Learning Abroad* (Ch. 5, pp. 115-136). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Hammer, M. R. (2012/2013). *A resource guide for effectively using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)*. Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC.
- Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The Intercultural Development Inventory. In R. M. Paige (Guest Ed.). Special issue on the Intercultural Development. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(4), 421-443.
- Hoff, J. G. (2008). Growth and transformation outcomes in international education. In V. Savicki (Ed.), *Developing intercultural competence and transformation: Theory, research, and application in international education* (pp. 53-73). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Kolb, D. A. (2014). The process of experiential learning. *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (pp. 20-38). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Lee, L. (2011). Blogging: Promoting learner autonomy and intercultural competence through study abroad. *Language Learning & Technology*, 15(3), 87-109.
- Lewis, L. H., & Williams, C. J. (1994). Experiential learning: Past and present. *New directions for adult and continuing education*, 1994(62), 5-16.
- Lutterman-Aguilar, A. & Gingerich, O. (2002). Experiential pedagogy for study abroad: Educating for global citizenship. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 8(2), 41-82.
- Perry, L. B. & Southwell, L. (2011). Developing intercultural understanding and skills: Models and approaches. *Intercultural Education*, 22(6), 453-466.
- Richlin, L. (2006). *Blueprinting for learning: constructing college courses to facilitate, assess, and document learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Storti, C. (2007). *The art of crossing cultures* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Intercultural Press, Inc.
- The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC™) (n.d.). Retrieved October 17, 2017 from <https://idiinventory.com/products/the-intercultural-development-continuum-idx/>
- Vande Berg, M., Paige, R. M. & Lou, K. H. (Eds.). (2012). *Student learning abroad: What our students are learning, what they're not, and what we can do about it*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Wanner, D. (2009). Study abroad and language: From maximal to realistic models. In R. Lewin (Ed.), *The handbook of practice and research in study abroad: Higher education and the quest for global citizenship* (pp. 81-98). New York, NY: Routledge.
- What is experiential education? (n.d.). Retrieved January 13, 2017, from <http://www.aee.org/what-is-ee>.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the countless contributions of Dr. Vance Maloney, Former Director of the Irish Studies Program, including his vision for and continuous quality improvement of the

Irish Studies Program since 2001. We are grateful for his inspiration and tireless leadership in the area of intercultural competence and for encouraging us to pursue co-writing this article. We also wish to acknowledge and thank all the wonderful students who have participated in the Irish Studies Program and have taught us so much.

About the Authors

Tammera R. Maloney is the former director in residence of the Irish Studies Program located in Greystones, Ireland for Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. She has been a Qualified Administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory since 2014 and is currently completing a thesis for a Masters degree in Higher Education from Taylor University.

Taryn E. Asbury recently completed her undergraduate degree from Taylor University as a Psychology major with an Interpersonal and Public Communication minor. She spent the first semester of her freshman year studying abroad in Ireland. As a result, she began a student research team that examined the key components of intercultural competence development. Taryn is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Higher Education from Virginia Tech. Author Note: Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tammera Maloney, Taylor University, Upland, IN 46989, Email: maloneys79@gmail.com

Bilingual Literacy Development: Trends and Critical Issues

Cristina Ríos, Ph.D. and Catalina Castellón, Ph.D.
Lamar University

Abstract

This article, a literature review of current trends in bi-literacy development and bilingual education examines published research dedicated to exploring the literacy strengths in the primary language that immigrant children bring to the classroom, and the potential of these children for becoming bilingual and bi-literate. The focus of the review is on research concentrated on school children who are developing literacy in two languages or have become literate in Spanish before starting school in an American classroom. The article identifies gaps in the literature and areas that deserve further research.

Keywords: bilingual literacy; bi-literacy development; English learners

This article presents a literature review of research on the development of bi-literacy in school children and examines the current trends on bilingual education. The number of research studies on bilingual literacy and bi-literacy development continues to grow. While some recent investigations build on earlier research, a number of studies explore innovative approaches. We have concentrated on gathering research studies that portrait the major developments in the field published since 1995. The publications reviewed range from large longitudinal studies to qualitative studies involving a small number of English learners. Some published works addressing the views and experiences of recognized experts in the field are also mentioned throughout the article. The authors acknowledge that this is not an exhaustive compilation of the works published on bilingual literacy, but a focused compilation of research covering critical issues on bilingual literacy development. This review was guided by these questions: Does literacy in the primary language stimulate second-language literacy? Which are the best approaches for bi-literacy development?

Does literacy in the primary language stimulate second-language literacy?

In this paper, the term “English learners” refers to children who are learning English as a new language. Statistically, the vast majority of English learners in the United States are Spanish speakers, with roots in Latin America. Manning & Baruth (2009) discussed the dramatic growth of English learners and the impact of this growth in the public schools (p. 172). Data for the school year 2014-15 from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) reflects the fast growth of English learners. NCELA reports that in 2014-15 there were 4,806,662 English learners enrolled in schools across the country; of those, 3,659,501 English learners have Spanish as their primary language. About 18% of these Spanish speaking English learners are first generation immigrants. NCELA data indicates that the states of

California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois have the highest numbers of Spanish speaking English learners (NCELA, 2017). The number of English learners whose primary language is Spanish continues to grow, and public school classrooms reflect this trend.

Several studies have based their analysis on Krashen's discussion of the major three roles that reading has in language improvement for English learners. Krashen (2005) indicates that "reading in the primary language is of great help in promoting second-language literacy." Krashen points out that "free-reading in the second language makes a strong contribution to advanced second-language development" and concludes that "free reading in the heritage language appears to make a strong contribution to continued heritage-language development" (pp. 66-67).

A number of studies have been published on the challenges faced by monolingual and emergent bilingual immigrant children in U.S. public schools and the approaches to teach language and literacy to English learners (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, E. García, Asato, Gutierrez, Stritikus, & Curry, 2000; G. Garcia & Beltran, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2011). The level of L1 literacy of immigrant children varies depending on multiple factors such as age, years of schooling in L1, quality of the schools, teachers, curriculum, reading comprehension, access to books, and home literacy. They have in common the knowledge of their primary language, and many also possess both some academic skills in L1, and emergent literacy in the first language. Upon entering to school, these children have the potential to become bilingual and bi-literate. However, if the valuable emergent literacy these children possess is not nurtured, or if it is suppressed, they are in danger of both losing their literacy skills in L1 and having many difficulties in acquiring literacy in the new language, L2.

Wong-Fillmore & Valadez (2000) have stated, referring to English learners, that "in order to become true bilinguals these children must hang onto and develop their knowledge of the native language as they acquire English" (p.258, para. 2). These authors warn that "the learning of English all too often means the loss of the L1... For many of them, the price paid for learning English is the mother tongue and their cultural identity" (p.259, para. 1). Cummins (2001) has arrived at a similar conclusion, indicating that many parents do not realize "how quickly children can lose their ability to use their mother tongues" if the primary language is not supported in the school and at home "children can lose their ability to communicate in their mother tongue within 2-3 years of starting school" (p. 19, para. 2). While immigrant children with a well-established primary language might not completely lose their oral competencies in L1, their academic skills and literacy in L1 will certainly deteriorate if they stop reading and writing in their first language. Thomas & Collier (2011) indicate that research studies have demonstrated that "children whose first language use is stopped or slowed down before age 12 may experience cognitive slowdown; whereas those whose first language is continuously developed through at least age 12 have cognitive advantages" (p. 2, para. 3). In her study of emergent bi-literacy in young children, I. Reyes (2006) found that "when children have access to writing systems and to various literacy activities in both languages, they are more likely to become bi-literate" (p. 289, para. 1).

The primary language is a valuable resource for English learners' development of English language abilities and literacy, as has been demonstrated by numerous research studies. When English learners have already acquired reading and writing skills in their first language (L1), they own a treasure of linguistic resources, cultural strengths, and academic foundations, which should support learning a second-language and the acquisition of English literacy (Cummins 2000, 2001, 2005; Collier & Thomas, 2007; Ernst-Slavit & Mulhern, 2003; Krashen, 1997, 2004, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 1999, 2003; Wong-Fillmore & Valadez, 2000).

The National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth concurred with the research we have cited, arriving to the conclusion that literacy in the first-language is correlated to literacy development in English, stating that "there is clear evidence that tapping into first-language literacy can confer advantages to English-language learners... the research indicates that instructional programs work when they provide opportunities for students to develop proficiency in their first language" (August & Shanahan, 2006, p. 5, para. 2-5). This national panel of 13 experts worked for 4 years examining hundreds of research studies, under rigorous criteria.

Are schools meeting the needs of English learners?

The literature suggests that the knowledge, skills, and abilities that immigrant children bring to school are in many cases overlooked or considered of no value by the teachers and school administrators. In some instances, the baggage of prior knowledge and L1 literacy is seen as a liability and bilingualism is discouraged (Thomas & Collier, 1999; Cummins, 1996, 2000, 2001; Griego-Jones & Fuller, 2003; Nieto, 2000; M. L. Reyes, 2000). Several recognized authors in the field narrate incidents in which a school teacher has advised Spanish-speaking parents to stop speaking Spanish to their child, so the child could better learn English. These teachers did not consider that if the parents did not speak to their children in Spanish, which was the only language they could use fluently, the parents' communication with the child would be broken. Several researchers have found that these situations continue to occur in our public schools. Nieto & Bode (2010) stated that "...it is common practice in schools to try to convince parents whose native language is other than English that they should speak only English with their children" (p. 403, para. 3). Nieto (2000) discusses the results of a countrywide survey, conducted by the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), which found that "serious disruptions of family relations occurred when young children learned English in school and lost their native language" (p. 202, para 3, citing NABE News). When the home language is not valued in the school, some children become reluctant to continue using their primary language. As we have noted elsewhere, this language loss can have far-reaching negative effects as the internal communication and relationships within the family are disrupted.

An important factor to consider is the vast cultural heritage and values that are part of the identities of immigrant children and their families, which on many occasions are disregarded by schools and teachers. Wong-Fillmore & Valadez (2000) have emphasized that these students and their families "have enormous cultural resources and talent to contribute to their adopted society" (p.259, para. 1). While relating her childhood experiences, Nieto (2000) recalls the low

expectations of some of her teachers and how she encountered stereotypes that fostered the notion that the Spanish language and culture were substandard. “I assumed, as many of my peers did, that there was something wrong with us. We learned to feel ashamed of who we were, how we spoke, what we ate, and everything else that was different about us” (p. 1, para. 3). According to E. Garcia (2002) “The assumptions a teacher makes about the student’s culture, whether right or wrong, may stereotype the student and thus preclude the flexible, realistic, and open-minded teacher-student interaction needed for effective instruction” (p. 76, para. 1).

Research shows that there are erroneous notions about literacy development ingrained in the minds of some educators. English learners who can read with fluency in Spanish are sometimes discouraged by teachers of continuing reading in their primary language due to mistaken notions that reading in Spanish will prevent them from learning to read in English. Cummins (2005) discusses the existing misconceptions about language development and how these mistaken views have impacted the teaching of reading and the instruction of English learners. The authors of this article have encountered teachers totally convinced that English learners should not read in their primary language. Parents of English learners have told us that school personnel have advised them not to let their children read anything in Spanish. One, for example, recounted her experience with her daughter’s teacher as follows: “*A Elenita le encanta leer, se pasaba la tarde leyendo. Le escondí los libros que trajimos de México, la maestra me dijo que si sigue leyendo en español no va a aprender inglés.*” (“Elenita loves reading; she used to spend the whole afternoon reading. I had to hide the books we brought from Mexico; her teacher told me that if she continues reading in Spanish she will not learn English”). [Personal communication].

Research studies indicate that conversations like the one above are, unfortunately, frequent. Parents of English learners want the best for their children: they want their children to learn English, and in most cases they believe that the teacher is the expert in language learning. Teacher preparation programs thus have the responsibility to ensure that every teacher candidate understands how languages are learned. Teachers need to be aware that reading skills transfer across languages. Sometimes schools tend to focus on remediation of English learners and assess them from a “deficit perspective” instead of valuing the richness of their primary language, cultural strengths, and the knowledge they have previously acquired, forgetting that “these students often arrive with a wealth of life experiences, including age-appropriate thinking, richly expressed in primary language” (Thomas & Collier, 1999, p. 46, para. 3). Soltero-González, Escamilla & Hopewell (2012) propose a holistic bilingual approach in order to properly assess the writing skills of emerging bilingual children. The authors point out the need for modifying teachers’ perceptions about bi-literacy.

Curriculum & Instruction that Supports Bi-literacy

There is abundant research indicating the positive effects of the continuous development of the primary languages of English learners as they are in the process of learning English as a new language (Collier & Thomas, 2007; Goldenberg, 2008, 2013; Krashen, 1997; I. Reyes,

2006). Krashen (1997) asserts that when English learners receive quality education in L1, schools are providing these children with content knowledge and literacy skills. “The knowledge that children get through their first language helps make the English they hear and read more comprehensible. Literacy developed in the primary language transfers to the second language” (Krashen, 1997, p. 2, para 1). Other researchers arrived to similar conclusions; Collier and Thomas (2007) have pointed out that, for English learners in the primary grades, the linguistic gains in the first language transfer to the second language and the content knowledge acquired through L1 becomes a knowledge base that will support academic development in L2. Collier and Thomas stress that “When schooling is provided in both L1 and L2, both languages are the vehicle for strong cognitive and academic development” (p. 341, para. 1). English learners can use their literacy skills in the Spanish language to understand features of the English language.

Cummins (2005) asserts that there are “many possibilities for cross-linguistic language exploration” and indicates that “The Latin or Greek origins of academic vocabulary in English also means that there are many cognates between this vocabulary and the vocabulary of Spanish and other Romance languages” (p.24, para. 4). Cummins refers to Coxhead (2000) who had recommended the study of prefixes, suffixes and stems for learning academic vocabulary, given that more than 82% of academic words used in English come from the Greek or Latin (p.24). The academic repertoire of words that immigrant English learners might already know and be able to recognize is an important source for expanding their content knowledge and learning English. Research demonstrates the importance of helping students make cross-language connections (Soltero-González, Sparrow, Butvilofsky, Escamilla, & Hopewell, 2016; Sparrow, Butvilofsky, Escamilla, Hopewell & Tolento, 2014).

Wong-Fillmore & Valadez (2000) believe that bilingual education “offers children a chance to become bilingual without giving up their cultural identities... and to enjoy the social and cognitive benefits that bilingualism offers to individuals” (p. 258, para. 2). Cummins (2001) concurs on the advantages of bilingualism stating: “Bilingualism has positive effects on children’s linguistic and educational development” (p. 17, para 4). Bilingualism is an asset and should be valued by teachers and schools. Proficiency in the primary language is a key factor that supports the development of literacy skills in a new language. English learners should be encouraged to build upon the skills they have in their primary language. If these English learners keep increasing their primary language literacy as they develop academic language proficiency in English, they have the possibility of becoming bilingual and bi-literate (Dworin, 2003; G. Garcia & Beltran, 2005; Hopewell & Escamilla, 2014).

When a child enjoys reading and is engaged in voluntary and self-selected free reading, the child has a valuable resource for academic achievement. Immigrant children who are avid readers have in their books a link to their roots, culture, family and friends left behind. Literature in the primary language should be encouraged and facilitated for these children. According to Krashen (1997), reading in one language will support learning to read in the second language “Children who arrive with a good education in their primary language have already gained two

of the three objectives of a good bilingual education program -- literacy and subject matter knowledge” (p. 3, para 2).

G. Garcia & Beltran (2005) point out that the primary language “permits children to use their full language repertoire to help them acquire a second language” and there is evidence that “conceptual understanding is greatly enhanced when supported by the child’s primary language; this language link to the home provides a comfort zone” that can help students achieve success (p. 215, para. 3).

Many English learners will become “Sequential Bilinguals,” as defined by Trumbull & Pacheco (2005): “Sequential Bilingual - A person who has learned a second language after the first language is established” (p.71, para. 1). The ideal would be that they also become bi-literate. Researchers agree that: “if children continue to have access to and opportunities to function in both languages and writing systems, they will be more likely to maintain and continue to develop their bilingualism and bi-literacy” (I. Reyes, 2006, p. 289, para. 1). Nevertheless, as Krashen (1997) determined, English learners do not always have access to reading and educational materials in both languages. In many instances, the school environment and learning resources available exclude the culture and language of the child’s home. English learners who learn to read in both L1 and L2 develop important skills that provide the foundations of academic success. Research supports the importance of bilingual academic language development for these children (Cummins, 2000, 2001, 2005; Hopewell & Escamilla, 2014).

When English learners have the opportunity of developing literacy skills in both languages their academic potential increases. If a child has developed literacy skills in Spanish and is involved in self-selected reading of newspapers, magazines, comic books, fiction, stories and books in Spanish; these reading activities should not be discouraged (Krashen, 1997, 2004; Krashen & Mason, 2015). The enjoyment of reading in one language will transfer to the new language. Exposure to interesting reading material in both languages supports bilingual literacy development. In other words, literacy activities in the primary language will support learning English and the development of academic language skills when English learners start school in the United States.

Ernst-Slavit & Mulhern (2003) support the use of bilingual books for fostering bilingual literacy. Bilingual books are particularly useful for English learners and sequential bilingual children. The availability of bilingual resources and bilingual books continues to increase. There are a number of publishers dedicated to produce culturally relevant bilingual literature for children that genuinely portray the Latino culture. There is a comprehensive range of bilingual literature for different age levels and about countless topics. As English learners gain literacy skills in their new language, they should be able to enjoy reading books in both their first and second language. English learners should have access to a variety of high quality and interesting literature in both L1 and L2; if they find pleasure in reading, they will have more chances of succeeding in school. Reading is central to increasing school achievement and test scores in every subject. Krashen (1997) emphasizes the importance of the availability of literary resources

in the school and at home. He has stated that the main problem with bilingual education “is the absence of books--in both the first and second languages -- in the lives of students in these programs” (Krashen, 1997, p. 4, para 5). The availability of books in L1, L2, and bilingual books enables voluntary reading. “Free voluntary reading can help all components of bilingual education: It can be a source of comprehensible input in English or a means for developing knowledge and literacy through the first language, and for continuing first language development” (Krashen, 1997, p. 5 para. 1).

Cummins (2001) has highlighted the benefits of dual language acquisition indicating that elementary school children who develop literacy in more than one language obtain “deeper understanding of language and how to use it effectively. They have more practice in processing language, especially when they develop literacy in both, and they are able to compare and contrast the ways in which their two languages organize reality” (Cummins, 2001, p. 17, para. 5). Other experts agree: “proficient bilinguals (who develop written as well as oral proficiency in both languages) outscore monolinguals on many types of measures-especially in measures of creativity and problem-solving” (Thomas & Collier, 2011, p. 2, para. 3).

Models of Instruction for Bi-literacy Development

A wide range of instructional models and strategies there have been implemented to instruct English learners and this is reflected in the research studies reviewed. Among the pedagogical methodologies with documented success are the dual language bilingual approaches and the paired literacy instructional models. In a dual language program, English learners are taught in academic content in both L1 and L2. Dual language programs can be implemented either as a one-way or a two-way program, depending on the demographics. In the one-way model, most of the students are English learners whereas in the two-way model, native speakers of Spanish and native speakers of English are instructed together in both languages. Most of the dual language programs use Spanish and English, given that the majority of English learners in the U.S. have Spanish as their L1 language (NCELA, 2017), but there are dual language programs that pair English with another language, such as Vietnamese, Mandarin, Arabic, French, or others. In classrooms with multiple languages dual language programs are not feasible. This review is focused on bilingual Spanish-English programs.

Thomas & Collier (2011) determined that dual language programs are effective for English learners and that these programs are able to close the achievement gap of English learners faster than other instructional approaches: “current strategies that close the gap in the shortest amount of time possible are found in dual language programs, in which English learners are receiving the curriculum at least half of the instructional time through their mother tongue and the other half in English” (p. 1, para. 3). School children who are literate in Spanish when entering an American school will benefit from a dual language program; they can continue developing their primary language in school, and use their first language as a foundation for becoming literate in English. Sleeter & Grant (2009) assert that dual language programs

“promote full academic competence in two languages among both immigrant and native-English speaking students” (p. 29, para 2).

Dual language programs give students the opportunity to become bilingual, bi-literate, and develop bi-cultural competences. Numerous research studies demonstrate that dual language programs are ideal for immigrant elementary school children who have achieved basic literacy in Spanish and have learned to read and write in their primary language before entering school in the United States. These children can continue acquiring content knowledge in their primary language and reading for academic purposes and for pleasure while learning English as a new language (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Collier & Thomas, 2007; Kibler, Salerno, & Hardigree, 2014; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2003).

Research by Thomas & Collier (2003) reveals that in a dual language classroom “English learners have an opportunity to make faster-than-average progress on grade-level instruction that is not watered down” (p. 61, para. 2). Thomas & Collier have studied the effects of dual language programs for years and have asserted that English learners are better served by the dual bilingual education model. Research has demonstrated that in well implemented dual language programs children can reach high academic achievement in both languages (Thomas & Collier, 1999, pp. 46- 47).

Several research studies have examined the effectiveness of paired literacy models which deliver literacy instruction in Spanish and English; with an emphasis in the importance of cross-language connections and high quality literacy instruction in both languages. Results of longitudinal research studies using the paired literacy model “*Literacy Squared*” support the benefits of simultaneous literacy development, reading and writing, in both languages (Soltero-González, et al., 2016; Sparrow, et al., 2014). The benefits of metalinguistic awareness have demonstrated in a number of research studies. Beeman & Urow (2013, 2017) have studied the implementation of “*The Bridge*” approach in which the teacher helps students recognize the differences and similarities between L1 and L2 and to understand the metalinguistic connections. Several studies denote the need of appropriate bilingual assessment for English learners. Researchers indicate that the development of bilingual assessment instruments is crucial in the classroom and for further research purposes (Soltero-González, et al., 2012; Sparrow, et al., 2014).

The National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth, after a rigorous research examination, found that “studies that compare bilingual instruction with English-only instruction demonstrate that language-minority students instructed in their native language as well as in English perform better, on average, on measures of English reading proficiency than language-minority students instructed only in English” (August & Shanahan, 2006, p. 5, para. 5). Following the publication of the findings of the *National Literacy Panel*, experts in the field analyzed the panel’s conclusions and recommendations. Goldenberg (2008) remarked that the national panel was “the latest of five meta-analyses that reached the same conclusion: learning to read in the home language promotes reading achievement in the second language” (p. 15, para. 2). Other researchers questioned if educational policies that prevent English learners to become

bi-literate would change. “Given this knowledge, will federal/state/local policies encourage the implementation and study of multiple approaches to the education of language minority students? Or will we continue to see the current trend toward policy initiatives that privilege and mandate monolingual approaches?” were some of the questions raised by Escamilla, (2009) in her review of the findings of the national panel (p. 451, para. 3). Experts in the field have pointed out that the research findings were conclusive and that policy and practice should be guided by the research evidence, but research demonstrate that this is not always the case. Goldenberg (2008) expressed the concern that despite the conclusive results of five different meta-analyses, educational policies in several states disregard the scientific evidence. The use of the first language continues to be avoided in many classrooms and English learners do not always receive the instructional modifications needed.

Trends and Further Study

The literature reviewed demonstrates the many complexities and paradigms in bilingual education. Researchers in the field continue to seek better approaches for bi-literacy development, the research reviewed exhibits some consistent findings on “best practices” in bilingual education. A major premise found in the literature is that the transfer of literacy skills from one language to another language occurs, so that literacy in both L1 and L2 should be supported and encouraged. It is widely recognized in the literature that bilingual literacy is an advantage and that there are many life-long benefits in becoming bilingual and bi-literate. A bicultural curriculum that supports bilingualism and bi-literacy requires culturally competent teachers able to help children make cross-language connections; these teachers must understand bi-literacy development and bilingual assessment (Collier & Thomas, 2007; Cortina, Makar, & Mount-Cors, 2015; Kibler, Salerno, & Hardigree, 2014; Soltero-González, et al., 2016; Sparrow, et al., 2014; Thomas & Collier, 1999, 2003).

Our review elucidates that the study of bi-literacy development is an evolving field. There is a growing body of literature concerned with the implementation of bilingual pedagogical approaches that provide connections across the languages and appropriate assessment practices for English learners. Likewise, there is an enormous need for further research studies, quantitative and qualitative, in the field of bilingual education, bi-literacy development, and related areas. Additional research is needed on the preparation of effective teachers for English learners, especially of teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach in dual language classrooms, able to provide metalinguistic awareness and assessment in both languages. As a final point, perhaps one of the most crucial issues is that educational policies at state and national levels must be influenced by the research findings.

References

- Alanis, I., & Rodriguez, M. A. (2008). Sustaining a dual language immersion program: Features of success. *Journal of Latinos & Education*, 7(4), 305-319.

- August, D., & Shanahan, T. (2006). Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the national literacy panel on language minority children and youth. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Beeman, K., & Urow, C. (2013). *Teaching for bi-literacy: Strengthening bridges between languages*. Philadelphia: Caslon Publishing.
- Beeman, K., & Urow, C. (2017). Making Metalinguistic Connections: The Bridge between languages. *Soleado: A Publication of Dual Language Education of New Mexico*, Winter 2017.
- Collier, V., & Thomas, W. (2007). Predicting second language academic success in English using the Prism Model. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching*, Part 1 (pp. 333-348). New York: Springer.
- Cortina, R., Makar, C., & Mount-Cors, M. F. (2015). Dual language as a social movement: Putting languages on a level playing field. *Current Issues In Comparative Education*, 17(1), 5-16.
- Cummins, J. (1996). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society*. Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education.
- Cummins, J. (2000). The two faces of language proficiency. In J. Noel (Ed.), *Notable selections in multicultural education* (pp. 244-252). Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.
- Cummins, J. (2001). Bilingual children's mother tongue: Why is it important for education? *Sprogforum: Journal of Language and Culture Pedagogies*, 7 (19), 15-20.
- Cummins, J. (2005). Reading and the bilingual student: Fact and friction. In G. Garcia (Ed.), *English learners reaching the highest level of English*. (pp. 2-33). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/MerrilPrentice Hall.
- Dworin, J. (2003). Insights into bi-literacy development: Toward a bidirectional theory of bilingual pedagogy, *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 2(2): 171–86.
- Ernst-Slavit, G., & Mulhern, M. (2003). Bilingual books: Promoting literacy and biliteracy in the second-language and mainstream classroom, *Reading Online*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279976909_Bilingual_books_Promoting_literacy_and_biliteracy_in_the_second-language_and_mainstream_classroom
- Gándara, P., Maxwell-Jolly, J., García, E., Asato, J., Gutierrez, K., Stritikus, T., & Curry, J. (2000). *The initial impact of Proposition 227 on the instruction of English learners*. Santa Barbara, CA: Linguistic Minority Research Institute.
- Garcia, E. (2002). *Student cultural diversity: Understanding and meeting the challenge* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Garcia, G., & Beltran, D. (2005). Re-visioning the blueprint: Building for the academic success of English learners. In G. Garcia (Ed.), *English learners reaching the highest level of English*. (pp. 197-226). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/MerrilPrentice Hall.
- Goldenberg, C. (2008). Teaching English language learners: What the research does—and does not—say. *American Educator*, 32(2), 8-44.

- Goldenberg, C. (2013). Unlocking the research on English learners: What we know—and don't yet know—about effective instruction. *American Educator*, 37, 4-11.
- Griego-Jones, T., & Fuller, M. L. (2003). *Teaching Hispanic children*. Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.
- Hopewell, S., & Escamilla, K. (2014). Struggling reader or emerging bi-literate student? Reevaluating the criteria for labeling emerging bilingual students as low achieving. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 46(1), 68-89. doi:10.1177/1086296X13504869
- Kibler, A., Salerno, A., & Hardigree, C. (2014). More than being in a class: Adolescents' ethnolinguistic insights in a Two-Way Dual-Language program. *Language and Education*, 28(3), 251-275.
- Krashen, S. (1997). Why bilingual education? *ERIC Digest: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools Charleston WV*. ERIC Identifier: ED403101. Retrieved from <http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/FullText/WhyBilingualEdKrashen.pdf>
- Krashen, S. (2004). *The power of reading* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Publishing Company.
- Krashen, S. (2005). Three roles for reading for minority-language children. In G. Garcia (Ed.), *English learners reaching the highest level of English*. (pp. 55-70). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/MerrilPrentice Hall.
- Krashen, S. 2011. Protecting students against the effects of poverty: Libraries. *New England Reading Association Journal* , 46 (2): 17-21.
- Krashen, S., & Mason, B. (2015). Can second language acquirers reach high levels of proficiency through self-selected reading? An attempt to confirm Nation's (2014) results. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 10 (2): 10-19.
- Lindholm-Leary, K. (2012). Success and challenges in dual language education. *Theory into Practice*, 51(4), 256-262.
- Manning, M. L., & Baruth, L. G. (2009). *Multicultural education of children and adolescents* (5th Ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.
- NCELA. (2017). National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. *Sources for English learner (EL) Data*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncela.us/sources-english-learner-el-data>
- Nieto, S. (2000). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Nieto, S., & Bode, P. (2010). School reform and student learning. In J. A. Banks & C. M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (7th ed., pp. 395-415). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Reyes, I. (2006). Exploring connections between emergent biliteracy and bilingualism. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. Vol. 6(3) 267–292.
- Reyes, M. L. (2000). Unleashing possibilities: Biliteracy in the primary grades. In M.L. Reyes and J.J. Halcón (eds), *Best for our children: Critical perspectives on literacy for Latino students*, (pp. 96–121). New York: Teachers College Press.

- Sleeter, C. E., & Grant, C. A. (2009). *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Soltero-González, L., Escamilla, K., & Hopewell, S. (2012). Changing teachers' perceptions about the writing abilities of emerging bilingual students: Towards a holistic bilingual perspective on writing assessment. *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, 15(1), 71-94. doi:10.1080/13670050.2011.604712
- Soltero-González, L., Sparrow, W., Butvilofsky, S., Escamilla, K., & Hopewell, S. (2016). Effects of a paired literacy program on emerging bilingual children's biliteracy outcomes in third grade. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 48(1), 80-104. DOI:10.1177/1086296X16653842.
- Sparrow, W., Butvilofsky, S., Escamilla, K., Hopewell, S., & Tolento, T. (2014). Examining the longitudinal biliterate trajectory of emerging bilingual learners in a paired literacy instructional model. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 37:1, 24-42, DOI: 10.1080/15235882.2014.893271
- Trumbull, E., & Pacheco, M. (2005). *The teacher's guide to diversity: Building a knowledge base*. Vol. II: Language. Providence, RI: The Education Alliance at Brown University.
- Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (1999). Accelerated schooling for English language learners. *Educational Leadership*, 56(7), 46.
- Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2003). The multiple benefits of dual language. *Educational Leadership*, 61(2), 61.
- Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2011). Drs. Thomas and Collier share the educational implications of their research on dual language programs. *ESL Globe*, 8(1), 1-2. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University. Retrieved from <http://www.thomasandcollier.com/>
- Wong-Fillmore, L., & Valadez, C. (2000). Teaching bilingual learners. In J. Noel (Ed.), *Notable selections in multicultural education* (pp. 244-252). Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

About the Authors

Cristina Ríos is a faculty member in the College of Education and Human Development at Lamar University in Texas. She teaches School Law for Teachers, Research Methodology, Curriculum Design, and Diversity Issues. Her research focuses on higher education policy issues at an international level. Dr. Ríos has conducted extensive comparative research on quality assurance in higher education in México, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Catalina Castellón is a Professor in the Department of English and Modern Languages at Lamar University in Texas. She teaches Spanish language at all levels as well as courses in literature, culture, and civilization of Spain and the Americas. Besides topics on bilingual/bicultural pedagogy, her research interests are on Hispanic Literature in the US, Baroque and Neobaroque artistic expressions, Globalization and Cultural Studies, and Folkloric manifestations in Galicia, Spain.



Journal Description

International Research and Review is the official journal of the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. It is a multidisciplinary journal whose primary objectives are to: (1) recognize, disseminate and share the scholarship of our members with the global academic community; (2) provide a forum for the advancement of academic inquiry and dialogue among all members and stakeholders; and (3) cultivate support for international education among campus leadership by working with university administrators to expand the support for international education among campus leaders.

IRR is a peer-reviewed electronic journal providing a forum for scholars and educators to engage in a multi-disciplinary exchange of ideas, to address topics of mutual concern, and to advocate for policies that enhance the international dimension of higher education. Articles should focus on studies and systematic analyses that employ qualitative, quantitative, a mixture of both methods, and theoretical methodologies from an international scope. Both pedagogical and andragogical perspectives in teaching and learning are welcome.

The Journal reaches out to an audience involved in matters touching all areas of international education, including theoretical, empirical, and normative concerns and concepts as well as practices. It includes stakeholders, practitioners, advocates, as well as faculty, independent researchers, staff, and administrators of programs and institutions engaged in the field. The editors welcome manuscripts that address the following concerns:

International studies and perspectives
Review of current literature pertaining to international studies
Initiatives and impacts in international education exchange
International program development at American colleges and universities
Internationalizing of curricula: policies, programs, practices, and impacts
International business education
Comparative international education issues
Curriculum development in area studies
Legal issues in the development of international programming
Other related topics

Peer – Review Process

All manuscripts will be forwarded to the Editor for initial review of its relevance of theme, significance, and over-all quality. Manuscripts which fit the aim and scope of the Journal, and are of sufficient quality, will then be forwarded to two anonymous reviewers. At the end of the review process, authors will be notified of any comments that the reviewers have made. They will also make a recommendation regarding whether to accept, revise and resubmit, or reject the paper.

Publication Frequency

The IRR is intended to be published once per year, but will be published more often as additional articles are received. The Proceedings of Phi Beta Delta will be a separate publication of Phi Beta Delta. It will include conference papers, speeches, commentary, and other information about the society.

Open Access Policy

This journal provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge. The journal will be published solely on-line.

Copyright Notice

Authors hold the copyright of articles published in the IRR. Request to reprint IRR articles in other journals will be addressed to the author. Reprints must credit Phi Beta Delta and the IRR as the original publisher and include the URL of the IRR publication. Permission is hereby granted to copy an article, provided IRR is credited and copies are not sold.

Indexing

Articles published in the IRR will be disseminated by the EBSCOHost Databases to libraries, ERIC Clearinghouse, and other of the clients.

Author Guidelines

International Research and Review is the official journal of the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. It is a multidisciplinary journal that (1) welcomes submission of manuscripts reflecting research representing *all areas of study* that promote the international and global dimensions of institutions programs (including both policy, practice, and debates) and individual experience of engaging in international education; (2) welcomes articles on current issues of the day regarding

international education: the practice, curriculum, institutional issues, faculty and administration management, and cultural aspects and; (3) welcomes book reviews, and reviews or critiques of current literature.

The increasing interest in international opportunities and promotion of scholarship in this shrinking world create new challenges. This purpose of such a publication is to contribute and engage in the conversation related to the broad frames of international education, internationalization, and international scholars. It is hoped that the Phi Beta Delta annual conference and will provide an environment where students, staff, faculty and interested groups can highlight their scholarship in these areas. The conference also serves as a forum for acquiring new ideas, conceptualizations, best practices, as well as discussion on these and other issues of international education.

Research articles may employ qualitative, quantitative, plural (mixed-methods), and theoretical methodologies from an international scope. Both pedagogical and andragogical perspectives on the international experience of teaching, learning, and cross-cultural interchange are welcome. It is recommended that manuscripts be submitted with less than 10,000 words. Articles should use the bibliographic and formatting standards found in the **APA 6th edition (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition)**.

Authors whose articles are accepted for publication are required to ensure that their data are fully accessible. Authors of quantitative empirical articles must make their data available for replication purposes. A statement of how that is done must appear in the first footnote of the article. Required material would include all data, specialized computer programs, program recodes, and an explanatory file describing what is included and how to reproduce the published results. The IRR is published four times a year on-line by Phi Beta Delta, Honor Society of International Scholars.

Please send your submissions to the Director of Publications at: IRR@phibetadelta.org

Submission Preparation Checklist

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these requirements.

1. The submission has not been previously published, nor is it before another journal for consideration.
2. The submission file is in Microsoft Word document file format.
3. All URL addresses in the text are activated and ready to click.
4. The text is double-spaced; uses a 12-point font; *employs italics*, rather than underlining (except with URL addresses); and all illustrations, figures, and tables are placed within the text at the appropriate points, rather than at the end.
5. The text adheres to the stylistic and bibliographic requirements of the APA, 6th edition. (**Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition**).

Your submission should contain the following:

- **Name, institute affiliation, mailing address, and email address for all authors**
- Paper title
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Introduction
- Body of paper
- Tables, figures, etc. (if applicable)
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- Brief bio of each author (one paragraph, no more than 100 words)
- References

Nota bene: Below are some issues authors should attend to:

1. Use quotation " " marks for all direct citations of material from your sources.
2. Citations in text from a book should include the page number as (author, date, p. #).
3. Citations from an on-line source must cite the paragraph: (author, date, para. #).
4. Use *italics* when you want to emphasize concepts or words.
5. Use the *automatic* hyphenation function to keep the character and word spacing at a minimum. In Microsoft Word, users can automatically hyphenate documents by altering the options within the program. The location of the automatic hyphenation option varies depending on the version of Word you are using. In Microsoft Word versions 2007 and 2010, it is found by clicking on Page Layout, Page Setup box, hyphenation. In Microsoft Word 2003, it is located in the "Tools" menu under "Language." Automatic hyphenation is also available in earlier versions of Microsoft Word. Reference the Help menu in the program you're using if you need help with either automatic or manual hyphenation.