MEASURING INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC
COLLEGE STUDENTS: THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

By

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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To my Mom, for breaking the emic grid.

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As societies evolve with shared purpose and varying societies continue to develop long-term economic relationships with other cultures, the need for increased competency in developing widespread, interculturally sensitive communication skills becomes more essential. The purpose of this inquiry is to closely examine potential disparities between levels of intercultural sensitivity among three groups of participants: international students, domestic students with international travel experience, and domestic students without international travel experience. The study will focus in on particular characteristics or experiences that may affect an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity. The benefits of positive intercultural interactions, and intercultural sensitivity are numerous. They allow for beneficial experiences to occur inside and outside of the classroom setting, and as well as prepare future global citizens for successful intercultural interactions as they take their place in the age of globalization.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

As societies evolve with shared purpose and varying societies continue to develop long-term economic relationships with other cultures, the need for increased competency in developing widespread, interculturally sensitive communication skills becomes more essential. As these societies are continually becoming more intertwined and more dependent on modern technology, Gergen (1991) identifies seven technologies that make up this trend of interdependence: railroad, mail, automobile, telephone, radio, motion pictures, and commercial publishing. Zhong (2000) adds that "television and computer, Internet in particular" can be placed on the list "because both are revolutionary in terms of their influence on modern society and human communication behaviors" (p. 35). As Gergen (1991) further states "each of these technologies brought people into increasingly close proximity, exposed them to an increasing range of others, and fostered a range of relationships that could never have occurred before" (p. 53).

The Internet plays a massive role in today's world of globalization, allowing people to communicate via email, internet telephone and instant messaging in real time, as well as experience things they otherwise could not. However, one thing the Internet cannot provide is the authenticity and experience of a face-to-face intercultural interaction; now a daily occurrence throughout most of the world. In order to be successful in these communications, it is necessary to have knowledge of and respect for cultural differences, and understand how they affect one's interaction skills and behavior. With immigration into the United States on a continuous upward climb since the 1970s (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), it is not hard to encounter individuals from cultural backgrounds different from our own.

The foreign-born population of the United States currently totals 33.1 million, which is equal to 11.5% of the total U.S. population, the highest percentage in 70 years. (Camarota, 2002). "The top ten countries of birth for immigrants in 2005 were Mexico (161,445), India (84,681), China (69,967), the Philippines (60,748), Cuba (36,261), Vietnam (32,784), the Dominican Republic (27,504), Korea (26,562), Columbia (25,571), and Ukraine (22,761). (Migration Policy Institute, 2006, p. 2). The Center for Immigration Studies (2005) states, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the United States will increase to more than 400 million in less than 50 years, a projection made based on immigration data. These immigrants come from all over the world, and for a variety of reasons.

The education system of the United States will feel this impact in the changes that must be made to accommodate these incoming children, who, for the most part, do not speak English as a first language. This also holds true for the number of school-aged immigrants and school-aged children of immigrants, which account for 9.7 million, or 18.3% of all school-aged children in the United States (Camarota, 2002). An interesting characteristic of these younger immigrants is that they learn and use English quickly, and it usually replaces their native language. According to Rubén G. Rumbaut, professor of sociology and co-director of the Center for Research on Immigration, Population, and Public Policy at the University of California-Irvine, "young immigrants (those ages 5 to 17) almost always are speaking English over their native tongues by adulthood." (Kent and Lalasz, 2006, n.p.). Though there are young immigrants who are speaking English over their native tongues by adulthood; there are, however, millions who still speak a language other than English at home. Kent and Lalaz (2006) purport that "the number of Americans speaking a language at home other than English has more than doubled

since 1980, reflecting the influx of millions of immigrants to the United States in recent decades, particularly Spanish-speaking immigrants from Latin America." (n.p.).

Although English speakers account for 82.1% of the U.S. population, the second most spoken language in the United States is Spanish, with 10.7% of the population speaking it at home. (mla.org, 2005). Following English and Spanish, the third most spoken language in the U.S. is French, with .61% of the population speaking, followed by Chinese, with a speaking population of .57%. The fifth most spoken language in the United States is German, with .52% of the population speaking German as their primary language at home. (mla.org, 2005). This means that the large number of people in the United States who are speaking languages other than English at home, are utilizing their cultural cues and values when interacting with primarily English speaking citizens.

Parallel to the phenomenon of immigration, countries are also experiencing an increase in international travel, exposing more people to various cultures and traditions. According to preliminary findings presented by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in January 2007, international tourist arrivals reached an all-time record of 842 million in 2006--an increase of 4.5 percent over 2005. Tourism growth occurred in all world regions, but was strongest in Africa (+8.1%) and the Asia-Pacific region (+7.6%). However, growth in continually strong tourist markets like the Americas (+2.1%) and Europe (+3.9%) slowed down somewhat, registering slightly below the world average. (Travel Industry Association, 2007). According to Mowana (1997), "tourists travel for a variety of reasons, including enhancement of social status, transcending feelings of isolation, a search for reality and authenticity, escape, and pleasure." (pg. 133). Likewise, some of the more common reasons why people travel abroad are to attend school, whether through a study abroad program or independently, for business purposes, to visit

family, as part of a missionary trip, for leisure, or possibly to live and work abroad. Whatever

the reason, with 842 million international travelers from all around the globe, it is apparent that

vast numbers of the world's citizens are now, more than ever, coming into contact on a daily

basis with varied individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. The global marketplace of

today's society is promoting this manner of travel and interaction, requiring more and more

individuals to become less ethnocentric and more interculturally sensitivity.

According to Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, and Hubard (2005), "Our ability to function

effectively in an environment depends upon our skill in recognizing and responding

appropriately to the values and expectations of those around us" (p. 47). To be effective,

interculturally sensitive people must be interested in other cultures, have an awareness of cultural

differences, and be willing to modify their behavior as an indication of respect for the people of

other cultures. Greenholtz (2000) expresses these interpersonal qualities via the term

"intercultural sensitivity." According to Lambert (1993), an individual with knowledge of the

ways in which their culture and other cultures differ, who respects and values those differences,

is motivated and wants to communicate appropriately, and who has mastered the skills to do so,

is considered interculturally competent.

Though it may seem intuitive to discern the different ways in which various societies can

benefit from positive intercultural interactions, it can be very difficult to understand exactly what

this process of gaining intercultural perspectives necessitates and what it means for the future of

the global community. In an attempt to clarify the ambiguous definitions of intercultural

competence, and arrive at a more precise and collective definition, researcher Darla Deardorff

(2006) conducted a study among intercultural scholars in the field of intercultural

communication, as well as with administrators from different colleges and universities across

the United States. While they were not able to agree on one single definition in the end, the study was still insightful as it gave a deeper understanding and showed the different perspectives of definitions between the researchers and the administrators. The definitions used by the intercultural scholars compared to the definitions used by the administrators were very different, meaning the understanding of these ideas and concepts are not the same amongst the two groups. It is important to look upon this study as it shows the complexity and variance in the understanding and interpretation of intercultural competence even among researchers within the field.

The purpose of this study is to focus in on particular characteristics or experiences that may affect an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity. This study will closely examine potential disparities between levels of intercultural sensitivity among three groups of participants: international students, domestic students with international travel experience, and domestic students without international travel experience. More specifically, the research question that drives this inquiry is as follows: Are there differences between the levels of intercultural sensitivity between international students, domestic students with international travel experience, and domestic students without international travel experience?

Intercultural Sensitivity: Higher Education

One of the key areas in which intercultural interactions take place is in the higher education setting. The need for awareness, respect, and acknowledgement of cultural differences in higher education may not be as apparent as in other situations, but the fact remains: no matter what or where the setting, there is a constant need for awareness of cultural similarities and differences. As the number of international students coming to the United States to pursue their secondary education continues to rise, so too does the likelihood of domestic students of coming into contact with their culturally distinct counterparts. With specific regard to the numbers of

international students enrolled on U.S. campuses for the year 2005-2006, that number was 564,766 out of a total enrollment of U.S. universities of 14,528,728 students (Open doors online, 2006). This is about four percent of the total enrollment of all students on U.S. campuses. The University of Florida, for example, ranks 12th on the list of high international students enrollment, with a total of 3,749 students out of the whole population of 49,650 students (Open doors online, 2006).

This data suggests many students attending a university in the United States are likely to come in contact with students from different cultural backgrounds. Whether these individuals meet through a class project, a student group, or a chance meeting, in order for these students to have successful interactions, they require some level of awareness and understanding of each other's cultural backgrounds and differences. Such awareness may influence their behavior, interaction style and their manner of speech, and produce positive outcomes for all culturally distinct individuals.

In today's world, the increasing number of university graduates signifies that these graduates comprise an increasing impact on the future of our global society. According to Achieve.org (2006), "Every year, about a million U.S. Americans enroll as first-time, full-time freshmen in the nation's four-year colleges and universities." This is in addition to the international students who also graduate from U.S. universities. As these people will lead our societies in the future, they, more than anyone else, should be educated and trained in the ideology of intercultural sensitivity. It is important that as our global societies become more intertwined, that we all have the necessary skills and knowledge to make the most of our joint efforts.

Within the higher education setting, one way of making the assimilation easier for international students, to a new culture, is by providing a support system, and "the university that hosts them should take responsibility." (Owen, 2007). Not only do international students need a place where they can interact positively with domestic students, but also they most certainly need a place where they can interact with people from their own countries or cultural backgrounds. Likewise, in order to create an environment for domestic student populations to be successful during these intercultural interactions, there should be training in cross-cultural communication, as well as opportunities for interaction with international students. According to Heikinheimo and Shute, (1986), the literature indicates that there is a positive relationship between time spent with the host culture and successful cultural adaptation for international students. This creates a positive outcome for both groups, in that helping the domestic student population effectively and confidently communicate with the international student population, in turn helps the international students adjust to the new culture, as well as to ensure opportunities for interaction for both groups. (Owen, 2007).

It is important to foresee challenges that can occur during intercultural interactions, as it is becoming more commonplace in today's world to come into contact with culturally diverse individuals. It is even more important to be equipped with the necessary tools to be successful, while working to overcome the obstacles that are present, as well as to understand the cultural differences that make us who we are, and influence the ways in which we interact with others, whether it be someone of the same culture, or people from different cultural backgrounds. In short, it is imperative that we develop our intercultural sensitivity. In order to further a deeper understanding of intercultural sensitivity, it is important to first clarify the concept of culture.

Understanding Culture

Culture has been defined in many ways and these definitions have been adapted to accommodate the lexicons of multiple research disciplines. Geert Hofstede, a social psychologist, defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another" (1984, p.21). Parsons, a sociologist (1949), states, "culture ... consists in those patterns relative to behavior and the products of human action which may be inherited, that is, passed on from generation to generation independently of the biological genes" (, p. 8).

Kluchohn, an anthropologist (1951), purports the following definition:

Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts: the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values (p. 86).

Amidst the multitude of definitions, one general and comprehensive description of culture is offered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UNESCO (2001) suggests, "culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs." (n.p.). Or, as Edward T. Hall (1959), an anthropologist and the founding father of intercultural communications research simply put it "culture is communication and communication is culture" (p. 186).

While many people may be aware of, and acknowledge that someone is from a different country when interacting with them; by noticing a different style of clothing or accented speech, most people are unaware that these cultural differences carry over into other aspects such as decision-making, thought processes, friendships, behavior, and interaction styles. It is crucial for

successful intercultural communication that people become aware of not only physical or surface-level cultural differences, such as skin-color, facial features, accented speech, or a special piece or type of clothing, but also to understand the human side of these differences and how these factors influence each person as they communicate with others. If individuals increase their levels of intercultural sensitivity, then their interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds can be more meaningful through greater depth of understanding and subsequently of greater benefit to all parties involved.

This study is an attempt to contribute to the body of research on intercultural sensitivity; specifically regarding how factors such as international travel experience, length of time abroad, reason for going abroad, ethnic background, age, and level of education affect intercultural sensitivity. This study is significant in that it can fill an existing gap in the research through increased understanding of what factors may affect an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity. The dependent variable in this study is intercultural sensitivity. The independent variables being examined that may impact the dependent variable are the characteristics of international students, domestic students with international travel experience, and domestic students without international travel experience.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of Intercultural Sensitivity

There is a continuing debate among researchers regarding a precise definition for intercultural sensitivity. The definition is continually changing and undergoing revisions in order to address social change, as well as ongoing developments in scholarship. Several studies have been conducted attempting to measure an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity, and although there are many researchers leading the field in this area of study, there really is no single leading authority.

As Kapoor, Blue, Konsky, and Drager (2000) write, "the term intercultural sensitivity has been used frequently in the discussion of cross cultural adjustment, task effectiveness during assignments abroad, and the development and maintenance of good interpersonal relationships with culturally diverse others" (p. 65). Although the definition of intercultural sensitivity is still finding its place in the research world, several researchers within the field of intercultural communications have made what they believe to be essential progress toward a deeper understanding of intercultural sensitivity.

Some of the early researchers "Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) point out that we need to seek out commonalities because 'with a more explicit understanding of what we have in common and the goals we seek to attain together, the differences between us that remain would be less threatening' (p. 287).

As Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) suggest, intercultural sensitivity is an individual's reaction to people from other cultures, which can predetermine that individual's ability to work successfully with those people. The authors further suggest it is obvious that in an age of technology and rapid expanse of products, commodities and more importantly culture, the ability

to communicate interculturally and achieve a high level of intercultural sensitivity will become

not only necessary, but also a sought after skill by universities, companies, and employers

everywhere.

Intercultural communications researcher Milton J. Bennett (1986) defines intercultural

sensitivity as the interactants ability to transform themselves not only affectively but also

cognitively and behaviorally from denial stage to integration stage in the development process of

intercultural communication. "That is to say, interculturally sensitive persons are able to reach

the level of dual identity and enjoy cultural differences by gradually overcoming the problems of

denying or concealing the existence of cultural differences and attempting to defend their own

world views, and moving to develop empathic ability to accept and adapt cultural differences"

(Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 4).

Similarly, researchers Dharm Bhawuk and Richard Brislin (1992) perceived intercultural

sensitivity from the perspective of individualism and collectivism and proposed a measure by

arguing that intercultural sensitivity consists of three elements, including the understanding of

cultural behaviors, open-mindedness towards cultural differences, and behavioral flexibility in

host culture. The authors describe it as being "a sensitivity to the importance of cultural

differences and to the points of view of people in other cultures" (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992, p.

346).

Intercultural communication researcher Guo-Ming Chen (1997) asserts:

Intercultural sensitivity can be conceptualized as an individual's ability to develop a
positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that
promotes an appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication. This
definition shows that intercultural sensitivity is a dynamic concept. It reveals that
interculturally sensitive persons must have a desire to motivate themselves to understand,
appreciate, and accept differences among cultures, and to produce a positive outcome from
intercultural interactions. (p. 6)

While the key definitions of intercultural sensitivity are not all identical, they do have a major trait in common, and that is the notion of success in dealing with people from different cultural backgrounds. Researchers agree that the individual must be responsible for self-motivation, as well as for understanding that cultural differences do exist. It requires positive emotions toward all things related to intercultural interactions, such as learning, understanding, recognizing, and respecting the cultural similarities and differences, otherwise such harmony is unattainable (Chen, 1997). This is increasingly true in the world as it is today. For the purpose of this study, the definition composed by researcher Guo-Ming Chen (1997) will be utilized, due to its encompassing explanation of intercultural sensitivity.

A History of Intercultural Sensitivity

The beginnings of intercultural sensitivity awareness were born out of necessity, after the end of the World War II. Many government workers overseas often found themselves at a loss to interact within and understand new cultures, based solely on the language training they received before going abroad. In other words, the training received in the new language they were expected to use and be proficient in left them under-prepared for the many cultural barriers they were to face (Martin & Nakayama, 2004). In order to respond to these hurdles, the U.S. government passed the Foreign Service Act in 1946, as well as establishing the Foreign Service Institute (FSI). As Martin and Nakayama (2004) report: "the FSI in turn, hired Edward T. Hall and other prominent anthropologists and linguists (including Ray Birdwhistell and George Trager) to develop 'predeparture' courses for overseas workers" (p. 42). As it turned out, the workers traveling abroad wished to have very specific and relevant cultural clues and information, based on the country to which they had been assigned. This caused a change in pedagogy by Hall, who had been teaching about culture from a broad perspective, and called

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upon him to create a way of training these overseas workers how to understand and assimilate to a new host culture. Thus, the first intercultural training regime was born.

These days, businesses are employing these similar concepts for intercultural sensitivity training to teach their employees how to interact within different cultural contexts, with regard to social mores, customs, and respect for differences. Brislin and Yoshida (1994) argue convincingly that a comprehensive intercultural sensitivity training plan should include the following four components:

- Awareness of oneself and one's own cultural influences,
- Knowledge of other cultures,
- Recognition of emotional challenges involved, and
- Basic skills that can be applied to most intercultural encounters.

They also claim that training effectiveness is weakened if any of these four progressive steps is missing. With respect to multicultural skills development, two basic approaches exist: (1) culture-specific and (2) culture-general (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Samovar et al., 1998). The culture-specific approach focuses on the practices of a particular culture (e.g., rules regarding whether direct or indirect eye contact is appropriate vary from culture to culture) (Cornett-DeVitto & McGlone, 2000). Trainers are warned that if these skills are not used with sufficient foresight and cultural knowledge, negative outcomes can occur. For example, trainees may assume that their newfound skill is appropriate and applicable in all situations involving the culture in question. Consequently, trainers who use this approach are cautioned to clearly identify the skills or skill set; understand the cultural values associated with the skill; understand that individual differences within cultures exist; and recognize that practicing and interacting with those from the specific culture will provide more information regarding the nuances of when, where, and how the skill is appropriately used (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994).

Just as much as culture-specific training provides specific knowledge about a particular culture, culture-general training helps develop a broad understanding of cultural differences. Culture-general training is designed to increase awareness of how cultures affect values and behavior; as such, affective measures including cross-cultural attitude, self-efficacy, and trainee reaction would be appropriate indicators of training effectiveness (Poon, Stevens, and Gannon, 2000).

Brislin et al (2006) suggest that cultural intelligence, the skillful recognition of behaviors that are influenced by culture, is an important factor in preparing individuals for life in another culture. Such preparation requires concerted training efforts that are designed according to specific concepts and pedagogies. The authors maintain that knowledge and acceptance of cultural differences are not qualities that are limited to only a few people. An individual's cultural intelligence can be increased with experience, practice, and a positive attitude toward lifelong learning.

Bhawuk and Brislin (2000) suggest that the evolution of cross-cultural training methods has, over the past fifty years, demonstrated encouraging signs of growth and expansion toward more theoretically meaningful methodologies and tools. For example, the authors suggest that cultural assimilators, theory-based exercises and simulations based on behavior modeling, are one method for cross-cultural training that have been noticeably emergent in the past decade. Such methods provide cognitive validity to cross-cultural training and evaluative measures are also being developed to consequently measure the impact of cross-cultural training on intercultural interactions.

According to Leeds-Hurwitz (1990), "intercultural communication continues to serve the function of training Americans to go abroad, although it has grown substantially past this initial

mission to include such areas as the training of foreign students, recent immigrants, and teachers who work with students of different cultural backgrounds" (p. 264). This style of preparing sojourners for their host culture continues today. One group that benefits from such preparations are study abroad students at the University of Florida. These students receive a version of a "pre-departure" session, in order to partially prepare them for what lie ahead in their host country. These sessions talk about safety abroad, language, customs, food habits, interacting in the host culture, as well as to stress the importance of studying about the new culture and all its characteristics before going abroad, to be well prepared and successful in intercultural interactions abroad.

Measuring Intercultural Sensitivity

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a 50-item paper-and-pencil instrument, which is designed to measure an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity. It was developed by Mitchell R. Hammer and Milton Bennett, and is based on Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The IDI can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including for individuals, groups, training for organizations, evaluation and assessment and for research. "In addition to providing an overall score, the IDI also yields scores for the different scales, clusters, and sub-stages of the DMIS. An individual's overall score is used to determine his or her sate of development (again, as defined by the DMIS)" (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004, p. 183).

Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, and DeJaeghere (2003) state that the results of their study "demonstrate that the IDI is a reliable measure that has little or no social desirability bias and reasonably, although not exactly, approximates the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity upon which it is based" (p. 215). Similarly, Greenholtz (2000) found during his study

that the "Intercultural Development Inventory provides a psychometrically valid and reliable empirical tool which administrators of transnational educational programs can use to make informed decisions related to human resource management of faculty and support staff, to assess training needs and the effectiveness of training programs, and to maximize the quality of student experiences" (p. 13).

A study conducted by one research team made up of Philip Anderson, Leigh Lawton, Richard Rexeisen, and Ann Hubbard (2005) discovered that based on their study of short-term study abroad programs, which used the IDI to measure intercultural sensitivity, that "there is weak support ($p = 0.069$) for the hypothesis that the students who participated in the four-week study abroad experience significantly improved their level of intercultural sensitivity as measured by the IDI's development scale. Stronger statistical support was found for two other hypotheses: As a group, the students lessened their tendency to see other cultures as better than their own and improved their ability to accept and adapt to cultural differences" (p. 8).

Positive results were also obtained by researcher Adriana Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004), whose study conducted on program length of study abroad courses and intercultural sensitivity, shows that the students in the longer duration program "returned home showing 1) significant development of intercultural sensitivity as defined by the IDI; (2) broader vocabulary and examples with which to talk about cultural differences; (3) a deeper understanding of Mexican culture and its people; and (4) a critical – and informed – point of view regarding the United States, its culture, and its international politics. These results suggest that the longer students stay immersed in a target culture, the more they learn and grow, and the more their intercultural sensitivity develops (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004).

In conclusion, the IDI provides a valid and reliable measure of those cognitive states associated with certain stable orientations toward cultural difference and can be useful for "assessing training needs, guiding interventions for individual and group development of intercultural competence, contributing to personnel selection, and evaluating programs" (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p. 119). Although the IDI is an internationally recognized and validated scale, adept at measuring intercultural sensitivity, it was not possible for it to be employed by the present study due to time and financial constraints. Each participant's answers to the IDI must be analyzed by trained professionals, thus the process is lengthier and requires a greater financial commitment; one that is not always afforded in every research situation.

The Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)

"The Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) was developed to provide a tool for self-assessment of cross-cultural effectiveness. This instrument, which was originally created in 1987, was revised in both 1989 and 1992. The instrument's authors, Colleen Kelley and Judith Meyers, created both the original and the revised versions of the instrument. Designed to be used as a single assessment or as part of a multi-assessment training program, the CCAI was developed in response to the need for a self-assessment instrument designed to measure cross-cultural adaptability (Kelley & Meyers, 1995). The authors stated that this instrument is applicable to all cultures assuming that anyone who was adapting to a new culture would share the same types of feelings and experiences (Kelley & Meyers, 1995a)" (as cited in Davis & Finney, 2006).

"The authors proposed that cross-cultural adaptability has four dimensions: (1) flexibility/openness, (2) emotional resilience, (3) perceptual acuity, and (4) personal autonomy" (Davis & Finney, 2006). "Flexibility/openness reflects an individual's tendency to be broad-

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minded and open toward others. The ability to be flexible and possess a non-judgmental

perspective is commonly associated with cross-cultural effectiveness. Emotional resilience is

defined as being able to maintain positive emotions while being surrounded by the unfamiliar

with respect to cultural cues and environmental influences. Individuals immersed in a new

culture often experience negative emotional reactions (i.e., culture shock). The emotional

resilience scale was created to represent an individual's ability to cope with these feelings.

Perceptual acuity represents how effective and comfortable a person is when communicating

with individuals of another culture. The perceptual acuity scale focuses on one's ability to detect

both verbal and nonverbal cues from individuals from another culture in addition to general

communication skills. Finally, personal autonomy refers to an individual's ability to posses and

maintain a strong personal identity in a new culture despite negative reactions to his other unique

identity due to cross-cultural differences. The personal autonomy scale was created to assess

how well one will be able to appreciate cultural differences while maintaining his or her personal

sense of self (Davis & Finney, 2006).

There is conflicting data in existence about the validity of this measurement tool. While

several studies using the CCAI have been conducted to test the "effectiveness of programs or

experiences on increasing cross-cultural adaptability" (Kitsantas & Meyers, 2001, Shim &

Paprock, 2002), there was a major study completed by Davis and Finney (2006) that finds flaws

with the four-factor structure of the tool. "The research was designed to examine the plausibility

of the four-factor model of cross-cultural adaptability as measured by the CCAI (Kelley &

Meyers, 1995b). Unfortunately, the four-factor model hypothesized to underlie the responses to

these items did not fit adequately. In addition, the exploratory analyses failed to produce a

solution that was interpretable" (Davis & Finney, 2006). The authors further suggest that any

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improvements or development of this measurement tool should be "clearly tied to theory and supported by empirical evidence" (p. 78) before being used to effectively measure intercultural sensitivity.

One study conducted by Cornett-DeVito and McGlone (2000) showed positive results using the CCAI as the measurement tool. "A matched sample *t*-test was performed on the CCAI pre- and post-scores for each of the four culture-general competencies (emotional resilience, flexibility and openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy) to note differences between the two measurements from the same group of trainees (Frey, Botan, Friedman, & Kreps, 1991). Of the four culture-general skills measured in the CCAI, three produced significant mean differences between the pre- and posttest for the 40 paired sets of test scores: perceptual acuity, emotional resilience, and personal autonomy. There was no significant mean difference for flexibility and openness" (Cornett-DeVito & McGlone, 2000, p. 247).

Another research team, Goldstein and Smith (1999) also concluded positive results from the CCAI as a measurement tool. "Student sojourners who attend the weeklong Discover the United States program provided by the Meridian International Center (Meridian) upon arrival to this country exhibit greater cross-cultural adaptability than a similar group of students who did not attend the training. This relationship is demonstrated by the significantly higher scores on the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) of the program's graduates in every dimension of cross-cultural adaptability, including emotional resilience, flexibility/openness, perceptual acuity and personal autonomy" (Goldstein & Smith, 1999, p. 167).

The Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ISCI)

"The Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ICSI; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992) is a 46-item self-report instrument in which people give their response on a Likert-type seven-point scale ranging from very strongly agree to very strongly disagree" (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992, p. 420). It

was designed "to measure intercultural sensitivity by examining subjects' responses to items reflecting individualist-collectivist orientations (Kapoor, Blue, Konsky, & Drager, 2000, p. 215).

"The Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory was developed to address a need in the scholarly literature for a reliable and valid measure of the intercultural sensitivity construct. In developing their instrument, Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) evaluated various predictors used to estimate intercultural effectiveness of overseas personnel" (Kapoor & Comadena, 1996, p. 169). They found several factors which they equated with success overseas: empathy, respect, interest in local culture, flexibility, tolerance and technical skill (Kapoor & Comadena, 1996).

However, as other researchers delved further into the measurement tool, they found slight flaws with the methods used. "Kapoor and Comadena tested the construct validity of the Bhawuk and Brislin measure and concluded that, due to ambiguity in the tone and direction of the items used, the measure was relatively unreliable" (Kapoor, Blue, Konsky, & Drager, 2000, p. 215). "One problem with the Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) instrument is consistent that the items used to measure behavior patterns are rather abstract in tone and substance. Kapoor & Comadena (1996) argued that the items used in the measure were rather ineffective in assessing everyday conduct peculiarities unless the subjects had an opportunity to study a specific culture from close quarters (Kapoor, Blue, Konsky & Drager, 2000).

Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

A comparatively new and upcoming measurement tool called the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, was developed by Guo-Ming Chen and William Starosta, and designed to "integrate features of both cross-cultural attitude and behavioral skills models" (Fritz & Mollenberg, 2001, p. 54). This scale is a 24-item questionnaire aimed at measuring intercultural sensitivity. The sensitivity scale has five factors on which its statements are based: (1) interaction engagement (e.g., "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures"), (2) respect for cultural

differences (e.g., "I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded"), (3) interaction confidence (e.g., "I am pretty sure of myself in interacting wit people from different cultures"), (4) interaction enjoyment (e.g., "I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures"), and (5) interaction attentiveness (e.g., "I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures") (Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 98).

As Fritz and Mollenberg (2001) note, "The model is comprised of three conceptual dimensions of intercultural communication competence, including intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural adroitness" (p. 60). According to Chen and Starosta (1996), the three are closely related but separate concepts. They also postulate that the concept of intercultural communication competence is comprised of three facets: cognitive, affective, and behavioral ability of interactants in the process of intercultural communication" (Chen and Starosta, 2000, p. 70).

Intercultural awareness is the concept that represents the cognitive aspect of intercultural communication competence in demonstrating the understanding of culture conventions that affect how we think and behave (Chen, in press). Intercultural sensitivity is the concept that represents the affective aspect of intercultural communication competence by referring to the subjects' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (Chen & Starosta, 1998). Intercultural adroitness is the behavioral aspect of intercultural communication competence in that it refers to "the ability to get the job done and attain communication goals in intercultural interactions" (Chen & Starosta, 1996, p. 76). "Moreover, the authors proposed that individuals must possess six affective elements to be interculturally sensitive: self-esteem, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction involvement, and suspending judgment" (Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 80).

"Empathy, also called telepathic or intuition sensitivity (Gardner, 1962), refers to the ability to step into one's culturally-different counterparts' mind to develop the same thoughts and emotions in interaction. The concept has been considered a core component of intercultural sensitivity by scholars (e.g., Bennett, 1986; Chen & Starosta, 1997; Yum, 1989). Empathic persons have been found to be more concerned for others' feelings and reactions, more accurate in observing the internal states of their counterparts, and more able to show affect displays, active listening, and understanding in intercultural communication situation (Parks, 1994). In other words, the more empathic one is, the more interculturally sensitive one will be" (Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 112).

Several studies have been done to test the validity and reliability of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, all with positive results. Chen and Starosta (2000) found in their study to validate and test their Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, that the "ISS has demonstrated strong reliability and appropriate concurrent and predictive validity. While further research is needed to replicate the properties of the ISS, the scale shows promise for use as a measure of intercultural sensitivity." Fritz and Mollenberg (2001) used the ISS on German students in Germany, to see if the scale could be used among different cultural groups. According to Fritz and Mollenberg (2001) "The results of confirmatory factor analysis in this study by using a German sample confirmed the validity of the overall structure of Chen and Starosta's instrument on the measurement of intercultural sensitivity" (p. 57).

As stated earlier, this study will employ the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), the measurement tool created by Chen and Starosta. This model was chosen because it takes into consideration all of the dimensions of intercultural communication competence, and has specific intentions to measure intercultural sensitivity of different groups of people. This scale has been

tested by other researchers, and found to be valid and reliable. Fritz & Mollenburg tested the

validity on a group of German students, and the results were quite good. Similarly, Peng,

Rangisipaht, and Thaipakdee (2005) measured the intercultural sensitivity levels of Thai and

Chinese nationals, and again, the results were found to be quite reliable.

Intercultural Sensitivity in a Post 9-11 World

Intercultural sensitivity around the world suffered after the 9-11 terrorist attacks, as many

in the United States became fearful or suspicious of anyone from a different country or cultural

background (Kondrasuk, 2004). In addition to the news stories reporting on the likelihood of

other terrorist attacks by way of nuclear fire, a poisoned food or water supply, and mail bombs;

the endless repetition of video of jets bombing Afghanistan, which filled the television screens of

homes in the United States, kept the fear of terrorism alive. The increased fear and insecurity

created by such stories was amplified by "a growing sentiment on the part of the American

public that people who suggest that terrorism should be analyzed, in part, within the context of

American foreign policy should not be allowed "to teach in the public schools, work in the

government, and even make a speech at a college" (Giroux, 2002, p. 178).

Kondrasuk (2004) suggests that 9/11 attacks had a number of immediate impacts on the

United States in general. The initial outrage of the population of the United States was followed

by an aftermath of shock and sorrow. Peoples' world-views changed. There was both hatred

and acts of discrimination against Muslims and Arabs, as well as a new national inquisitiveness

to learn more about Islam. The citizens of the United States drew closer together; just as there

was a significant increase in national solidarity, there was, likewise, a decrease in the sensitivity

people had toward the interactions with people of divergent cultural contexts.

While there has been some resistance in both the media and among diverse groups to the

accelerated practice of racial profiling, the American public largely supports the indefinite

detention by federal authorities of over 11,000 immigrants, only four of whom, according to Davis, have direct links to terrorist organizations (Giroux, 2002). Another type of retaliation and revenge was exemplified by the many games which surfaced on the internet, to be played by gamers across socioeconomic and age spectrums, in which the goal of the game was to find Osama bin-Laden, and "blow him up" (Varisco, 2002).

Evans and Elphick (2005) describe efforts by the post-9-11 tourism industry to establish crisis management policies that utilized foundational principles of intercultural communication and cross-cultural training to establish methodologies for mitigating the effects of further terrorism-related occurrences, as well as ongoing the reactions and stigmas tourists maintained as a result of post-9-11 social trauma. One such policy examined by the authors featured the crisis and incident management structure, notification and activation criteria, information flows and response to the media, response plans and training. The training includes general training, tabletop exercises and real time and live exercises with the aim to test the organization, communications and the teamwork of those concerned and the ability of individual actions. The policy describes communication and decision processes that are predicated on clear role descriptions to ensure that crises are handled swiftly and effectively at an appropriate level. Training is included as part of the policy to test the organization, the communication and individual roles, as it increases familiarity and capability among those being trained and makes the organization aware of potential crisis situations.

Intercultural Sensitivity: Corporate Sector

"Landis and Bhagat (1996) argue that intercultural sensitivity is crucial to enabling people to live and work with others from different globalization of business intensities, an individual's sensitivity to cultural differences combined with an ability to adapt his or her behavior to those differences will become increasingly valuable" (Anderson et al., 2005, p. 46).

In other words, the increase in travel and international business ventures, necessitates that an increasing number of people will need to be aware of cultural differences and will need to increase their level of intercultural sensitivity in order to stay current within their market area.

"Globalization continues to redefine our identity in the workplace, at home, and other arenas of our life by breaking down the stereotypical roles we played at previous weeks or years. Moreover, globalization demands a community where people of different cultural backgrounds must learn to be interdependent in order to survive. As a result, the need for intercultural communication competence in the globalizing society becomes indispensable for a peaceful and successful life in the new millennium" (Chen 2000, p. 78).

Without this knowledge of culture and customs, international business could not be a successful enterprise. There must be a level of established cultural harmony before any business venture or any sort of discussion can be deemed successful. In the business world, language and cultural knowledge are very important. In some countries, business dealings will not be successful unless certain activities and interactions are conducted according to the host-country's custom, so those who are unaware of the customs cannot do business successfully in those countries. For example, in Japan, the exchange of business cards is ceremonial and very important. Strict adherence to the rules of this ceremony must be followed for successful business in Japan.

As one specialist at a Language and Culture consulting firm states, "very few businesses can escape the need to at some point in time deal with foreign colleagues, clients or customers. Business is international and if an organization wants to develop and grow, it needs to harness the potential an international stage offers" (Cultural Services online, 2007). It is important for people to have knowledge of other cultures, including their language, in order to make a

connection with the people with whom they are making a business venture. Many businesses are turning to consulting firms to teach classes to their employees so that they will have an understanding of cultural differences, as well as to learn the necessary skills to interact successfully with potential clients from other cultural backgrounds.

At a corporate level, intercultural skills are required in every line of business and during every interaction. Cultural differences influence everything from the design of an organization's mission statement and the way international subsidiaries are managed, to the rules and regulations set out for employees, the processes for negotiation of business deals or the preparation of marketing strategies. Global managers and workforces need intercultural skills both in face-to-face interaction and in virtual communication with partners from other cultures, in their own country, abroad and in international teams. Intercultural skills are indispensable for effective management of a diverse workforce.

Varner (2000) writes that prior to Hall's 1959 examination of intercultural business communication with relation to cultural attitudes that can serve as inhibitive or contributive factors in the communication process; most researchers did not focus on the process of communication in intercultural contexts. Intercultural business literature prior to Hall's work focused more on functional business issues, rather than communications frameworks; intercultural communication literature focused more on general contexts rather than business-specific contexts. However, with the cold war in bloom, Hall's work presented significant considerations for business leaders attempting to overcome tenuous communication barriers in order to build business relations in an untrusting global context.

Varner (2000) further suggests that the growth of international business agreements, outsourced production and customer service, and shrinking international boundaries have

increased the need for intercultural sensitivity and competency in business. Necessary insights into social behavior, attitudes toward morality, self-perception, and the role of cultural hierarchies provide the business agent the requisite tools to function beyond his or her cultural comfort zones. The author mentions that the increasing educational interchange of students across international boundaries places higher education in this framework of consideration, as well.

Study Abroad and Intercultural Sensitivity

With more than 200,000 American college students going abroad each year, Richard C. Sutton, senior advisor for academic affairs and director of international programs for the University System of Georgia Board of Regents, purports that "[study abroad] is no longer a fringe activity" (Redden, 2007, n.p.). A small number of studies have been conducted regarding the outcomes of studying abroad, to discern whether or not it has an effect on the level of an individual's intercultural awareness or sensitivity. The difficult part of measuring the potential effects of study abroad on intercultural sensitivity is that there are often many factors which cannot be controlled for each particular student, such as ethnic background, upbringing, travel experience, second-language acquisition, previous exposure to cultural differences, location and length of program, experience with host family, and the list goes on. Thus, the studies that have been conducted to measure intercultural sensitivity levels of students studying abroad, all have limitations.

Data collected for a study done by researcher Adriana Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004), "does provide support for a hypothesis that duration of study abroad programs plays a key role in the development of intercultural sensitivity of U.S. university students studying abroad" (p.52). Another study conducted by Langley and Breese (2005) showed "most students reported that their attitudes toward other cultures have become less judgmental and that they stereotype people

of other cultures less. Some reported a more critical and, at the same time, more appreciative view of their own culture. Others expressed an increased desire to learn of other cultures" (p. 319).

A study showing positive results conducted by Williams (2005) reported that "The results showed that as predicted, the students who studied abroad generally showed a greater increase in intercultural communication skills than the students who did not study abroad, and students who chose to study abroad had a higher level of intercultural communication skills at the beginning and at the end of the semester than students who did not choose to study abroad. The results also showed that exposure to various cultures was actually a better predictor of intercultural communication skills than location in both pre- and posttest scores" (p. 368).

Hypotheses of the study

Given the fact that individuals from countries around the world tend to be more aware of the rest of the world than people from the United States who function from more of an insular social perspective, many U.S. citizens do not know about what the rest of the world is doing, nor is it of great significance to them. People from other countries grow up learning about other cultures, and about the United States, and most of them learn English in school, often starting as young children. Americans are, for the most part, monolingual and this can be a problem when these individuals travel abroad and do not speak the language of the host country or know much about its culture. According to the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC), only nine percent of Americans can speak their native language plus another language fluently, as opposed to 53 percent of Europeans. (NVTC online, 2005). While the impact of second-language acquisition on intercultural sensitivity is still being studied, it may be that this lesson in language and culture plays a part in an individual's knowledge of and respect for different cultures. For international students coming to study in the United States, just being conscious of cultural

differences and possibly having a greater awareness of the rest of the world, may give them a slight advantage on the scale of intercultural sensitivity. For these reasons, the following hypothesis was suggested:

- **H1:** International students will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than domestic students.

Domestic students without international travel experience may well have had interaction with people from different cultures here in the United States. However, these interactions may not be the same as if they were taking place overseas, due to the fact that the way someone behaves and interacts in the comfort zone that is their homeland, is most certainly different than they way they behave and interact while in another country and culture. Consequently, exposure to new and different cultures by way of international travel may result in a higher level of intercultural sensitivity. The domestic students who have experience traveling on an international scale have been exposed to other cultures in their native setting, as opposed to interacting with someone from another country here within the borders of the United States. This exposure to other cultures may provide more in-depth awareness and understanding of cultural differences, as well as a respect for these differences. For this reason, the following hypothesis was suggested:

- **H2.** Domestic students with international travel experience will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity that those without it.

Age is believed to bring maturity, and along with that, a larger scope of one's self as well as of the world. A scientific study done by Bennett and Baird (2006) on students at a private college in New Hampshire, gave results which suggested that "significant age-related changes in brain structure continue after the age of 18" and that these changes may be related to new challenges stemming from a new environment, in this case, the college setting. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) most recent survey for students of U.S.

universities for the Fall of 2004, showed that 35.9 percent and 29.3 percent of undergraduate students at U.S. universities are between the ages of 18 and 19, and also 20 and 21, respectively. This data also shows that 32.2 percent and 30.2 percent of graduate students at U.S. universities are between the ages of 22-24 and 25-29 respectively. This difference in age and depth of experience between most graduate students and undergraduates may translate into a higher level of intercultural sensitivity. For this reason, the following hypothesis is suggested:

- **H3:** Graduate students will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than undergraduate students.

Study abroad can have many positive effects on a student's understanding of culture, communication, and the world as a whole. It allows students a chance to see another country, including experiencing its language, customs, fashion, history and culture. It provides the opportunity to see how other people live in different places around the world. It offers the chance to increase cultural awareness, as they become aware of themselves while attending classes abroad, and doing every day things such as a trip to the grocery store, reading street signs and billboards, watching TV, and especially during language interaction. For these reasons, the following hypothesis was suggested:

- **H4:** Students who have participated on study abroad programs will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than students who have not participated on a study abroad program.

The importance of understanding cultures is not limited to the basic knowledge associated with the concept, but also extends to the fact that an individual who is to be successful at intercultural communication and thus have an increased level of intercultural sensitivity, must have a desire to know about other cultures. This is in order to cultivate a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives, and acknowledge that a person's cultural background influences the ways in which that individual interacts across cultures with other people. In other words,

intercultural sensitivity in the contemporary global climate is a necessary component of social

progress.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Population and sample

The population for this study was undergraduate (N =2804) and graduate students (N =
231) of the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. The 24-item
intercultural sensitivity questionnaire developed by researchers Chen and Starosta (2000) was
administered to a selected number of students. Participants were reached within the classroom
setting in both undergraduate and graduate classes after approval of the research protocol by the
UF Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A) and negotiating permission with instructors.
Non-probability sampling techniques were used, more specifically convenience sampling and
purposive sampling (Buddenbaum and Novak, 2001). It was convenient in that the research
participants were easily and quickly accessible in large numbers, and there were no exclusionary
pre-requisites to participating. In other words, every student in each classroom that was
surveyed was representative of one of the three groups to be analyzed. The purposive technique
was utilized to target international students, in order to get a variety of cultural representation
from the sample. In that funding was not available to employ assistance in gathering data, these
sampling techniques made this study possible despite time and resource constraints.

The sample for this study (N = 180) was made up of 133 undergraduate and 47 graduate
students. Of these students, 50 were male and 130 were female. Eighty-four participants
classified themselves as White-non Hispanic, 15 as Black/African-American, four as Asian-
American, 19 as Hispanic or Latino, 34 as Asian, nine as European, and 15 classified themselves
as Latin American or Caribbean. The mean age of participants was 23. The participants fell into
one of three categories to be analyzed: 1) domestic students who had not traveled internationally,

2) domestic students who had traveled internationally, and c) international students. There were 60 respondents for each group.

Research Instrument Construction

The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

The research instrument consisted of three sections. The first section of this study's research instrument was Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), which is a 24-item questionnaire designed to measure intercultural sensitivity (see Appendix B). The ISS was chosen due to the fact that its validity as well as its functionality across cultures has been established by several different studies measuring intercultural sensitivity. The sensitivity scale has five factors or constructs on which its statements are based: interaction engagement (7 items), respect for cultural differences (6 items), interaction confidence (5 items), interaction enjoyment (3 items), and interaction attentiveness (3 items). Research participants completing the ISS ranked their responses in terms of levels of disagreement or agreement, to the statements contained in the questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale was used to respond to each item in which 1 is strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 somewhat agree, 4 agree, and 5 is strongly agree. The scale attempts to measure an individual's level of interculturally sensitivity. According to Chen and Starosta (2000), "higher scores of this measure are suggestive of being more interculturally sensitive" (p. 10).

Before summing the 24 items, the following items were reverse-coded for data analysis: 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20, and 22. Reverse-coding was used in this case because in addition to having "positively-keyed" or positively worded Items (i.e. "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures") the ISS also has items that are considered "negatively-keyed" (i.e. "I don't like to be with people from different cultures"). "Reverse-coding the negatively-keyed items ensures that all of the items – those that are originally negatively-keyed and those that are

positively-keyed – are consistent with each other, in terms of what an "agree" or "disagree" imply." (Wake Forrest Website). For example, if an individual responded 1 (Strongly Disagree) to the "I don't like to be with people from different cultures" item, then we recode this individual's response to a 5. Thus, the reverse-scored item now has a high score (a 5 instead of a 1), which indicates a high level of intercultural sensitivity. This is based on the reasonable assumption that someone who strongly disagrees with the statement that she dislikes being with people from different cultures, has a relatively high level of intercultural sensitivity. That is, a disagreement to "I don't like to be with people from different cultures" is logically similar to an agreement to "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures". Reverse-coding is done so that high scores on the questionnaire reflect relatively high levels of the attribute being measured by the questionnaire. The SPSS function used to perform this data analysis was the "Transform" mode, under which the items were recoded into the same variable, and given the reverse-score (1=5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2, 5=1).

The second component of the research questionnaire included four questions about demographic information. These were age, sex, nationality/ethnic background (which was set up to also indicate if the student is a domestic or international student), as well as academic status (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate). Finally, the last section of the instrument asked participants three questions about their international travel experience including whether or not they had been abroad, the length of time spent abroad, as well as the main purpose (or purposes) for their international travel.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by using SPSS for Windows version 15.0. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were first run to assess the results of each item of the survey instrument.

Subsequently, Alpha reliability analysis was done to measure the strengths of the measurements of each construct according to the quality of responses of this study.

A series of correlations, T-test, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to explore the relationship among independent variables (demographic and international travel data) and the various constructs of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (dependent variables), including composite variables created by aggregating the items of each construct. The hypotheses stated at the end of the literature review were tested by exploring the levels of significance of the aforementioned associations.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

International Travel Experience of Participants

Of the students sampled, 118 (66%) answered affirmative to having international travel experience, while 62 (34%) answered in the negative to having international travel experience. The two additional instances of no international travel where traced down to two international student participants who had incorrectly answered the question asking whether or not they had traveled abroad. The length of travel for all participants with international travel experience ranged from three days up to 3,650 days. Sixty-two (34%) participants had no international travel experience. Fifty-three (29%) participants had between three and 42 days of time spent abroad, and 65 (36%) participants had spent between 45 and 3650 days abroad. The median for this data set was 60 days, with 11 participants reporting to have stayed this long on their longest international trip. The median is used instead of the mean score because of the presence of extreme values (outliers) (Table 4-1).

Of the 120 participants with international travel experience, 80 (44%) listed "leisure" as their main reason (or one of) for traveling abroad and 58 (32%) listed "study abroad" as the main reason (or one of) for traveling abroad. Forty-three students (24%) listed "visiting family" as their main reason (or one of) for traveling abroad, 18 (10%) listed "other" as their main reason (or one of) for traveling abroad, and finally, 11 participants (6%) listed "business" as their main reason (or one of) for traveling abroad (Figure 4-1).

Reliability Analysis

Each of the five constructs or dependent variables described by the 24 items of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale was subjected to reliability analysis. The highest reliability coefficient was identified in the construct "respect for cultural differences" (Cronbach's Alpha =

.783), followed by "Interaction attentiveness" (Cronbach's Alpha = .641), "Interaction enjoyment" (Cronbach's Alpha = .604), "Interaction engagement" (Cronbach's Alpha = .586), and finally "Interaction confidence" (Cronbach's Alpha = .479). Table 4-2 ranks the constructs from highest to lowest reliability. The lower reliability coefficients indicate that the items of the instrument may need revision or new items added to capture the concepts measured. (Table 4-2).

Descriptive Statistics of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale's Items

In order to better understand the data, it is necessary to look at the means and standard deviations of all the items of the scale. The standard deviations are more important than the means, in this case, as the standard deviation indicates the consensus around the item according to the respondents. The first statement, which has a standard deviation of 1.02, is "I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures." The second statement, which has a standard deviation of 1.01, is "I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction." The third statement, which has a standard deviation of 1.00, is "I think my culture is better than other cultures." The higher standard deviations mean there is a more broad set of answers, and in this case, it means the three statements with the highest standard deviations could be improved by rewording them, as they may be confusing or worded in a way that respondents do not feel comfortable answering honestly.

Closely looking at each of the items of the scale, the item with the highest mean response was "Respect for Cultural Differences 8" (i.e., respect the values of people from different cultures) (M = 4.41, SD = .775). The second highest item was "Interaction Engagement 13", (i.e., open minded to people from different cultures) (M = 4.34, SD = .735). The third highest item was "Interaction Engagement 1", (i.e., enjoy interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 4.21, SD = .796). The fourth highest item was "Respect for cultural differences 16", (i.e.,

respect ways people from different cultures behave) (M = 4.04, SD = .801). The fifth highest item was "Interaction Confidence 3", (i.e., pretty sure of myself when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 3.85, SD = .835). The sixth highest item was "Interaction Attentiveness 14", (i.e., observant when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 3.74, SD = .931). The seventh highest item was "Interaction Engagement 21", (i.e., give positive responses to culturally different counterpart during interaction) (M = 3.70, SD = .834).

The eighth highest item was "Interaction Attentiveness 17", (i.e., obtain as much information as possible when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 3.69, SD = 1.020). The ninth and tenth highest items had the same Mean; "Interaction Confidence 10", (i.e., feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 3.63, SD = .865), followed by "Interaction Engagement 24", (i.e., have feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me) (M = 3.63, SD = .859). The eleventh highest item was "Interaction Engagement 23", (i.e., show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues) (M = 3.60, SD = .865). The next, and 12th highest item was "Interaction Confidence 6", (i.e., can be as sociable as I want when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 3.56, SD = .958). The 13th highest item was "Interaction Engagement 11", (i.e., tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts) (M = 3.54, SD = .930), followed by "Interaction Attentiveness 19", (i.e., sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction) (M = 3.24, SD = 1.017).

The 15th highest item was "Interaction Confidence 5", (i.e., know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 2.73, SD = .869), followed by "Interaction Confidence 4", (i.e., find it hard to talking in front of people from different cultures) (M = 2.11,

SD = .888). The seventeenth highest item was "Respect for Cultural Differences 20", (i.e., think my culture is better than other cultures) (M = 1.89, SD = 1.005), followed by "Respect for Cultural Differences 2", (i.e., think people from other cultures are narrow minded) (M = 1.82, SD = .705). The nineteenth highest item was "Interaction Enjoyment 12", (i.e., often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures) (M = 1.80, SD = .758), followed by "Interaction Enjoyment 15", (i.e., often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 1.76, SD = .788). The 21st highest item was "Interaction Engagement 22", (i.e., avoid situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons) (M = 1.73, SD = .781), followed by "Interaction Enjoyment 9", (i.e., get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures) (M = 1.58, SD = .732). The 23rd item was "Respect for Cultural Differences 7", (i.e., don't like to be with people from different cultures) (M = 1.47, SD = .697), followed by "Respect for Cultural Differences 18", (i.e., would not accept opinions of people from different cultures) (M = 1.44, SD = .662) (Table 4-3).

Composite of the Five Constructs

In order to obtain a larger picture view of the data, the items for each of the five constructs were collapsed. The new composite variable with the highest mean score was "Interaction Enjoyment" (M = 4.29, SD = .57), followed by "Respect for Cultural Differences" (M = 4.00, SD = .54). The composite variable with the next highest score was "Interaction Engagement" (M = 3.91, SD = .54), followed by "Interaction Attentiveness" (M = 3.56, SD = .76). Finally, the last composite variable was "Interaction Confidence" (M = 3.53, SD = .62) (Table 4-4).

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis one states that international students will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than domestic students. The test used for this analysis was a one sample independent

t-test. The t-test is used in this instance, in order to compare the means of the two different

groups (Bostrom, 1998). No statistical significance was found in the answers of the two groups,

and thus hypothesis one was rejected. Results based on the five composite variables indicate that

for the first composite "interaction engagement" domestic students had a mean of 3.90 and

standard deviation of .553, while international students had a mean of 3.91, and standard

deviation of .511. For the second composite "respect for cultural differences" domestic students

showed a mean of 3.94, and standard deviation of .561, and international students showed a

mean of 4.02, and standard deviation of .503. For the third composite, "interaction confidence",

domestic students had a mean of 3.49, and a standard deviation of .563), and the international

students had a mean of 3.63, and a standard deviation of .731. The fourth composite, interaction

attentiveness", showed domestic students with a mean of 3.52, and a standard deviation of .720,

and the international students had a mean of 3.63, and a standard deviation of .833. The fifth and

final composite "interaction enjoyment" showed the domestic students with a mean of .33, and a

standard deviation of .525, and the international students showed a mean of .21, and a standard

deviation of .643. (Table 4-5).

Upon further analysis of the 24 items, t-tests were performed, and there were two

instances of statistical significance to support the hypothesis, in which the international students

had a higher mean score than domestic students. The first was for the item "Respect for cultural

differences 2" which was reverse coded, and stated, "I think people from other cultures are

narrow-minded." The international students showed a mean of 3.41, and a standard deviation of

.650, and the domestic students showed a mean of 3.07, and a standard deviation of .706. (t(178)

= -3.096, p = .002 (two-tailed), d = -0.46). The other item that showed a significance in mean

scores for the international students was "Interaction confidence 5" which states, "I always know

what to say when interacting with people from different cultures." For this item, the international students showed a mean of 3.12, and a standard deviation of 1.010, and the domestic students showed a mean of 2.55, and a standard deviation of .728. (t(178) = -4.322, p = .000 (two-tailed), d = -0.65). (In this case, d refers to the strength of the relationship of the item to the results. A relationship can range from positive and strong, to negative and weak. The number for the relationship can be anywhere from -1 to +1. Those close to -1 and +1 are very strong, and those close to zero are weak. Negative d's indicate a negative relationship, while positive d's indicate a positive relationship).

Hypothesis 2 states that Domestic students with international travel experience will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity that those without it. The test used for this analysis was a one-sample t-test. Statistical significance was found and thus, hypothesis two was supported. The first composite "interaction engagement" showed the domestic students without international travel experience with a mean of 3.74, and a standard deviation of .551, and the domestic students with international travel experience, with a mean of 4.04, and standard deviation of .520. The second construct "respect for cultural differences" showed the domestic students without international travel experience had a mean of 3.91, and standard deviation of .583, and the domestic students with international travel experience with a mean of 4.01, and standard deviation of .532. For the third construct, "interaction confidence", the domestic students without international travel showed a mean of 3.41, and standard deviation of .548, and the domestic student with international travel showed a mean of 3.56, and standard deviation of .574. The fourth construct, "interaction attentiveness" showed domestic students without international travel with a mean of 3.33, and standard deviation of .693, while it showed domestic students with international travel with a mean of 3.72, and standard deviation of .694.

The fifth and final construct "interaction enjoyment" showed the domestic students without international travel experience as having a mean of 4.31, and a standard deviation of .535, and the domestic students with international travel experience as having a mean of 4.36, and standard deviation of .517. Results indicate that significance was found at two levels: "interaction engagement" ($p = .003$) and "interaction attentiveness" ($p = .002$). (Table 4-6).

Upon closer observation of the 24 items of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, there was one instance in which the domestic students with international travel experience showed a higher mean than for domestic students without international travel experience. This was for the item "Interaction confidence 5" which states, "I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures." The students with international travel experience showed a mean of 3.14, and standard deviation of 1.008, while the students with no international travel experience showed a mean of 2.59, and standard deviation of .824 ($t(116) = -3.255$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed), $d = -0.60$).

Hypothesis 3 states that Graduate students will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than undergraduate students will. The test used for this analysis was a one-sample independent t-test. No statistical significance was found among the data, and hypothesis 3 was rejected. Results indicate, for the first composite, "interaction engagement" had the undergraduate students with a mean of 9.94, and standard deviation of .548, and the graduate students with a mean of 3.78, and standard deviation of .500. The second, "respect for cultural differences" showed the undergraduates with a mean of 3.96, and a standard deviation of .565, while the graduate students showed a mean of 3.99, and a standard deviation of .475. For the third composite "interaction confidence", undergraduates had a mean of 3.56, and standard deviation of .577, while the graduate students had a mean of 3.45, and a standard deviation of

.738. As for the fourth composite "interaction attentiveness", the undergraduate students showed a mean of 3.60, and standard deviation of .732, and the graduate students showed a mean of 3.43, and standard deviation of .816. For the fifth and final composite, "interaction enjoyment", the undergraduates scored a mean of 4.33, and standard deviation of .569, while the graduate students scored a mean of 4.18, and had a standard deviation of .555. (Table 4-7).

Upon closer examination of the 24 items, one instance showed significance in higher mean scores of graduate students compared to undergraduate students, as well as once case where the undergraduate students showed a higher mean score as compared to the graduate students. For the item "Respect for cultural differences 2", which was reverse coded, and states "I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded", the graduate students showed a mean of 3.49, and standard deviation of .547, while the undergraduate students showed a mean of 3.08, and standard deviation of .724 (t(178) = -3.574, p = .000 (two-tailed), d = -0.54). For the item "Interaction attentiveness 14" which states "I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures", the undergraduates showed a mean of 3.86. and standard deviation of .903, while the graduates showed a mean of 3.39, and a standard deviation of .930 (t(177) = 3.042, p = .003 (two-tailed), d = 0.46).

Hypothesis 4 states that students who have participated on study abroad programs will have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than students who have not participated on a study abroad program. The test used for this analysis was a one sample independent t-test. No statistical significance was found and hypothesis four was rejected. Results indicate for the first composite "Interaction Engagement" that students who have participated on a study abroad program showed a mean of 3.91, and standard deviation of .49, while the students who have not participated on a study abroad program showed a mean of 3.89, and standard deviation of .56.

For the second composite, "Respect for Cultural Differences", the students with prior participation on a study abroad program showed a mean of 4.04, and a standard deviation of .510, and the students with no prior participation on a study abroad program showed a mean of 3.94, and standard deviation of .56. This was followed by the third composite "Interaction Confidence" in which students with study abroad experience showed a mean of 3.62, and standard deviation of .708, and the students without study abroad experience showed a mean of 3.49, and a standard deviation of .576. The fourth composite "Interaction Attentiveness" showed results for students who had participated on a study abroad program with a mean of 3.61, and standard deviation of .767, while the results for students who had not participated on a study abroad program showed a mean of 3.54, and a standard deviation of .753. The fifth and final composite "Interaction Enjoyment" showed data for students with study abroad experience as having a mean of 4.28, and standard deviation of .504, and showed data for students without study abroad experience as having a mean of 4.30, and a standard deviation of .597. (Table 4-8).

Other Analysis Performed

Upon testing the age of the participants against the five composite variables, by using an independent sample t-test, no significance was found. Thus, for the sample in this study, age appears to have no impact on the scores of participants for the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale. Upon testing the sex of the participants against the five composite variables, by using an independent sample t-test, only the construct "respect for cultural differences" was found significant. The mean response for female participants was higher than for male participants. Females had a mean of 4.02, and standard deviation of .509, while males had a mean of 3.84, and a standard deviation of .610. For the other constructs, the data was as follows. For the construct "interaction engagement", female participants had a mean of 3.91, and standard deviation of .543, while male participants had a mean of 3.85, and standard deviation of .533. Data for the

construct "interaction confidence" showed that female participants had a mean score of 3.54, and a standard deviation of .613, and the male participants had a mean of 3.51, and a standard deviation of .654. The construct "interaction attentiveness" showed female participants as having a mean of 3.60, and a standard deviation of .742, and male participants as having a mean of 3.46, and a standard deviation of .790, and finally, the construct "interaction enjoyment" showed data for female participants with a mean of 4.30, and standard deviation of .556, and the data for male participants showed a mean of 4.27, and a standard deviation of .602. Thus, no real significance was found in the relationship of the participant's sex and their scores on the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (Table 4-9).

Table 4-1 Travel length collapsed

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	no travel	62	34.4	34.4
	3 to 42 days	53	29.4	29.4
	45 to 3650 days	65	36.1	36.1
	Total	180	100.0	100.0

Table 4-2 Reliability Statistics for the 5 constructs of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Interaction Attentiveness	.783	6
Interaction Enjoyment	.641	3
Interaction Confidence	.604	3
Interaction Engagement	.586	7
Respect for Cultural Differences	.479	5

Table 4-3 Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Respect for cultural differences-8	180	1	5	4.41	.775
Interaction Engagement-13	180	2	5	4.34	.735
Interaction Engagement-1	180	2	5	4.21	.796
Respect for cultural differences-16	180	1	5	4.04	.801
Interaction confidence-3	180	2	5	3.85	.835
Interaction attentiveness-14	179	1	5	3.74	.931
Interaction Engagement-21	178	1	5	3.70	.834
Interaction attentiveness-17	180	1	5	3.69	1.020
Interaction confidence-10	180	1	5	3.63	.865
Interaction Engagement-24	180	2	5	3.63	.859
Interaction Engagement-23	179	1	5	3.60	.865
Interaction confidence-6	180	1	5	3.56	.958
Interaction Engagement-11	180	1	5	3.54	.930
Interaction attentiveness-19	180	1	5	3.24	1.017
Interaction confidence-5	180	1	5	2.73	.869
Interaction confidence-4	180	1	5	2.11	.888
Respect for cultural differences-20	179	1	5	1.89	1.005
Respect for cultural differences-2	180	1	4	1.82	.705
Interaction enjoyment-12	180	1	5	1.80	.758
Interaction enjoyment-15	180	1	5	1.76	.788
Interaction Engagement-22	180	1	5	1.73	.781
Interaction enjoyment-9	180	1	5	1.58	.732
Respect for cultural differences-7	180	1	4	1.47	.697
Respect for cultural differences-18	180	1	5	1.44	.662
Valid N (listwise)	176				

Table 4-4 Descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interaction Enjoyment Composite	180	4.2889	.56748
Respect for Cultural Differences Composite	179	3.9693	.54236
Interaction Attentiveness Composite	179	3.5587	.75584
Interaction Confidence Composite	180	3.5333	.62284
National Origin Composite	180	1.3200	.46900

Table 4-5 Hypothesis 1: Int'l Students X Domestic Students

	National Origin	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Interaction Engagement Composite	Domestic	122	3.8911	.55376	.05013
	International	56	3.9056	.51130	.06833
Respect for Cultural Differences Composite	Domestic	122	3.9440	.55983	.05068
	International	57	4.0234	.50340	.06668
Interaction Confidence Composite	Domestic	122	3.4852	.56329	.05100
	International	58	3.6345	.72754	.09553
Interaction Attentiveness Composite	Domestic	122	3.5246	.71828	.06503
	International	57	3.6316	.83258	.11028
Interaction Enjoyment Composite	Domestic	122	4.3333	.52486	.04752
	International	58	4.1954	.64295	.08442

Table 4-6 Hypothesis 2: Domestic no travel x Domestic yes travel

	Participant's travel	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Interaction Engagement Composite	No	61	3.7424	.55071	.07051
	Yes	61	4.0398	.51977	.06655
Respect for Cultural Differences Composite	No	61	3.8743	.58266	.07460
	Yes	61	4.0137	.53168	.06807
Interaction Confidence Composite	No	61	3.4131	.54756	.07011
	Yes	61	3.5574	.57401	.07349
Interaction Attentiveness Composite	No	61	3.3279	.69253	.08867
	Yes	61	3.7213	.69437	.08890
Interaction Enjoyment Composite	No	61	4.3060	.53505	.06851
	Yes	61	4.3607	.51745	.06625

Table 4-7 Hypothesis 3: graduate students x undergraduate students

	Grad and Undergrad	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Interaction Engagement Composite	Undergraduate	132	3.9372	.54841	.04773
	Graduate	46	3.7764	.49912	.07359
Respect for Cultural Differences Composite	Undergraduate	133	3.9612	.56515	.04900
	Graduate	46	3.9928	.47526	.07007
Interaction Confidence Composite	Undergraduate	133	3.5624	.57690	.05002
	Graduate	47	3.4511	.73835	.10770
Interaction Attentiveness Composite	Undergraduate	133	3.6015	.73221	.06349
	Graduate	46	3.4348	.81610	.12033
Interaction Enjoyment Composite	Undergraduate	133	4.3283	.56851	.04930
	Graduate	47	4.1773	.55539	.08101

Table 4-8 Group statistics

	Participant travel purpose study abroad	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Interaction Engagement Composite	Not Checked	121	3.8867	.55968	.05088
	Checked	57	3.9148	.49771	.06592
Respect for Cultural Differences Composite	Not Checked	122	3.9385	.55637	.05037
	Checked	57	4.0351	.50957	.06749
Interaction Confidence Composite	Not Checked	122	3.4902	.57617	.05216
	Checked	58	3.6241	.70793	.09296
Interaction Attentiveness Composite	Not Checked	122	3.5355	.75278	.06815
	Checked	57	3.6082	.76667	.10155
Interaction Enjoyment Composite	Not Checked	122	4.2951	.59720	.05407
	Checked	58	4.2759	.50393	.06617

Table 4-9 Participant sex x 5 composite variables

|	Participant's sex	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Interaction Engagement composite	Male	50	3.8543	.53334	.07543
	Female	128	3.9118	.54291	.04799
Respect for Cultural Differences composite	Male	49	3.8401	.60949	.08707
	Female	130	4.0179	.50886	.04463
Interaction Confidence composite	Male	50	3.5120	.65423	.09252
	Female	130	3.5415	.61276	.05374
Interaction Attentiveness composite	Male	49	3.4626	.79003	.11286
	Female	130	3.5949	.74244	.06512
Interaction Enjoyment composite	Male	50	4.2667	.60234	.08518
	Female	130	4.2974	.55568	.04874
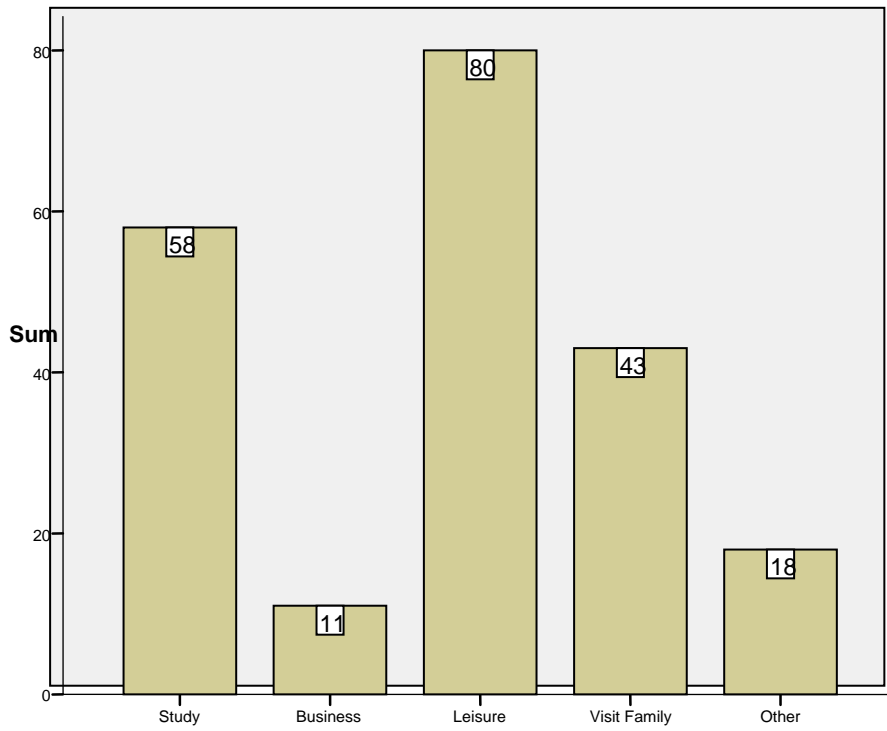
Figure 4-1 Reasons for traveling abroad

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between international travel experience and students' level of intercultural sensitivity, while looking at a variety of factors that could influence this relationship, such as whether or not the student had prior international travel experience, the time spent abroad, ethnic background/nationality, class standing at the university (i.e. freshman, sophomore, junior, senior or graduate) as well as age and gender. The types of international travel experiences examined were, travel for study abroad, business, leisure, and to visit family. The length of time spent abroad, for whatever purpose, was also measured. These differences were also explored for the three groups of students, which were 1) international students, 2) domestic students with international travel experience, and 3) domestic student without international travel experience.

International Travel Experience

The findings suggest that international travel experience has some statistically significant effect on an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity. This study's data shows that domestic students, who have international travel experience, do indeed have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than domestic students who have no international travel experience. For all of the five construct of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale; "respect for cultural differences", "interaction confidence", "interaction engagement", "interaction attentiveness", and "interaction enjoyment", the domestic students with international travel experience scored higher than did the domestic students without any international travel experience. This could be due to the fact that students who find value in traveling to international destinations, already have an increased awareness of cultural differences, and are inspired to seek out new and different cultures. One reason may be to immerse themselves in those cultures in order to learn the language of the country. When an

individual learns a new language, gaining knowledge of the source culture for that language is intrinsic within that process.

As more colleges and universities are internationalizing their campuses, the concept of international travel for academic reasons, has come to the forefront. Some college programs require students spend at least one semester studying abroad, as a condition of their completion and thus graduation from the program. Students are encouraged to study abroad, and over time, more study abroad programs have been created to target specialized areas of study or research, thus making it accessible to more students, and not just for those with a desire for language study and culture acquisition. Some of these include, mathematics in Thailand, marketing in Italy, and biology in Fiji (University of Florida International Center, 2007). Students "believe that a study-abroad experience will provide personal enrichment, travel opportunity, graduate school acceptance, job procurement, and awareness of global issues and cultural diversity" (Langley and Breese, 2005, p. 314).

International Students vs. Domestic Students

The data show no statistically significant results that international students have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than domestic students at the University of Florida. The first construct to which the international students and domestic students were compared was "respect for cultural differences." This construct represents how participants orient to or tolerate their counterparts' culture and opinion (Chen & Starosta, 2000). In this study, the international students scored higher than did the domestic students and this may be true due to the fact that people in other countries may have more exposure to events worldwide, and even foreign visitors. Most other countries around the world have a defined culture, and in some cases may remain more isolated than the United States, that prides itself on having a multicultural population with many cultures represented, as opposed to defining itself with one main culture.

However, this respect and value of a country's culture may well translate into a deeper understanding of the importance of culture, and thus a greater level of respect for cultural differences.

The next concept to which the two groups were compared was "interaction confidence." This construct is concerned with how confident participants are in the intercultural setting (Chen & Starosta, 2000). Again, the international students scored higher than did the domestic students. This may be explained by the fact that international students may feel more confident interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds because they have had lots of experience doing so possibly during their college years, and for many, during visits abroad for travel or to visit family. Another way international students may have more experience and thus confidence when interacting with people from different cultures is because the American culture is embedded in other countries by way of television, music, fashion, and most certainly by way of travelers and tourist from the United States.

In terms of the construct "interaction engagement", which is concerned with participants' feeling of participation in intercultural communication (Chen & Starosta, 2000), the international students scored higher than did the domestic students. One explanation for this could be that international students are simply more aware of their surroundings, both physical and cultural. Another explanation may be that in order to be successful in their academic endeavors, their environment requires them to engage daily with professors, administrators, and other students. As these positive interactions are a necessity of assimilation, this may contribute to the international students' higher level of interaction engagement skills.

For the construct "interaction attentiveness", which is concerned with the participants' effort to understand what is going on in intercultural interactions (Chen & Starosta, 2000), the

international students again had higher scores than the domestic students. This may be because the international students are essentially required to assimilate to the new culture in order to be successful while interacting. Likewise, these students may need to pay closer attention to what is happening in the intercultural interaction, as the many nuances of culture can be difficult to understand. In order to successfully communicate, one must understand the language as well as the culture.

The final construct against which the international students and the domestic students were compared was "interaction enjoyment." The items of this construct are mainly concerned with participants' positive or negative reaction towards communicating with people from different cultures. Interestingly, the domestic students scored higher than the international students. This could be due to the fact that domestic students have a high likelihood of coming into contact with people from different cultural backgrounds, whether it is in school, the work place, or other social gatherings.

With so many immigrants in the United States, many children are interacting with other children from different cultural backgrounds at a very early age, and this perhaps peaks an interest in new cultures, as well as sparks a subconscious sensitivity to intercultural differences and respect for cultural differences. Another explanation may be that these are university students living and/or studying at a campus with a diverse population, (3,749 international students out of the whole population of 49,650 students) where multicultural events are part of the core of the university and happen frequently. However, the international students on this campus are also exposed to the same multicultural environment, though the effects may likely have a different impact on different students.

Undergraduate Students vs. Graduate Students

The data shows that in relation to the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, graduate students do not have a statistically significant positive difference in their level of intercultural sensitivity as compared to undergraduate students. This may be due to the fact that younger students, in this case the undergraduates, are coming into contact with people from cultural backgrounds different than their own at an early age, and consequently may be more likely to have a higher level of sensitivity at an earlier age. Another explanation may be that many younger students have traveled abroad at a very young age, with their families, and so have been exposed to new cultures and other countries, and may incorporate this as a more common happening, as opposed to an isolated incident of intercultural interaction.

There was only one construct for which the graduate students had a higher score than the undergraduate students, and that was "interaction engagement." This may be due to the fact that older students in general, are more likely to feel a sense of participation during an intercultural interaction, or any kind of interaction, because they may be more comfortable with themselves as individuals, than some younger students may be.

With regard to the other four constructs, "respect for cultural differences", "interaction confidence", "interaction attentiveness", and "interaction enjoyment", the undergraduates scored higher than the graduate students, on all four constructs. This may be due to the fact that students are having more experiences in today's society, as travel is much easier now and safer, there are programs for students to study abroad, volunteer abroad, go on adventures abroad, and this may enable younger students to have more opportunity to interact with new and different cultures, thereby giving them a higher level of intercultural sensitivity, at it is represented by the constructs mentioned above.

Study Abroad

Data also show that there is no statistical significance in the level of intercultural sensitivity of students who have participated on a study abroad program, versus the level of intercultural sensitivity of students who have not participated on a study abroad program. This study may not have found any significance in levels of intercultural sensitivity for students who had participated on study abroad programs versus those who have not participated on study abroad for various reasons. This is interesting and perplexing in that so many studies have found that going on a study abroad program helps students' level of intercultural sensitivity. One reason there may not have been significance between students who have studied abroad and students who have not is that many students may have studied abroad several years ago. It is possible that one's level of intercultural sensitivity could fade over time, if the individual does not make a conscious effort to maintain contact with the new culture.

A study by Williams (2005) measured the level of increase in intercultural communication skills as affected by study abroad. She compared students participating on study abroad programs and students who stayed on campus, and did not participate on a study abroad program. The results showed that "students who studied abroad generally showed a greater increase in intercultural communication skills than the students who did not study abroad" (p. 14). Additionally, the students choosing to study abroad showed a higher level of intercultural communications skills before going abroad, as well as upon return from the study abroad program (Williams, 2005).

This is consistent with results from another study, conducted by Kitsanas (2005), in which the study data shows support for study abroad programs enhancing the cross-cultural skills of students as well as their global understanding. (Kitsanas, 2005). Specifically, "the findings demonstrated that study abroad programs significantly contribute to the preparation of students

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to, function in a multicultural world and promote international understanding" (Kitsanas, 2005, p. 447).

Additionally, a study by Penington and Wildermuth (2005) which attempted to measure the impact of short-term study abroad programs on a student's level of intercultural communication competence, found that "intercultural knowledge acquisition was found to be enhanced by the student's experience of being in a historical location or of interacting with individuals of the host culture" (Penington & Wildermuth, 2005, p. 180). The authors also noted that students reported a combination of occurrences that contributed to their feeling of cultural awareness and comfort with immersing themselves in the new culture. Those factors were the "lived experience" as well as the information provided by their pre-departure session prior to going abroad. (Penington & Wildermuth, 2005).

Male vs. Female

Although there were no statistically significant results that showed females have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than do males, the data showed that females had a higher mean score than males for all five of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale's constructs. This may be due to the fact that in many cultures, women are raised to be more aware of and attuned to feelings and the nuances that go with them than men are (Goleman, 1998). This means that the female students in this study may already have been programmed as young children, to have a higher level of empathy, making it easier for them to be culturally aware, and thus eventually leading to a higher level of intercultural sensitivity. According to Goleman (1998), the data results from the numerous tests of men and women and their empathetic abilities, generally show that "women do tend to experience this spontaneous matching of feeling with others more than men do" (Goleman, 1998, p. 322).

Importance of Findings

The findings of this study are important because they contribute to the body of knowledge on intercultural sensitivity research. In order to more fully comprehend intercultural sensitivity, it is important to understand the various factors that can affect an individual's level. While the results cannot be generalized to all students outside the participants of this study, the information presented here gives a snapshot of a small sample of a population, and how international travel can affect students at the University of Florida, in terms of their level of intercultural sensitivity. Additionally, this study shows some of the reasons behind why students choose to travel internationally. This could be valuable information for future studies, when looking at the effect of international travel.

There are many studies that have attempted to measure individuals levels of intercultural sensitivity, as well as studies that have measured study abroad students levels of intercultural sensitivity. However, there has been no study the author could find that measured international travel, including study abroad, with the scale used for this study, the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale. One study, conducted by Peng, Rangisipaht, and Thaipakdee (2005), which did employ the ISS, was a comparative study, which measured the intercultural sensitivity levels of ethnic Chinese and Thai nationals, and the effects of their level of English proficiency and intercultural experience, on their level of intercultural sensitivity. The study found that English proficiency levels and intercultural experience had a significant effect on the dimensionality of intercultural sensitivity (Peng, Rangisipaht, & Thaipakdee, 2005).

The current study is also unique as it looked specifically at the impact of international travel on an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity, while the original studies were looking for a general sense of intercultural sensitivity, as opposed to specific things that impact one's

level. Questions raised in their studies motivated the researcher to look at the impact of international travel experience as a facet for higher level of intercultural sensitivity.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations in this current study. One major limitation is that only students within the College of Journalism and Communications participated. This data cannot be generalized and thus pertains only to the students that were a part of the sample, drawn from the population of all undergraduate and graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. Students studying Journalism and Communications may already have a higher level of world awareness as well as intercultural sensitivity due to the nature of the field.

Another limitation for this study was that not all cultures were represented; only the cultures of students who chose to participate were included in the study. An additional factor to consider is that only university students were represented in the study, and in that students tend to be younger, and may have a more encompassing view of the world, they certainly do not represent the entire population.

A limitation of the methodology was that students were reached via the classroom setting, which may not have produced as representative a sample as hoped for, in that not all cultures of students at the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida were represented in the study. There were also time limitations as well as monetary limitations for this study. The data had to be collected during class times in which the professors, who agreed to allow the research in their classrooms, were holding class.

A possible major limitation of the instrument is that based on the statements of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), participants may have been able to easily guess what the scale was attempting to measure, and thus gave the "politically correct" answer, instead of what

they really felt. Participants may not have felt comfortable enough to honestly answer statements from the ISS such as "I think my culture is better than other cultures" or "I don't like to be with people from different cultures." Additionally, three statements of the scale had extremely high standard deviations, which means that the scale may benefit and produce a more accurate measure of these three concepts if the statements were reworded.

Recommendations for Further Research

One suggestion for future research would be to look at a wide variety of majors of students within the university setting, and compare their results of measured intercultural sensitivity. It would be interesting to look at for example, students from computer engineering as compared to students from the anthropology department. Additional suggestions for increasing knowledge of factors that affect intercultural sensitivity would be to look at different groups of people, other than just students. It would be interesting to examine professors at the university level, community college level, as well as teachers of secondary education. Workers in many different areas, including within the private sector, may also have different levels of intercultural sensitivity, depending on whether they interact with culturally distinct counterparts, or deal solely with other national workers.

A comparison study between national companies and international companies may show very pertinent data, while taking into account the amount of, if any, interaction with culturally diverse people takes places for business purposes. Measuring intercultural sensitivity of many more different cultures is advisable, as it is important to know how one's background influences their thoughts and patterns, as well as their level of intercultural sensitivity. Another suggestion would be to examine the role of level of education with an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity.

One recommendation would be to look at the long-term effects of study abroad on one's level of intercultural sensitivity. In that there is no data to show if one's level of intercultural sensitivity stays the same over time, or whether it fades or increases, it would be interesting to measure students before studying abroad, again immediately upon returning from being abroad, and again after one year, and lastly, five years after returning from their study abroad experience.

Additionally, there is a need to classify the study abroad experience of participants, in order to better understand the impact on intercultural sensitivity. For example, it would be helpful to know several things: 1) duration of study abroad program, 2) where the program took place, 3) type of accommodation, such as a home-stay, a private apartment, dorm room, etc., 4) and if the students studied in the host language at the foreign university or if there were special classes conducted in English.

Specifically for measuring the impact of international travel on intercultural sensitivity with the ISS, it is suggested that a set of items be developed to explain international experience, as well as to classify the types of international experience of participants. This would help in furthering the understanding of the aspects and types of international travel experience that may affect one's level of intercultural sensitivity.

A recommendation would be to improve the level of reliability of the five constructs, especially those with the lower reliability coefficients. It may help to add more items to each of the constructs, and to better formulate the items to more effectively measure this dimension of the scale. In addition, it is suggested to test for concurrent validity of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, by analyzing the ISS against another valid and reliable scale, such as the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).

Lastly, it is suggested to collect qualitative data in addition to the quantitative data from the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), in order to culminate a deeper understanding of participants' feelings and beliefs about other cultures, and about interacting with those cultures. This may help to understand how intercultural sensitivity levels of people from different generations are affected, and what may be the cause for some of those changes in thought and behavior in terms of intercultural interactions.

Conclusion

Results of this study suggest that domestic students who have traveled internationally have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than domestic students who have not traveled internationally. However, the data did not show statistically significant results to support the hypothesis that students who participated on a study abroad program had a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than students who have not participated on a study abroad program.

While this study can only draw inferences about international travel experience and its effects on an individual's level of intercultural sensitivity of students in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida, it has provided a more in-depth look at specific factors that may influence intercultural sensitivity, as well as the reasons behind why students are increasingly choosing to travel internationally. In closing, the benefits of positive intercultural interactions and intercultural sensitivity are numerous. They allow for beneficial experiences to occur inside and outside of the classroom setting, and as well as prepare future global citizens for successful intercultural interactions as they take their place in the age of globalization. As researcher Guo-Ming Chen succinctly said, "the need for intercultural communication competence in the globalizing society becomes indispensable for a peaceful and successful life in the new millennium" (Chen, 2006, p. 1).

APPENDIX
INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SCALE

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

5 = strongly agree
4 = agree
3 = somewhat agree   (Please put the number corresponding to your answer
2 = disagree   in the blank before the statement)
1 = strongly disagree

_____ 1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.
_____ 3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.
_____ 5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures
_____ 7. I don't like to be with people from different cultures.
_____ 8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.
_____ 9. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.
_____ 12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
_____ 13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.
_____ 14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 15. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.
_____ 17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
_____ 19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.
_____ 20. I think my culture is better than other cultures.
_____ 21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.
_____ 22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.
_____ 23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.
_____ 24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Alison Angley McMurray was born in 1977, in Gainesville, Florida. The youngest of three children, she grew up in Gainesville, Florida, and graduated from Gainesville High School. She attended Florida International University before enrolling at the University of Florida, where she earned her B.A. in Portuguese. Ms. McMurray also holds a graduate certificate in Translation Studies, from the University of Florida, with a focus in Portuguese to English translation. Ms. McMurray's love of language and culture led her to pursue graduate studies in intercultural communication and translation. She is engaged to Syraj Syed and lives in Gainesville, Florida with their four cats.