Are Our Efforts Worthwhile? International Students' Perceptions of a Project-Based
Program Designed to Internationalize Higher Education

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Marvin Lee Payne, who never got the chance to go to college, but who taught me how to study and encouraged me to get an education.

Abstract

      This qualitative research focuses on international students' perspectives on a project-based program designed to internationalize higher education. King and Baxter-Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity and Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory were applied to analyze reflective essays written by 60 international students who had led a Culture Corps project, and to 16 semi-structured interviews with past and present Culture Corps project leaders. Culture Corps is a program designed to "help the university community learn through the experience and knowledge of international students at the University" (ISSS, 2007) and, through this program, a diverse variety of events designed to internationalize higher education have been implemented every semester since 1999. Primary, secondary, and tertiary findings suggested that international students can benefit both personally, academically, and in future careers through the experience of having led a Culture Corps project. Personal and professional contacts made within and outside the academic community were strong themes, suggesting the importance of encouraging international students' involvement in programs like Culture Corps. International students also mentioned increasing their skills in many areas such as language, leadership, and teaching skills. Students frequently mentioned gaining confidence as a result of leading a project, and also a consistent appreciation for any financial benefits that were awarded. The reach of the program, however, remains minimal, as it was determined that approximately 1 percent of international students in the study university's campus have led a Culture Corps project. This suggests that there is much work to be done, and

many potential gains to be experienced as a result of more consistent, cohesive internationalization efforts that involve the entire university. Implications for research, policy, and practice were also addressed.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

On the surface, educational leaders agree about the importance of

internationalization. Urgent messages about internationalization of U.S. higher

education are bandied about by policymakers and academics with equal force. Every list

of educational outcomes has at least a phrase or two regarding preparing global citizens

for a diverse workforce (Evans, Carranza, & Sutton, 2007). The disagreements about

internationalization, however, begin to emerge upon discussing the details regarding

who should prepare students and how much preparation is enough. Arguments abound

about what internationalization looks like, how urgent it is, and who should be

responsible for the process (Evans et al., 2007; Mestenhauser, 1998a).

Rhetoric and reality are often at odds with one another when it comes to what an

institution of higher education should actually *do* regarding internationalization. The

meaning of those "internationalization" messages get confused by those who think we

are already "international," or lost by those who are too busy to listen. Meanwhile, the

world of higher education is changing, and the need to prepare students to have "an

empathetic understanding of others' worldviews and life experiences" is critical (Evans

et al., 2007, p. vii).

Today's U.S. college student cohorts are much different from those prior to the

1990s. Students who were previously considered minority and nontraditional are

becoming the norm (Johnstone, 1996). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) argued that the

majority of studies on college students conducted prior to the 1990s consisted of mostly

white males between the ages of 18-22. In contrast, research on college students after

1990 has reflected the composition and the needs of today's much more diverse student population, yet relatively few studies exist on the experiences of international students.

U.S. higher education has traditionally viewed international education from a mobility paradigm, seeing it as an activity that can be accomplished by study abroad. Study abroad programs, while an important component of internationalization, reaches only a very small portion of students. In the U.S., the number of students studying abroad is increasing, but the numbers are still very low: According to data from the American Council on Education (ACE), only 10% of college students study abroad, and of that 10%, most plan to study abroad for one month or less (Green & Olson, 2003). Opens Doors (2007) stated that interest in study abroad is increasing, but a few concerns remain. Western Europe is still the focal point of study abroad, for example, Britain, Italy, Spain, and France remain the top four study abroad destinations for American university students, attracting 95,670 (43%) of the total 223,534 students who studied abroad during the academic year 2005/2006. Also, the participation rates in study abroad among underrepresented students remain stagnant (McMurtrie, 2007). More wide-reaching internationalization efforts are in order. Paige (2003) contended that study abroad is just one element of internationalization and "cannot serve as the only institutional vehicle for internationalization" (Paige, 2003, p. 53). In order to be more effective, study abroad must work in conjunction with other internationalization components and must be viewed from the perspective of a much bigger, more systematic plan (Paige, 2003).

This qualitative study was designed to examine the reflections of international students who have participated in Culture Corps, a program designed to involve

international graduate and undergraduate students in internationalizing higher education. As Knight (2004) has asserted, internationalization is influenced by nation and sector levels in terms of policy, "yet it is usually at the individual, institutional level that the real process of internationalization is actually taking place" (p. 2). This study contributes to the literature of examining internationalization at an institutional level and provides further insights into the kinds of experiences that provide a positively internationalized learning environment for international students and into what kinds of experiences can also benefit the university and its students.

Problem Statement

Several issues serve as the context for examining the problem and are discussed more fully in the next chapter. Briefly, these issues are as follows: International education continues to be fragmented in its approach, and reaches only a small proportion of college students (Evans, et al., 2007). Domestic students are not adequately being prepared to be global citizens. In addition, although there is still a strong international student presence on U.S. campuses, international students and domestic students often do not integrate with one another (Leask, 2006; Teekens, 2006; Lee & Rice, 2007). Added to this is the fact that the United States is also increasingly viewed as an unwelcoming place (Lee & Rice, 2007; Salerno et al., 2007), and despite the possibility of obtaining visas, some international students may simply choose to study elsewhere. International students have more choices than ever before of where to study and work, and the commonly held assumption that the U.S. still holds a place as a priority destination for students from other countries is now no longer valid.

Proactively internationalizing higher education should involve designing programs to encourage students to obtain the skills they need for learning. Conducting research on existing internationalization programs could help to clarify what elements of those programs appear to be effective, and which elements may still have marginal influence. Research of this nature also begins conversations regarding how to take the rhetoric of internationalization down to a more practical, implementable level.

Purpose Statement

Examining international students' experiences after having led a project through the Culture Corps program through use of frameworks based in learning theory and in intercultural maturity development brings together two areas which have been cited in the literature as needing more study: international student involvement in their host countries and their experiences and concerns (Lee & Rice, 2007), plus the development of intercultural maturity, a critical element in preparing students to function more effectively in a diverse, global society (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Qualitative studies are conducted when "a problem or issue needs to be explored" (Cresswell, 2007, p. 39). An analysis of international students' learning and development while studying in their host country can be an important element in understanding the nuances of international education programs. To understand international students' experiences leading Culture Corps projects, I used existing data in the form of reflective essays that students are required to write upon completion of the program, and I also conducted semi-structured interviews with international students who were either participating in the Culture Corps program or who had

completed a Culture Corps project. Triangulation, which can increase the credibility of collected data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), was achieved by comparing the results of the semi-structured interview data and essay data. According to Denzen (1978) and Patton (1999), methods triangulation, or examining the consistency of findings resulting from different forms of data collection, can provide qualitative researchers a means of achieving deeper understanding of the data and make the analysis richer and more complex. Prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews, a small pilot study of two additional Culture Corps students was also conducted.

Research Question

The research question for this study was: What themes emerge from international students' reflections about their participation in a project-based program designed to internationalize higher education? Within this primary research question, three sub-questions were also generated based on existing research and preliminary investigation. These questions pertain to skills Culture Corps participants may have gained through the process of having led a Culture Corps project, and to the extent to which international students may obtain increased involvement and a sense of belonging in the campus community.

Sub-question 1: What skills does a Culture Corps participant obtain by designing a Culture Corps project?

Sub-question 2: Are international students' experiences in leading a Culture Corps project effective in encouraging self-efficacy and increased involvement in the host country?

Sub-question 3: Which theoretical framework does a better job of matching the categories of impact generated by an analysis of students' reflections about their participation?

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Methodological Overview

This qualitative study followed Cresswell's (2007) narrative qualitative analysis model. According to Cresswell (2007), narrative "originates from the humanities and social sciences" (p. 9) and are appropriate to apply when studying one or more individuals and collecting data primarily from documents and interviews. This qualitative study was designed to examine the learning that occurs in a program designed to "help the university community learn through the experience and knowledge of international students at the University" (ISSS, 2007). Given the need for higher education to prepare global citizens and an overall lack of a coherent, systematic approach to doing so, it is important to examine existing internationalization programs in order to gain understanding of what these practices contribute in practical terms to the academic community. Existing data was examined via an analysis of reflective essays written by international students who have led Culture Corps projects from the years 2001 to 2006, and through information gathered from semi-structured interviews with international students who have led at least one Culture Corps project.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Literature related to globalization, Internationalization of Higher Education, and Internationalization at Home frames the study by outlining the context in which international student issues, student development, intercultural maturity, and learning theory can be best understood. Paige (2005) has explained that globalization is "about the world order" and internationalization as "about organizations and institutions such as universities" (Paige, 2005, p. 101). Internationalization at Home provides an international dimension to higher education for everyone, and not just a small percentage of faculty and staff who study or work abroad (Nilsson, 2003, p.1). As Nilsson (2003) stated, Internationalization at Home is not a new idea, but a re-conceptualized notion which arose out of a need to "to embrace the whole university" (Nilsson, 2003, p.1).This literature review is divided into three sections. First, I review literature on globalization, Internationalization of Higher Education, and Internationalization at Home. Second, I review literature on international students. Third, I provide a literature for examining student development in the context of facilitating intercultural maturity in both international and host country (domestic) students. King and Baxter Magolda's Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) and Mezirow's Transformative Theory (1991) provide the elements of the derived conceptual framework that will be used for this study.

Globalization, Internationalization, and Internationalization at Home

The following section distinguishes the differences between the terms globalization, internationalization, and International at Home by using the literature reviewed for this study. These three terms are often misconstrued; therefore, a brief discussion of the terms is necessary. Altbach and Knight (2006) argued that while internationalization has always been present in universities, but what differs at present is the fact that globalization is now an inevitable force that is changing the landscape of higher education. As Altbach (2005) asserted,

> Perhaps the main difference between now and then: globalization in the 21st century is truly worldwide in reach—few places can elude contemporary trends since modern technology enables rapid dispersion of innovations and practices (p. 64).

The terms globalization and internationalization are terms that are often mistakenly interchanged, and while one impacts the other, they have clearly distinguishable features (Wächter, 2000). Wächter (2000) asserted that globalization is "a relatively uncontrolled process," while internationalization is "based on conscious action" (Wächter, 2000, p. 10). Perhaps the best definition to date is from Altbach and Knight (2006), who define globalization as an "economic, political, and societal force pushing 21st century higher education toward greater national involvement" (p. 27).

Although globalization has a powerful impact on higher education, we should not assume that everyone now shares one global culture (Grunzweig & Rinehart, 2002). Information and communication technology have reshaped our lives; communication across the globe is instantaneous and has provided unprecedented levels of readily

available information. Within this deceptive blanket of technological closeness, however, an informed recognition of cultural differences has never been more important (Teekens, 2003). Teekens (2003), in an article discussing the competencies required for teaching in an international classroom, argued:

> In education, and especially in international education, we are dealing with the complex questions of how to deal with a future in which old borders have lost their meaning but where new boundaries between people may create dangerous obstacles. Consider, for example, the renewed racial tensions in many parts of the world. Intercultural experiences can profoundly affect perceptions and create the openness that is necessary to foster cultural diversity in the international classroom and education as a whole (p. 115).

Globalization and internationalization of higher education raise complex issues about how to teach in a diverse and changing environment. Adapting to today's global context takes a willingness to examine how students perceive and make sense of the world. It also involves knowing that simply being in a multicultural or intercultural environment does not necessarily lead to intercultural learning, and that the conditions to promote such learning must be put in place by educators (Teekens, 2000).

Internationalization of Higher Education

According to the American Council on Education (2003), internationalization of higher education constitutes a transformation that affects teaching, research, service, and outreach missions. Internationalization of higher education goes far beyond competitive rhetoric and represents "a profound intellectual change," which demands

continuous exploration of "difficult questions about how we see the world, what mental models we unknowingly use to filter knowledge, and what information is worth knowing and why" (Green & Olson, 2003, p. 25).

Internationalization provides a wide arena of possibilities within which to create the type of learning environment that colleges and universities need in order to be more effective in preparing students for a world in which global and local issues cannot be separated. In order for U.S. higher education to make the changes it needs to make, a systemic approach should be taken in which internationalization involves all levels of the university, involves faculty, staff, students, and administrators, and is implemented at a practical level, far beyond rhetoric and into effective practice (Evans et al., 2007; Mestenhauser, 2002b).

International education does have a fixed definition, and approaches to international education appropriately vary according to nation, sector, and institutional contexts (Knight & de Wit, 1995). Knight's description of international education is as a process which has an evolutionary, developmental quality (Knight, 2004). Knight (2004) provided a working definition of international education as a system-wide approach, stating that "internationalization at the national/sector/institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education (p. 11).

Knight (1994) previously defined internationalization as "the process of integrating an international or intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and services functions of the institutions" (Knight, 2004). Knight has updated this definition to further emphasize process, function, and delivery of international education. Knight's

(2004) definition addressed the complexity of internationalization, and the fact that although globalization and national and sector level influences are key elements in internationalization, the process of internationalization occurs at the institutional level. Attention, therefore, to "process, function, and delivery" (p. 10) are of critical importance to a varied and contextual higher education system.

Specific attention should be paid to the word *process* in Knight's (2004) definition, because it underlines the need for internationalization to be conceived as "evolutionary" or "developmental" (p. 7). The developmental nature of internationalization of higher education underlines the need for internationalization to be of a continual and not an additive nature. In addition, when considering the process, reflection upon whether or not what is being done in internationalization is actually effective comes forth logically, as part of the process.

Ellingboe (1999) argued that for a college to be internationalized, system-wide changes to internationalize higher education should occur in these areas: 1) College Leadership, 2) Internationalized Curriculum, 3) Study Abroad Programs, 4) Faculty with International Experiences and/or Interests, 5) International Students and Scholars, and 6) International Student Services Units. These multiple perspectives to international education should be viewed as interrelated and there should be "a coherent relationship between these activities, brought about by some form of institution-wide coordination and central steering" (Wächter, 2000, p. 6).

Paige and Mestenhauser (1999) defined internationalization as an "internationalized mindset" containing dimensions which include "integrative, intercultural, interdisciplinary, transfer-of-knowledge-technology, contextual, and

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global" (Paige, 1999, p. 504). Knowledge is not simply taken from one setting and put into another, but borrowed, compared, and learned from in order to create new levels of understanding (Paige, 1999). The social, political, and global settings from which knowledge arose are carefully considered in order to more fully comprehend the theories and practices that have been created (Geertz, 1973; Hall, 1959, 1966, 1976, 1983; Lai, 1997 Robertson, 1992; Stallings, 1995 as cited in Paige & Mestenhauser, 1999).

Vision: Examples of Internationalization

McCarthy (2007), reflecting on twenty years of involvement in internationalization efforts, recently outlined the difference between successful and unsuccessful internationalization efforts. To McCarthy, the difference lies in whether or not the internationalization effort is campus-wide and involves everyone, from university leaders to students and the surrounding community (McCarthy, 2007). McCarthy (2007) divided this requirement into three categories: 1) articulating a bold vision, 2) investing in the vision, and 3) sustaining the vision.

First, articulating a bold vision means that an internationalization plan will begin from the mission statement and core values of a university, and "will take the institution's basic identity and project it onto a global stage" (McCarthy, 2007, p. B12). One of McCarthy's (2007) examples of such a step is "a land-grant university rooted in agricultural-extension efforts beginning to explore alternative bio-fuels with Brazilian researchers" (p. B12).

Second, investing in the vision involves financial and human resources. McCarthy (2007) related prior, failed efforts to recruit student participation in an exchange program in China. The program was redesigned involve faculty, and provided incentives for participation. Through that initial faculty involvement, the program grew and involved more faculty and students, and this involvement was subsequently reflected in the university's curriculum. Finally, sustaining the vision requires an entire university effort that involves a long-term commitment. McCarthy used the University of Minnesota's "curriculum integration initiative" as an example of sustaining the vision of internationalization. The University of Minnesota's Learning Abroad Center prepares faculty and advisers on study abroad, supports site visits, provides workshops, and assists educators in internationalizing their courses (McCarthy, 2007).

Internationalization of higher education is a transformation that must involve all stakeholders, not just those who are interested in or able to study abroad in other countries. The concept discussed in the following section, Internationalization at Home, does much to advance universities in the paradigm shift that must take place for internationalization to occur.

Internationalization at Home

Nilsson's (2003) concept of Internationalization at Home (IaH), defined as "any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student mobility" (p. 31), can be helpful in reframing the way U.S. higher education responds to a need for intercultural education. The idea of Internationalization at Home is to involve the entire university in international education, where connections between global and local issues

can be created and taught, and where interaction and learning between different cultures and beliefs can be proactively encouraged to be part of a new vision of what U.S. higher education could be.

According to data from the American Council on Education (ACE), only 10% of U.S. college students study abroad, and of that 10%, most plan to study abroad for one month or less (Green & Olson, 2003). White females constitute the majority of study abroad students. In 2004, for example, 83% were White/Caucasian, and 65.5% were female (Institute of International Education, 2007). Internationalization at Home can be an effective institutional response to low participation rates in studies abroad (Paige, 2003).

Internationalization at Home fits into the scheme of higher education in a more inclusive way, bringing domestic and international diversity issues together, and has the capacity to dramatically change the educational environment and shift the focus on what students learn as opposed to what they "do" in international education (Mestenhauser, 2003). Internationalization at Home also helps in shifting the view of international students as a revenue source to going back to what international education was originally intended to do: promote diplomacy among nations, create goodwill, and increase intercultural learning.

Horn, Hendel, and Fry (2004), in an analysis of internationalization indicators of 77 research universities, developed a list of 19 indicators with which to examine the international rankings of universities. The authors derived their framework from Mestenhauser's (2002) systems perspective, which delineates seven key domains within which internationalization can occur. Mestenhauser's domains in a systems perspective

of international education include international students/relations, area studies, foreign languages, international dimensions of academic disciplines, educational exchanges of students and scholars, development contracts and inter-university partnerships, and organization, policies, administration, and governance (Horn, Hendel, & Fry, 2004; Mestenhauser, 2002b, p. 175). Variables connected to all of the domains include stakeholders and constituents, geographic and cultural scope, knowledge, teaching, and learning, and context (Mestenhauser, 2002b).

Horn, et al. (2004) combined domains from Mestenhauser's (2002) systems framework and, using their 19 indicators with which to measure internationalization, then sorted them into five rubrics. Their list for measurement subsequently included student characteristics (7 indicators), scholar characteristics (3 indicators), research orientation (3 indicators), curricular content (3 indicators), and organizational support (3 indicators) (Horn et al., 2004). The authors asserted that institutional leadership plays a key role in internationalization. Two of the institutions that rated among the top 11 institutions, Michigan State University and the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, have "quite extensive operations aimed at internationalization" (Horn et al., 2004, p. 30; Paige, 2003).

One specific example of an International at Home initiative is the Culture Corps program at a public research university whose Carnegie classification is Very High Research Activity. Programs designed to involve international students have existed for many years. Learning with Foreign Students, an intercultural program designed at the study institution in the 1970s, provides an early example of the value of involving international students in intercultural programs (Mestenhauser & Barsig, 1977; Peterson

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et al., 1999). Another more recent example of a program that involves international students at this same university is a program called Culture Corps, which provides stipends to international students who design projects that bring their international experiences and perspectives to the university, either within or outside of the classroom (ISSS, 2006).

International Students and their Experiences in U.S. Higher Education

A good way to integrate international students into campus life is to involve them in internationalization efforts through programs that reward their efforts and encourage their leadership skills, personal growth, and overall satisfaction with their new environment (Bari, April 10, 2007 personal communication). This, in turn, can serve to promote the U.S. as a future study abroad destination for future students from their countries of origin.

International students promote international goodwill and understanding through exposure to new and unfamiliar traditions and ways of organizing reality. International students contribute to our knowledge economy, particularly in the sciences, and "bring global expertise and the international dimensions and perspectives of their disciplines" (NAFSA, 2006, p. 3). When encouraged to do so, international students can provide important perspectives from other countries, and they also generally have had prior professional experience in their fields, and often have expertise that can go untapped (Bari, April 10, 2007 personal communication).

However, the United States is becoming a less desirable destination for international students. According to the Institute of International Education (IIE, 2006),

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the year 2004/2005 marked the first decline in international student enrollment since 1971, dropping 2.4% (IIE, 2006). Of these drops in enrollment, students from the Middle East made up a drop of 9%, and students from Saudi Arabia dropped 16 percent (IIE, 2006). The academic year 2003/2004 saw a very small increase of 0.6% in international student enrollment; prior to that there had been a 5-year period marked by steady growth (IIE, 2006).

The period between 2001 and 2005 saw dramatic decreases in international student enrollment. During this same period, the number of international students studying in Japan, Australia, and France also increased. A recent 2007 Open Doors Report showed that foreign student enrollment levels in the United States have significantly rebounded since 2001; according to the report there were 582,984 foreign students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities during 2006, representing an increase of 18,218 over the year 2005 and "only 3,339 fewer than the highest number recorded" (McCormack, 2007, p. A31).

Momentary rebounds in enrollment numbers, however, do not tell the entire story. The United States is losing its market share of international students, and the U.S. is falling out of favor as a study destination for international students (Cohen, 2005; Jenkins, 2005; Lee & Rice, 2007; McCormack, 2007). The consequences of not responding quickly enough to the profoundly negative impact that terrorist attacks of September 11th on New York City had on U.S. higher education are still being felt, and literature generated after this date suggests that the long-term results will be even deeper than previously imagined (Lee & Rice, 2007; Salerno et al., 2007). Tightened visa regulations put in place by the Department of Homeland Security after September

11th made studying in the United States much more difficult than before. These regulations also included a complicated and costly renewal process, and stories of international students unable to finish almost-completed studies due to visa renewal complications abound (Salerno et al., 2007). Although many of the visa regulations put in place immediately after the events of 9/11 have been eased in the last few years, perceptions of the difficulty in obtaining and maintaining student visas remain strong.

Rapidly improving methods of distance learning, intercontinental university alliances, programs offered in English in foreign countries, aggressive recruiting strategies, and increased job opportunities abroad have provided international students with reasons to stay home or go to destinations other than the United States (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Salerno et al., 2007). The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) 2007 forum asserted that the U.S. federal government must strike an appropriate balance among "protecting our national security interests, ensuring our long-term competitiveness, encouraging growth in the developing world, and building bridges with other nations and their people" (Salerno et al., 2007, p. 1).

Programs that aid international students in using their prior knowledge and developing further skills and abilities while in their host country could serve to aid U.S. higher education in making fundamental changes in the way internationalization of higher education is approached. Most of the literature on international students has stemmed from psychology, and focuses primarily on the problems international students have in adjusting to their host society and on their levels of satisfaction (Lee & Rice, 2007; Marginson, 2007). As Marginson (2007) recently contended, such a focus views international students from the cultural assumptions of the host country and in terms of

marketing or "cash cow" objectives which "largely eliminate the distinctive cross-border student voices in advance" (p. 5). Research that focuses on what approaches can be taken to help international students integrate into the host culture by building on their existing skills and adding new knowledge may help to create the type of environment necessary to internationalize higher education. One way to begin focusing on what can be done to promote a more positive approach to international student involvement is to examine the question: What themes emerge from international students' reflections about their participation in a project-based program designed to internationalize higher education?

The assumption that a demographically diverse environment will automatically lead to interaction and learning among diverse student groups remains present in the way educational leaders approach higher education (Chang, Denson, Sáenz, & Misa, 2006; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1996). However, the "mere consumption of difference," as Teekens (2006) stated, "does not lead to learning, let alone changes in attitude" (p. 9). Having a racially and ethnically diverse student body may increase opportunities for interaction and learning, but a climate that encourages this interaction should also be present (Gurin, 1999; Terenzini, Cabrera, & Colbeck, 2001). Without this environment, we are likely to produce a seemingly diverse community that divides itself into cultural groups that scarcely interact with one another.

Simple "sink or swim" methods of exposing international students to their host countries do not provide the supports necessary for academic performance and social integration. Universities need to recognize the fact that students' well-being extends far

past academic performance by providing assistance in other areas of daily functioning. The simple act of moving from one culture to another and of being estranged from familiar surroundings can be, for some students, tremendous and even traumatizing. What we see as good grades on report cards may not necessarily be translating as general success and well-being outside of the campus.   Paige (1993) contended that "communicating and interacting with culturally different others is psychologically intense" (p. 1). This difficulty, if not skillfully addressed, can make interaction among diverse groups of students unlikely to occur beyond a very superficial level. According to Paige (1993), the "psychological intensity" (p. 4) of the intercultural experience depends on factors such as previous experience in other cultures, foreign language ability, and level of ethnocentricity.

Effective intercultural education requires cognitive, behavioral, and affective forms of learning and requires that students expand their thinking and become more comfortable with ambiguity (Paige, 1993). Leask (2006) averred that the lack of interaction between international and domestic students is a barrier to internationalization of higher education, and argued for a recognition of interaction among diverse groups as "an effortful process" and one which calls for a "culture of internationalization" in order for meaningful interaction among diverse student groups to begin to occur (Leask, 2006, p. 120).

Students have much to gain by interacting with others who present different worldviews and customs. Benefits of diversity include "enhanced self-confidence, motivations, intellectual and civic development, educational aspirations, cultural awareness, and commitment to racial equity" (Antonio, 2002; Chang, 1999; Chang,

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Astin, & Kim, 2004; Gurin et al, 2002, as cited in Chang et al., 2006, p. 321). Other benefits include a richer and more varied educational environment, a promotion of personal growth, a healthy society capable of understanding and negotiating differences, increased development of cognitive complexity, and a more competitive workforce (Terenzini, Cabrera, Colbeck, Bjorklund, & Parente, 2002).

Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) recent meta-analytic study of Allport's (1958) Intergroup Contact Theory, which analyzed 713 independent samples from 515 studies, provided conclusive evidence that race relations can improve through interaction with people from diverse racial/ethnic groups, and that this theory can be extended to other groups besides racial and ethnic groups. It is not difficult to hypothesize, then, that relationships among people from different countries might be affected positively through interactions among students across the globe. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) asserted that institutional support can be an essential factor in encouraging intergroup contact, and suggest further research be done on creating the kinds of conditions that reduce the anxiety that individuals may feel when interacting with unfamiliar groups of people. Institutions which provide a consistent, coherent message of the importance of international education, for example, may provide programs both within and outside of the classroom to encourage this type of learning to occur (McCarthy, 2007).

Hurtado, Milam, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1998) argued that educational leaders should consider racial/ethnic issues from each institutional context in order to create more effective policies and practices. The authors outlined the institutional framework for a campus to create the necessary environmental conditions for diversity to have a positive impact on students, which should include the diversity that

international students bring to campus. They suggested an assessment of four dimensions of an institutional context, to include the "historical legacy of inclusion," the "structural diversity," the "psychological climate," and the "behavioral climate" (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998, p. 280). Viewing an institutional framework this way allows for a better understanding of the structures that need to be in place in order for change to occur. Additionally, these four dimensions could be placed under an overarching framework of internationalization of higher education.

Global and domestic issues are no longer mutually exclusive, if they ever were (Evans et al., 2007; Olson, Evans, & Schoenberg, 2007). Issues such as racism and immigration, for example, can be communicated to students on a much deeper, multidimensional level when common threads that cross national boundaries are created (Evans et al., 2007). Including international students is a natural step and is one which can "prepare our graduates for a future where local and global issues are irrevocably related, and where dealing with cultural diversity is not limited to conditions across the national border" (Teekens, 2006).

Despite the need to create the conditions that encourage international education to occur and the many methods recommended to create such conditions, there is a significant difference between what is said and what is actually being done in international education (Green & Olson, 2003; Mestenhauser, 1998b). Talk of globalization and efforts to internationalize our universities is often demonstrated by enrollment numbers and initiatives designed for international involvement, yet numbers and initiatives alone do not give an accurate portrayal of the interaction between

international and host country students, nor do they examine the influence of international student presence.

Research suggests that although international students have the potential to contribute to campus life both in and out of the classroom, they often are not provided the opportunities to do so (Perucci & Hu, 1995; Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005). International students are often frustrated because it is not easy to establish connections with students in their host country. In the absence of being enabled to become fully immersed in their new host country environment, these students quickly begin to show strong preferences for establishing friendship groups from individuals from their own country or region of the world (Perucci & Hu, 1995; Zhao et al., 2005).

How international students are engaged on university campuses has little presence in the literature, which has mainly focused on international student adjustment issues (Perucci & Hu, 1995; Zhao et al., 2005). Research on adjustment has shown that factors such as level of English language ability, marital status, and country of origin have a significant impact on international student adjustment (Culha, 1974; Galloway & Jenkins, 2005). However, there is much to be explored regarding international students' level of interaction with faculty and peers, what they learn and what they can teach others, and the extent to which they are able to integrate into their host societies (Lee & Rice, 2007; Zhao et al., 2005).

There is a growing body of research on racial and ethnic diversity, which does not directly address racial and ethnic diversity of international students, but is nevertheless related in terms of potential effects on Caucasian students. A substantial portion of the research on diversity centers on enrolling and retaining underrepresented

students (Chang et al., 2006). An additional body of research has centered on how diverse campuses can provide a richer educational experience for all students and prepare them to work in today's diverse workforce (Chang et al., 2006; Gurin, 1999; Hurtado et al., 1996; Terenzini et al., 2001). Many studies have listed the educational benefits of peer interaction between diverse racial and ethnic groups (Antonio, 2002; Astin, 2002; Milem & Hakuta, 2002; Terenzini et al., 2002). However, research also suggests that interaction among college students from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds is not automatic (Chang et al., 2006; Gurin, 1999; Hurtado et al., 1996; Terenzini et al., 2001). International students often experience difficulty in establishing relationships with domestic students (Babbitts, 2001; Leask, 2006; Lee & Rice, 2007; Peterson, Briggs, Dreasher, Horner, & Nelson, 1999). Interaction between students from diverse racial groups, whether domestic or international, is an area of study that needs further attention.

Allport's (1958) Intergroup Contact Theory posited that race relations can improve through interaction with people from diverse racial/ethnic groups. Allport (1958) asserted that race relations can improve when diverse racial and ethnic groups interact with one another, but was also careful to underline that these improvements in relations only occur when optimal conditions are present (Allport, as cited in Chang et al., 2006, p. 433). When intergroup contact occurs between people of equal status who share common goals, for example, it is more likely that the results of the cross-racial interaction will be beneficial than if the contact occurred between groups of unequal status (Chang et al., 2006).

Much of the literature on international students has centered on adjustment or acculturation, but looking through this lens may be shifting focus away from larger problems[1]. Less attention has been paid to the social context of higher education and how the structure within the host society may impede or actually discourage intercultural learning (Lee & Rice, 2007). Further analysis of the social and academic environment of U.S. higher education with respect to how it impacts international students' experiences may provide helpful insights not previously considered, such as how to facilitate personal and academic development in international students.

One problem in this review is that most of the existing research on international students has been conducted either for students from the United States who have participated in study abroad or on the adjustment of international students studying in colleges and universities in the United States. No theoretical models similar to those of Perry (1968) or Chickering (1969, 1993) could be found to address how students develop in other countries, nor have researchers from other countries developed frameworks similar to King and Baxter Magolda's model, which focuses on the development of intercultural maturity, or Mezirow, which focuses on transformational learning. This raises the issue of validity for models developed in one culture and context and to their applicability for examining development of students from other countries. The critical nature of looking at the broader social and academic issues that international students experience, however, remains, and we begin with the tools we have while diligently developing others.

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[1] Scholars have argued that the term "adjustment" implies that something is wrong with the sojourner. Furnham and Bochner (1986) use the term "cultural accomodotation; Berry (1990) uses the term "acculturation."

Babbitts (2001) provided perspective on international students' experiences in the United States. Babbitts (2001) interviewed 20 Japanese women of a wide variety of ages who had studied abroad in the United States. Babbitts' interviewees saw the United States as a destination that provides a rich source of diversity among people and ideas; however, Babbitts' interview participants related much easier to other international students than to U.S. American students. International students often challenged their views of the world, and perhaps as a result "learned to juggle different versions of 'the self' and to integrate non-Japanese attitudes and perspectives into their lives" (p. 17).

Babbitts' interviewees stated that interacting with people from backgrounds different from their own had allowed them to gain perspective regarding their own culture and communication styles. This interaction also improved their abilities to move back and forth between the communication styles and dialects appropriate for specific social and academic contexts. For example, one woman who had studied in the United States and then returned to Japan to work as an interpreter reported an experience she had while translating for a group of American and Japanese authorities who had met to negotiate educational policy. Frustrated by listening to the Japanese men agreeing to everything the Americans proposed, the interpreter stepped out of her culturally placed position and told the Japanese men to stop accepting everything the Americans said. A conversation ensued between the Japanese men and the interpreter about whether or not it was polite to disagree. Afterwards, the interpreter's next translation to the Americans was one word: No! (Babbitts, 2001). This interpreter's experience provides just one example of the value of understanding other cultures and other languages, but one might imagine that the interpreter had many other, similar experiences where her culture and

language skills helped her to better understand and handle unfamiliar situations, or to seek new information that might aid her in comprehending otherwise confusing events.

Little has been written about the environment that international students encounter both on and off campuses in the United States. Lee and Rice (2007) recently conducted a case study in a large, Southwestern public university to examine the experiences and perceptions of international students in higher education through the lens of neo-racism, in which the emphasis is shifted from biological discrimination to differences in culture. Neo-racism shifts the emphasis from skin color to differences based on natural superiority due to culture and nationality, which gives way to discrimination which appears natural and contextual.

Lee and Rice (2007) interviewed 24 students from 15 different countries and examined both perceptions and experiences of international students studying in the United States. According to this study, international students repeatedly encounter misinformation and stereotypes about their countries and cultures, indifference to anything that "isn't American", and overt racism and discrimination both in and out of the classroom. Many of the international students in this study reported never having had to face discrimination in their home countries, but experiencing it early on in their stay in the United States. White international students experienced little or no difficulties, but witnessed discrimination against other international students. Students who struggled with English had an especially difficult time. Some spoke of being excluded from study groups and social events. Professors, too, appeared to be part of the problem, lacking patience with those students who did not speak English very well.

Lee and Rice (2007) argued that it is necessary to go beyond problematizing international students' adjustment, which often contains an underlying premise that international students have the responsibility to adjust and that nothing is wrong with the environment. Their study raised serious concerns about the United States as a host country. International students in the United States often struggle to become accustomed to a new culture and a very different educational system (Lee & Rice, 2007; Paige, 1990a). According to Paige (1990), one of the major stresses that international students experience is "a significant status reduction from professional person back to student" (Paige, 1990a, p. 167). This type of stress has always been present, but the post 9/11 atmosphere in the United States, combined with an abundance of appealing and often more affordable alternatives for international students to study elsewhere, may cause additional challenges for U.S. higher education. Creative programs designed to encourage international students to build on their existing knowledge and construct new knowledge while in their host country can mitigate some of the stresses international students face and also serve to make them feel more welcome (M. Bari, personal communication, June 14, 2007).

Prior studies of international students' experience support the argument that attention must be paid to the climate that international students encounter when studying in the United States. Perrucci and Hu (1995) conducted a quantitative study of 1,200 international students at a large Midwestern university, examining questionnaire data to understand the factors relating to international students' experiences in their host cultures. Perrucci and Hu (1995) concluded that less emphasis should be placed on adjustment and more on satisfaction with social and educational experiences. According

to Perrucci and Hu (1995), educational leaders should offer programs that allow for international students to more effectively integrate into their host society, both in and out of the classroom. Perruci and Hu (1995) suggested that future research should focus less on international students' issues surrounding adjusting to their host society and instead put emphasis on what inadequacies may exist in the host society and how those inadequacies might be addressed. Schram and Lauver (1988), in a quantitative study of international student alienation, found that contact with people from the host country and graduate student status negatively correlated with alienation, which was described as feelings of powerlessness and social isolation. They also found that international students from Europe are much more likely to be able to adjust than those with non-European origins.

Otten (2003), in a paper discussing the impact of diversity in European higher education under the context of Internationalization at Home, emphasizes the importance of integrating international students. As Otten (2003) asserts:

> Foreign students often purely rely on the social network of members of their
> own cultural background, almost without contact with either other foreigners or
> host culture members. If early ties are not made, there is the danger of an
> irreversible isolated retreat into students' own cultural colonies. (p. 17)

Extending beyond a focus on international students' adjustment to the host society raises many important questions regarding what kind of climate international students may be facing when studying in the United States, and how the experiences that international students face may also depend on whether or not they are perceived as a minority in their host culture. In addition, this perspective encourages more emphasis to

be placed on programs that facilitate international student integration into the host society.

Trice (2003), in a qualitative study of four different academic departments at a top Midwestern university, interviewed an unspecified number of faculty members from each of the four different academic departments and examined faculty perceptions of international graduate students. Trice found faculty are often unaware of the most pressing issues in international graduate students' lives, tending to overestimate some of the students' problems and be almost completely unaware of others. The most significant finding in Trice's study was that faculty appeared to be oblivious to international students' desire to integrate with American students in their departments. Faculty incorrectly assumed that international students wanted to associate solely with other international students, and that their lack of integration was quite simply a lack of desire to integrate (Trice, 2003).

Authors examining social context are careful to remind readers that there should be no "one-size-fits-all" program available for international students (Galloway & Jenkins, 2005; Schram & Lauver, 1988). Schram and Lauver (1988), in suggesting improved institutional practices such as "buddy" programs, recommend that strategies to assist international students be custom-fit to specific cultural backgrounds. Galloway (2005) asserts that although level of facility with English is an important factor in international students' experiences, other factors such as "marital status, country of origin, gender, and time at the university" are also crucial factors for administrators to take into consideration when planning activities and programs for international students (p. 176). Faculty and administrators use their time, energy, and resources more

efficiently when they have first identified the needs of the student populations for whom they are designing programs and activities. Cultures, contexts, and students' needs vary widely. Based on the research available, it is evident that much more work needs to be done in creating the kind of university climate that welcomes and integrates international students and embraces both domestic and international diversity.

Student Development, Diversity, and Intercultural Maturity

Introduction

The following sections outline student development theory and intercultural maturity. First, I discuss portions of student development theory from Perry's Four Major Periods of Intellectual Development (1968) and Chickering's Seven Vectors Model (1969, 1993). I briefly discuss these theories as they apply to laying the groundwork for further, more in-depth understanding of student development as it applies in the context of designing more effective programs for international students, and I also present additional literature on diversity, intercultural maturity and student development. Second, I introduce my conceptual framework, which I draw from King and Baxter Magolda's Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) and Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory.

My rationale for combining intercultural development theory and learning theory as a model was to utilize theories that put a focus on international students' reflections on their experiences in having done an internationalization of higher education project. King and Baxter Magolda's work is based largely on research done on undergraduate college and university students, while Mezirow's work is centered on

adult learning theory.   Although King and Baxter Magolda's and Mezirow's theories

are based on Western thought, a combination of these two theories can provide a useful

beginning point in understanding what could be done to aid in the understanding of

international students' growth and experiences in their host countries. The framework I

present was designed to aid in examining what international students learn when

participating in programs designed to promote the internationalization of higher

education. In addition to discussing the work of these two theories, I also use articles

and models to support the research surrounding my conceptual frameworks to enrich the

context of my literature review.

Perry's Four Major Periods of Intellectual Development

Perry's (1968) model of intellectual development represents an important

underlying current of thought that informs much of today's research on how individuals

develop cognitive processing skills. Perry (1968) categorized four primary stages in

cognitive development: 1) dualism, 2) multiplicity, 3) relativism, and 4) commitment in

relativism (Perry, 1968). In dualism, people believe that there are right and wrong

answers, and view gaining knowledge as primarily a passive activity. In multiplicity,

individuals begin to abandon the quest for the "right" answer. In relativism, people

become more comfortable with ambiguity and can gather and weigh evidence before

coming to a conclusion. Finally, in commitment in relativism, knowledge becomes

more integrated and students can more comfortably weigh many different perspectives,

determine their own views, and still leave room for new, future information that may

become available.

Seven Vectors of Student Development

Chickering (1993) developed the Seven Vectors of Student Development, which are as follows: 1) Developing Competence, 2) Managing Emotions, 3) Moving Through Autonomy Toward Interdependence, 4) Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships, 5) Establishing Identity, 6) Developing Purpose, and 7) Developing Integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). In this study, the first and fourth vectors, Developing Competence and Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships, are particularly useful. In the first vector, Developing Competence, individuals develop more competence and confidence in their intellectual, physical, and interpersonal abilities. In this stage, students become more able to reason through complex issues. In the fourth vector, Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships, students develop an increased capacity to understand and appreciate intercultural and interpersonal differences. As Chickering and Reisser (1993) averred:

> The shift out of dualistic, black-and-white thinking leads naturally to an increase in tolerance, which in our model is addressed as the process of developing mature interpersonal relationships. Growing acceptance of other's interpretations and values is essential in forming truly intimate relationships and for living in a pluralistic society. When students discover that absolute truths and simple solutions no longer suffice, a liberalizing or humanizing process follows. (p. 8)

Thoughtfully designed and implemented programs that are backed by student development theory can help students view the world in a much more complex, much more interesting manner.

Diversity in Postsecondary Institutions

A superficial glance at student demographics in many postsecondary institutions may prove misleading: the situation may suggest that today's college student could simply attend school at a diverse campus and learn the skills they need to function in today's global society. While a racially and ethnically diverse student body may increase opportunities for interaction and learning, a climate that encourages this interaction should also be present (Gurin, 1999; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Hurtado et al., 1996; Terenzini et al., 2001). Hu and Kuh (2003) focused on interactional diversity, defined as "the extent to which students from diverse backgrounds actually come in contact and interact in educationally purposeful ways" (p. 321).

Hu and Kuh (2003) studied responses to the College Student Experience Questionnaire (CESQ) from 53,756 undergraduate students from 124 different colleges and universities, to examine the effects of interactional diversity experiences on a range of learning outcomes. Hu and Kuh (2003) asserted that more research on programs and activities aimed at encouraging interaction and learning between diverse groups of students is necessary and that counting on the racial and ethnic composition of a student body to diversify a campus is insufficient (Hu & Kuh, 2003). Programs and services to promote interaction among diverse populations of students include friendship groups, "buddy" programs, leadership programs that deliberately engage students from all cultures, and brown bag lunches given by lecturers who can teach about the connections between local and global issues on topics such as the environment, politics, and human rights issues. In addition, programs that encourage international students to share their

skills and cultural knowledge with others in both curricular and extra-curricular

contexts may also create connections among diverse student groups.

Internationalization and multicultural education have historically functioned

separately; however, institutions of higher education are beginning to focus on the

places in which the two fields reinforce one another (Evans et al., 2007; Green & Olson,

2003). International and minority students can learn a lot from one another, especially

in matters regarding racism and cross-cultural communication (Cross, 1989, as cited in

Paige, 1990b). Also, cultural diversity issues do not define themselves by geographical

lines; local and global issues are now inextricably linked (Teekens, 2006). When

viewed with the lens of internationalization, an "over-arching, mega-goal" of education

that "should permeate the entire educational system" (Mestenhauser, 1998b, p. 4), it

becomes clear that intercultural and multicultural disciplines have much in common.

Intercultural Maturity

Much of the literature on intercultural maturity focuses on attitudes and not

competencies, but a more holistic analysis should be provided (King & Baxter Magolda,

2005; Yershova, DeJaeghere, & Mestenhauser, 2000). Intercultural competence requires

complex cognitive skills. Many scholars have argued that cognitive development begins

at a simple, concrete, absolute, or dualistic level and progresses toward more complex

levels (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King & Kitchener,

2004; Perry, 1968). Moore and Ortiz (1999), in a study on intercultural competence of

an unspecified number of American students abroad, identified characteristics of

interculturally competent students. According to Moore and Ortiz (1999), students who

are interculturally competent possess critical thinking skills and the ability to withhold judgment. They have a good knowledge of themselves and their limitations, and can sift through different perspectives and reach fair conclusions. All of this requires high levels of cognitive processing abilities.

Yershova, et al (2000) examined the literature on the development of intercultural competencies and found the research on this subject to be lacking in discussion of how intercultural competencies are developed and manifested in terms of more sophisticated thinking skills. The authors suggested that "intercultural competence develops in the dynamic interaction of cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes in an individual" (Yershova et al., 2000, p. 43). Efforts to teach intercultural competence, as the literature suggests, involves a holistic approach to learning.

Intercultural competence requires that students go beyond learning a few facts about other cultures; more important than factual knowledge is the ability to ethically and efficiently problem-solve in the face of diverse perspectives (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2003). In a mixed method study of 48 college students, Guthrie (1996) examined the correlations between tolerance and intellectual development and found that "almost half of the variance in college students' level of tolerance for diversity was explained by their level of cognitive complexity in reflective judgment" (King & Baxter Magolda, as cited in, Guthrie, 2005, p. 581). Guthrie (1996) defined intellectual development or cognitive complexity as "the participant's level of reflective thinking as described by King and Kitchener's (1994) Reflective Judgment Model" (p. 45), which examines individuals' reasoning skills from late childhood to adulthood. Guthrie (1996)

concluded that students who have greater reflective thinking skills tend also to be more tolerant of differences in others.

Landreman (2003) reviewed the literature on intercultural competence and noted that an intrapersonal holistic awareness must be present for intercultural competence to occur. To Landreman, this is "achieving consciousness," which "implies an understanding of self and identity (intrapersonal) while interacting with others in a historical and socio-cultural-political context (interpersonal), leading to reflection (cognitive) that motivates action" (Landreman, as cited in King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 42).

The skills required to achieve the outcome of intercultural competence are complex and require a much different approach to higher education than what tradition has provided. Traditional higher education has viewed knowledge as a commodity that is bestowed upon students after enough "seat-time" has occurred (Mestenhauser, 2003; Yershova et al., 2000). Knowledge has been assumed to be "already known," transferable, and given to the student by the teacher. This approach does not help students to acquire the intellectual skills necessary to examine a problem from various perspectives and solve it (Yershova et al., 2000).

Baxter Magolda's (1992, 2001) 15-year longitudinal study of 101 male and female college students provided insights about young adult learning and development and supported the argument that higher education has been slow to respond to the demand that more focus be placed on knowledge construction rather than simple knowledge transfer. Baxter Magolda (2001) posited that individuals shift from accepting knowledge as defined and given by authority figures to constructing their own

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knowledge, based on a definition of self and internally determined values. The ability to define oneself and one's own values directly applies to diversity. As Baxter Magolda states, "Complex appreciation of diversity is not possible without attention to the development of an internal sense of self" (Baxter Magolda, 2003, p.234).

Approaches to international education have often been fragmented and one-dimensional, and developmental levels of students have not been taken into consideration and responded to accordingly (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; Mestenhauser, 2002a; Mestenhauser, 2003). Scholars have argued for a more holistic, integrative approach to educational practices in order to assist students in developing the multidimensional skills that are required to function effectively in today's global society (Baxter Magolda, 2003; Bock, 1999; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; Paige, 1999).

Torres and Baxter Magolda (2004) conducted a qualitative, longitudinal study on how cognitive development can positively influence ethnic identity development. Focusing their study on Latino students, the authors drew from a sample of seven institutions and conducted 48 semi-structured interviews. Through this study, the authors illustrated the importance of a holistic approach to identity development in which students can develop an internal sense of identity and re-examine their beliefs. This has powerful implications for minority students who, in developing an "an internal basis for evaluating knowledge claims" (p. 343), can alter their responses to external beliefs such as preconceived racial stereotypes. According to Torres and Baxter Magolda (2004), students should be given the opportunity to explore their identities and belief systems and see where these ideas originated in order to further understand them

and subsequently accept, reject, or modify those ideas (Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004).

Chávez, Guido-DiBrito, and Mallory (2003) provided a Framework for Individual Diversity Development. Using a combination of current developmental theory and 50 combined years of professional experience as educators and administrators, the authors presented a model to represent how individuals progress as they encounter difference in other individuals. The authors asserted that their model "integrates the mind (cognitive), the heart/spirit (affective) and the body (behavioral)" (Chávez, Guido-DeBrito, & Mallory, 2003, p.455).

Chávez, Guido-DiBrito, and Mallory (2003) argued that individuals with previous "otherness" experience, either due to the personal experience of being a minority or by having lived outside of their home country, are more likely to understand those who are different from themselves. In addition, students, faculty, and staff who come from marginalized groups such as students from other nations, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender, and individuals with disabilities tend to show a much higher level of diversity development, although this cannot be assumed (Chavez et al., 2003).

Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity is informed by Perry's (1968) Four Stages of Intellectual Development, and is a framework for understanding how individuals may respond to cultural differences (Ziegler, 2006). The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) includes the underlying assumption that people develop increasingly sophisticated levels of intercultural competence as they experience cultural difference (J. M. Bennett, 2003). In this model, individuals progress through six steps, which are divided into two categories:

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ethnocentric stages and ethnorelative stages (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). Bennett

(2004) makes a distinction between ethnocentric and ethnorelative categories --- that of

"avoiding cultural difference" and "seeking cultural difference." In the first category –

"avoiding cultural differences" – Bennett places Denial, Defense, and Minimization.

This category is marked by a focus on similarities. In this second category ---"seeking

cultural differences" – lay the steps called Acceptance, Adaptation, and Integration.

Figure 1 (below) is Bennett's (1993) illustration of how Intercultural Sensitivity

progresses.
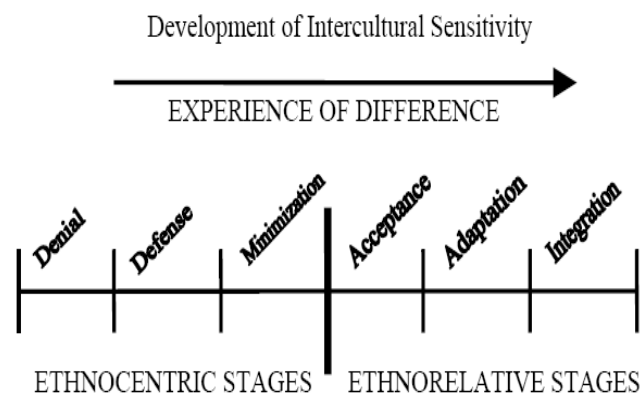
Figure 1. Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity.

In the first three stages, there is an emphasis on similarities in cultures. In the

last three stages, the emphasis shifts to differences to illustrate how individuals accept,

adapt, and integrate with a decreasing intensity of judgment as development progresses.

An individual progressing through the initial three stages is characterized by viewing

his culture as the norm from which all others can be compared. Individuals have a

dualistic, "us-versus-them" approach in which they see their own culture as complex

and varied while the "other" culture is quite simple, monochromatic, and easy to

portray.[2] The dualistic nature of these stages can evolve into a kind of "universal thinking," in which the truth of the dominant group's position remains unquestioned while simultaneously "bringing in" others. A major problem with this approach is that it is created by the lens of the dominant culture group, and it is through this lens that similarities are "seen."

Individuals progressing through the last three stages of Bennett's (1993) DMIS model have the ability to consider more than one worldview. Decisions are made about culture based on context. Contextual relativism occurs when individual make choices based on their own judgment and on the situations in which they find themselves. Adaptation marks the fifth stage, which usually occurs when a person has spent more time in other cultures and has faced a need to think or act in another's cultural context. In the sixth stage, Integration, individuals are able to adapt to other cultures and view their definition of their own culture as something not arrived at but rather in continual construction.

King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity

King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity provided a conceptual framework useful for understanding students' levels of intercultural maturity and thereby created a means with which to encourage this developmental process. The authors relied on Kegan´s holistic notion of cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal domains to present a model of intercultural maturity in

---

[2] A variation in this stage, as Bennett outlines, occurs when people reverse the "us-and-them" dualistic measures and begin to simplify and stereotype their own native cultures after spending time in another culture. This reversal is equally ineffective, however, and often very unwelcome behavior for all but in a few in the "new culture" the wayward, dualistic sojourner may choose to adopt.

which they separated "initial, intermediate, and mature" (p. 576) levels of development. Within this matrix, the authors have provided examples of typical behavior in each category. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) drew from research from college student and adult development literature such as Perry (1968); Belenky, et al. (1986); M. Bennett (1993), Chickering and Reisser (1993), and Torres (2003) to explain how individuals resolve the tension that occurs between an "externally derived sense of self" and an "internally derived self" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 578). King and Baxter Magolda (2005) define "an externally derived sense of self" as "reliance upon affirmation by others or peer group acceptance, while an "internally derived self" is defined as knowing what one's beliefs are and why, and an increasing ability to deal with ambiguity and suspend judgment when differences are encountered (p. 578).

As King and Baxter Magolda (2005) have argued, "theory development on multicultural competence has been limited by heavy reliance on the assessment of attitudes as a proxy for competence" (p. 572). King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) examined the "underlying capacities" that guide students toward intercultural maturity. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) argued that as individuals establish their identities instead of dwelling in the beliefs and values they taught as children, they become increasingly able to embrace intercultural issues without feeling threatened by difference:

> The developmental complexity that allows a learner to understand and accept
> the general idea of difference from self without feeling threat to self enables a
> person to offer positive regard to others across many types of difference, such as
> race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion. Without this

foundation, students may be able to learn about cultural differences; however, this model suggests that they will find it difficult if not impossible to use this knowledge in an intercultural interaction. (p. 573)

This argument is based on theory that previous scholars have provided regarding cognitive development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King & Kitchener, 2004; Perry, 1968). King and Baxter Magolda asserted that that the reason why superficial attempts to teach culture are simply ineffective is because not all three of the domains they present in their model are taken into consideration. A holistic approach to learning and development is much more effective.

Transformational Learning

Mezirow's Transformation Theory (1978) is centered on perspective transformation, which has meaning-making and problem-solving at its core. Mezirow's theory can inform practice in internationalization of higher education because it examines the process of how individuals can develop more effective cognitive processing skills by examining preconceived notions. Mezirow (1991) describes the structure of how adults make sense out of experiences, stressing the importance of reflective and active learning in a process he describes as perspective transformation. According to Mezirow (2000), frames of reference, or "meaning perspectives," are the "structure of assumptions and expectations through which we filter sense impressions" (Mezirow, 2000b, p. 16). Many of the frames of reference about ourselves and others us are unconscious and based on values, feelings, and associations that we have acquired early in life. These frames of reference act as filters that we unknowingly use to

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interpret the world around us (Mezirow). Mezirow (1991) defines perspective

transformation as follows:

> Perspective transformation is the process of becoming critically aware of how
>
> and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive,
>
> understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual
>
> expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrating
>
> perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new
>
> understandings. (p. 167)

As suggested in this quote, learning is often an activity we do for the purpose of

making sense out of our lives. It is meaning-making that often drives learning;

interpreting life events or a problem invites new perspectives; as the individual

discovers that new problems cannot be solved by old patterns of thinking, he then

reflects critically and gains new perspective. Mezirow describes perspective

transformation as permeable, because through the cognitive process of reflection, adult

learners gain the ability to interpret an experience and then either discard or modify it

later when the context is no longer the same (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Not all adult

learning is necessarily transformational; new skills can be acquired that do not require a

shift in perspective, but rather involve an acquisition of facts. However, Mezirow views

it as the educator's role to facilitate critical reflection (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Through critical self-reflection and examination of our automatic responses to

events and ideas, we begin to develop the capacity to analyze events and ideas from in a

much more complex fashion, make more sense out of our lives, and develop increased

problem-solving skills. To Mezirow, the need to make sense out of our lives is vitally important. As Mezirow (1991) states:

> A defining condition of being human is our urgent need to understand and order the meaning of our experience, to integrate it with what we know to avoid the threat of chaos. If we are unable to understand, we often turn to tradition, thoughtlessly seize explanations by authority figures, or resort to various psychological mechanisms, such as projection and rationalization, to create imaginary meanings. (p.3)

Without reflection, we tend to see ideas and actions that do not fit with our habitual ways of viewing the world as "unworthy of consideration—aberrations, nonsense, irrelevant, weird, or mistaken" (p. 5).

Three types of reflection

Mezirow (1991) classifies reflection in three different types: content, process, and premises (p. 117). Content reflection is a reflection on the content of a problem. It is, to Mezirow (1991) "what we perceive, feel, or act upon" (p. 107). Process reflection refers to the "process or method of our problem solving, or the premise(s) upon which the problem is predicated (Mezirow, 1991, p. 117). Finally, premise reflection involves "becoming aware of why we perceive, think, feel, or act as we do" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 108).

Three domains of learning

Mezirow (1991) relies heavily on Habermas' (1970) work on instrumental and communicative domains of learning. Mezirow (1991) describes the instrumental domain as consisting of scientific, cause-and-effect knowledge. This domain consists of rules

and facts, and is derived from science and its methodologies. In contrast, the communicative domain does not rely solely on logic, but focuses on socially constructed values and beliefs, and knowledge of ourselves and others, and the social norms within which individuals exist. In the communicative domain, we make ourselves understood and learn to understand others (Mezirow, 1991). A third domain, the emancipatory domain, is the domain in which transformative learning can occur. According to Mezirow (1991), emancipatory learning has "a learning dimension of critical reflection with implications for both of the other two" (p.72). Mezirow (1991) described emancipatory learning as "the reflective dimension" and asserts that "the emancipatory interest is what impels us, through reflection, to identify and challenge distorted meaning perspectives" (p.87).

Mezirow's Transformation Theory (1991) has been highly influential in adult learning theory and practice. Adult learners can be distinguished from younger learners by their approaches to knowledge, their motivations for learning, and the prior life experiences to which they can relate their knowledge. Knowles (1968) first made this distinction by using the term "andragogy," a concept which is based on the assertion that adults are more self-directed learners, have prior experiences which can drawn upon for future learning, focus more on practical uses for learning, and are more internally motivated to learn (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Mezirow's Transformation Theory (1991) uses these principles of adult learning, and then focuses on assisting adult learners in the process of critical reflection and perspective transformation. Mezirow's work is significant because it helps adults become more independent

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thinkers and problem-solvers by helping them to unearth unexamined meaning that often govern their thought and behavior. (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Mezirow, 1991).

Transformative learning theory encourages reflective thinking with the goal of uncovering tacit beliefs that may govern our interpretations of our circumstances. Mezirow (2000) contends that there are no "fixed truths or totally definitive knowledge" (Mezirow, 2000a, p. 3) and that meaning is something that should be continually negotiated. Without questioning our circumstances and actions, we risk remaining unaware of the underlying beliefs that can govern our thoughts and actions.

Mezirow's Transformation Theory can inform educational practice as it outlines a method of encouraging individuals to think in a much more complex manner, to become aware of and examine their assumptions, and make changes accordingly. Individuals who are able to comprehend diverse worldviews likely possess a greater understanding of themselves and their own values and beliefs than those who are not able to do so (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; Mezirow, 1991; Ortiz, 2000). Those able to function in this manner are likely to become lifelong learners who are able to comprehend the multidimensional, complex nature of culture and context, and thus more aptly function in a world that demands constant adaptation and change.

Summary: A Framework for Further Understanding

There is an abundant body of research in the areas of student development, intercultural maturity, international students, and internationalization of higher education. Less has been written, however, about how all of this may be tied together in the context of Internationalization at Home. Also, although much research on issues of

adjustment among international students has been conducted, there is little research on issues of how specific cultural contexts might affect international students. Lee and Rice's (2007) study on the experiences of discrimination and cultural misunderstandings that international students have here in the United States raises serious issues about the present, sometimes hostile climate that international students face and also about domestic students' ability to understand different worldviews. As has been shown in the literature review, it is urgent that U.S. higher education respond to the pressing needs of an increasingly knowledge-driven, diverse, global society. Practices in international education vary widely and still exist on the margins of academia. More research is needed on how Internationalization at Home may impact both intercultural and multicultural diversity issues and create educational environments that encourage cognitive complexity.

The literature I have reviewed shares common themes which illustrate how complex thinking skills can be developed and how intercultural learning can be encouraged. This literature has shown that reflective learning and student development theory can be tied to intercultural maturity. King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) and Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (1991) can serve as a framework for understanding international students' perceptions of their experiences in U.S. higher education.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This study used a qualitative design. My philosophical assumption was ontological, meaning "the researcher uses quotes and themes in words of participants and provides evidence of different perspectives" (Cresswell, 2007, p. 17). My paradigm, "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17, as cited in Cresswell, 2007), was narrative, meaning that it was based on a) the experiences of international student Culture Corps project leaders, as conveyed in reflective essays after project completion, and b) upon semi-structured interviews conducted with students who had completed at least one Culture Corps project. This particular model of study was selected because little research has been conducted in this area, and a qualitative study which can include international students' voices, and perhaps capture how they perceive the experience of leading a project in a foreign country, may be a good beginning point for further studies.

To begin this study, I analyzed existing documents in the form of reflective essays written by Culture Corps project leaders who had completed at least one Culture Corps project. In addition, I used information provided by 16 interview participants. The sample of interview participants in this study is purposive and criterion-based (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1994). In purposive sampling, the emphasis is not on generalizing to a wider population, but rather one of studying information and illuminating or comprehending what is examined (Patton, 1999).

Interview participants were classified by their having or having had status as an international student in the United States and by leading or having led at least one

Culture Corps project. I made every made every possible attempt to find reflective essay responses representing a variety of geographic locations, perspectives, and years in which projects were completed.

The perceived influence of programs such as Culture Corps on international student experiences were examined through the application of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (1991), and King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005). Although Mezirow's framework was initially created as a result of work with returning, non-traditional, female college students (1991), this adult learning theory model was applied to achieve a greater comprehension of international students' experiences and learning processes while in their host country. As Marginson (2007) recently contended, international (or cross-border) students are "shaped by the context in which mobility occurs" but also self-develop and often "undergo a profound personal transformation, one that can take many different possible courses" (p. 6). In addition, King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) was used. This model was intended for U.S. undergraduate students, but it was used as a conceptual framework with respect to how it outlines the behavior that students' exhibit at different levels of intercultural learning.

The following sections first describe the Institutional Review Board Approval Process I followed to gain permission to conduct this study. Second, I provide a description of Culture Corps, the program from which information was taken for this study. The purpose of Culture Corps is to understand international students' experiences in programs designed to internationalize higher education. After providing information

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about Culture Corps, I discuss the conceptual framework I utilized to analyze my data. Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning and King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity provided the framework for this investigation. Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning and King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity provided the framework for this investigation. Mezirow's (1991) model explains how individuals learn, and King and Baxter Magolda's Model (2005) focuses on how intercultural maturity is manifested in terms of behavior. Finally, a description of the components of the two sets of data and a description of how the data was examined in the context of the theoretical models will be presented, with a discussion of how coding and data analysis was conducted.

Institutional Review Board Approval Process

This study required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at the study institution. As the principal investigator, I submitted an application to the IRB in February of 2008, requesting approval to use human subjects and existing data from International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) for my study, along with a permission letter from the director of Culture Corps at ISSS which stated I could use their data (reflective essays). The IRB granted approval in February, 2008.The study was exempt from full review. A copy of the approval letter is provided in Appendix A.

Description of Culture Corps Program

There are many different programs and initiatives dedicated to internationalizing higher education. Programs and initiatives include programs to increase the

involvement of faculty and graduate students, funding for research done abroad, workshops and institutes for faculty development, brown bag lunches, symposia, partnerships with universities in other nations, study abroad programs, internships, efforts to internationalize the curriculum, and community outreach, to name a few. Specific to the study institution, one such program, Culture Corps, focuses on integrating international students into the mainstream university culture in order to promote internationalization.

The study institution, a comprehensive land-grant research institution in the Midwestern United States, hosts over 3,000 international students and scholars each year from over 140 countries (OIP Annual Statistical Report, 2008; Catambay, October 24, 2008, personal communication). Culture Corps is a program offered through International Student and Scholar Services, under the Office of International Programs. Culture Corps was designed in 1998, with the purpose of helping international students use and develop the knowledge they have about their countries or about a particular skill they wish to teach to others. Culture Corps' mission statement sums this up as "University community learning through the experience and knowledge of international students" (ISSS, 2007). Through Culture Corps, international students can obtain project management experience in the United States. Projects range widely, represent a wide variety of countries, and can vary in format according to subject matter. Table 1 describes the basic elements of Culture Corps.

Culture Corps acknowledges that international students have valuable academic and professional experience that is often unused, as international students are often expected to take the traditional higher education role of being a student who passively

receives knowledge (Bari, April 10, 2007, personal communication). Qualified students

can initiate projects through Culture Corps. Students who are interested in becoming

project leaders must go through a formal application process which includes committee

review. Students consider items such as what gap in knowledge the project may

address, the amount of time the project will take to implement, including how many

hours per week the project will require, and the manner in which they will work with

their faculty mentor during the project.

Table 1

Core Elements of Culture Corps Program

Elements	Description
Project Proposal	Gain experience "selling" idea about a project
Interaction with faculty and staff	Work with faculty or staff on projects.
Interaction with students	Teach students about some element of home culture
Interaction with community	Provide a service for university community by offering project. Furthers Internationalization at Home efforts.
Stipend	Payment received for leading a project
Project Management Experience	Gain experience planning, implementing, and reflecting upon a project.
Active Learning	Put learning into practice by planning and implementing project
Reflective Learning	Reflective essays and opportunities to further develop project

Award amounts vary according to complexity of the project. Payment is given in a cash award from a range of $500 to $1,500 per project and a possible tuition waiver amounting to .25% of the student's tuition, an award which is determined by the project's complexity and by the potential impact the project may have on the general campus community. Students can implement a project by themselves, or can work with a group of students on one project and share the award (Bjarnadottir, April 20, 2007, personal communication).

Projects vary widely in size, scope, content, and whether or not they are conducted within or outside of the classroom. Projects with classroom involvement have included activities such as language learning in Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Italian, for example (Bjarnadottir, April 20, 2007, personal communication). Cultures presented to the campus community are numerous and include Tibetan, Senegalese, Finnish, and Guatemalan, to name a few. Culture Corps events have also been held at a Community Center, located in student housing in the city, where students have gathered for events such as quilt-making and improving parenting skills. Comparative religion classes, movie series, dance performances, and a regularly held coffee hour gathering are also vital components of Culture Corps (Bjarnadottir, April 20, 2007, personal communication).

Table 2 below contains a profile summary of Project Leader Profiles from the years 2000 to 2007, beginning the year the use of reflective essays began and ending the last full academic year for which reflective essays were currently available for analysis. Over the course of the seven years shown in Table 2, a maximum number of 956 international students participated in Culture Corps; however, duplicate numbers could

be present because international students sometimes lead a project for more than one

semester or may be a part of more than one project (Catambay, October 24, 2008,

personal communication).

Table 2

Overview of Student Project Leader Characteristics, Years 2000-2007

Year	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender														
Female	22	59	25	61	19	54	20	43	23	61	24	67	18	82
Male	15	41	16	39	16	46	27	57	15	39	12	33	4	18
Total	37	100	41	100	35	100	47	100	38	100	36	100	22	100
Degree														
Non-Degree	6	16	4	10	5	14	6	13	0	0	0	0	1	5
Bachelors	16	43	15	37	9	26	21	45	15	39	14	39	2	9
Professional	3	8	3	7	1	3	0	0	3	8	0	0	1	5
Masters	7	19	14	34	18	51	13	28	8	21	10	28	6	27
Doctorate	5	14	5	12	2	6	7	15	12	32	12	33	12	55
Total	37	100	41	100	35	100	47	100	38	100	36	100	22	100
Age Group														
18-24	20	54	15	37	12	34	22	47	19	50	14	39	4	18
25-30	11	30	22	54	17	49	19	40	8	21	11	31	11	50
31-36	3	8	2	5	4	11	3	6	7	18	7	19	3	14
37-44	2	5	1	2	2	6	2	4	4	11	2	6	2	9
45+	1	3	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	6	2	9
Total	37	100	41	100	35	100	47	100	38	100	36	100	22	100
Region														
Africa	2	5	3	7	1	3	3	6	3	8	4	11	1	5
Asia	19	51	20	49	22	63	29	62	28	74	26	72	14	64
Europe	13	35	10	24	7	20	7	15	4	11	4	11	4	18
Latin America	3	8	7	17	5	14	8	17	3	8	2	6	2	9
Middle East	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
North America	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oceania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	37	100	41	100	35	100	47	100	38	100	36	100	22	100

For the purpose of this study, international students who implement a Culture Corps project are titled Project Leaders. As Table 2 illustrates, the majority of Culture Corps Project Leaders are females between the ages of 25 to 30, and are from an Asian region of the world. Female project leaders have consistently outnumbered male project leaders since the program's inception. Aside from individuals from Asian regions of the world, the second most prominent region is Europe, followed by smaller percentages of participants from Latin America and Africa. Project leaders generally are enrolled in a degree program, from Bachelor's to Doctoral levels. Recently, the level of doctoral student participation has increased dramatically, which for 2006-07 was 55 percent.

Most Culture Corps students begin a project in their second year of study, and can be in any program at any level of study, including if they are participating in a non-degree program such as foreign exchange (Bjarnadottir, April 20, 2007, personal communication). Students are classified by region, which could be broken down into sub-regions and also further into countries of origin, but this detail was beyond the scope of this investigation since no analysis by country of origin was conducted. Briefly, however, students' countries represented in this study included Japan, India, Colombia, China, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Germany, Taiwan, and Guatemala.

Table 3 shows the total numbers of international students at the study university, compared to the number of international students who have led a Culture Corps project. Through the years that data from Culture Corps was examined, no more than 1 percent of the total of international students at the study institution participated in this program.

Table 3

Percentage of Culture Corps Leaders to International Student Enrollment/2000-2007

	Culture Corps	Total International Students	Culture Corps Project Leaders
	N	N	%
2000-2001	37	3,356	1
2001-2002	41	3,628	1
2002-2003	35	3,801	1
2003-2004	47	3,731	1
2004-2005	38	3,663	1
2005-2006	36	3,629	1
2006-2007	22	3,556	1

Theory and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical frameworks provided by Mezirow (1991) and King and Baxter Magolda (2005) form this study's conceptual model, which suggests the interplay between student development and intercultural maturity, and holds the underlying assumption that Transformative Theory can be utilized to explain students' individual learning. Both models can be instrumental in understanding both international and domestic student development and learning.

The application of Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning and King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity provided a means of analysis of international students' reflections on their participation in the internationalization process. It is hoped that the outcome of this study will contribute to internationalization of higher education research, which draws on existing work in internationalization, Internationalization at Home, and the importance of developing global citizens capable of interacting with diverse racial and ethnic groups both domestically and internationally (Evans et al., 2007; Green & Olson, 2003;

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Hurtado, Milem, & Clayton-Pedersen, 1999; Mestenhauser, 2006; Nilsson, 2003; Olson et al., 2007; Paige, 2003; Teekens, 2006). Specific to Culture Corps, identifying international students' perceptions of this program may serve to illustrate some of the program's benefits and challenges in working to internationalize higher education at the study university.

This research study was focused on international students' experiences in participating in internationalization of higher education programs. The focus was on the areas related to how students learn when faced with new life circumstances that may not match with their prior experiences and ways of viewing the world. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the conceptual framework, and is followed by further description of the theory behind the framework.

Coding categories relate to Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory, plus King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity, the two theories that served as the basis for my theoretical framework. The remainder of this section describes the theoretical framework, after which coding categories derived from my conceptual framework are presented.

Mezirow's (1991) description of meaning schemes and meaning perspectives illuminates the learning process by outlining the process that occurs when one encounters upon facing varying levels of new information or new experiences. Meaning schemes are defined as "knowledge, beliefs, value judgments, and feelings that constitute a specific interpretation" (p. 61). Meaning perspectives function as "rule systems of habitual expectation (p. 61) and constitute "orientations" and "personal paradigms" (p. 61). When a student encounters new information, whether it is a new

skill or a new way of thinking, this information is interpreted through the student's prior knowledge.

Mezirow (1991) outlined four distinct ways in which adults learn (p. 61) in Transformative Learning, as follows: 1) learning through meaning schemes, 2) learning new meaning schemes, 3) learning through transformation of meaning schemes, and 4) learning through perspective transformation. Learning through meaning schemes, the first type of learning, is "learning within the structure of our acquired frames of reference" (p. 93). Mezirow (1991) refers to learning through meaning schemes as "recipe" or "rote" learning, in which "one behavior becomes a stimulus for another behavior" (p. 93). This type of learning is "habitual and stereotypic" and is simply a behavior that one acquires in response to the stimulus of another behavior (Mezirow, 1991). A second form, learning new meaning schemes, involves acquisition of new knowledge, but only within the framework of existing knowledge. Meaning perspectives are extended, not changed. The third form of learning, learning through transformation of meaning schemes, involves "reflection on assumptions" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 94). This type of learning leads to the fourth form of learning, which is learning through perspective transformation.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework
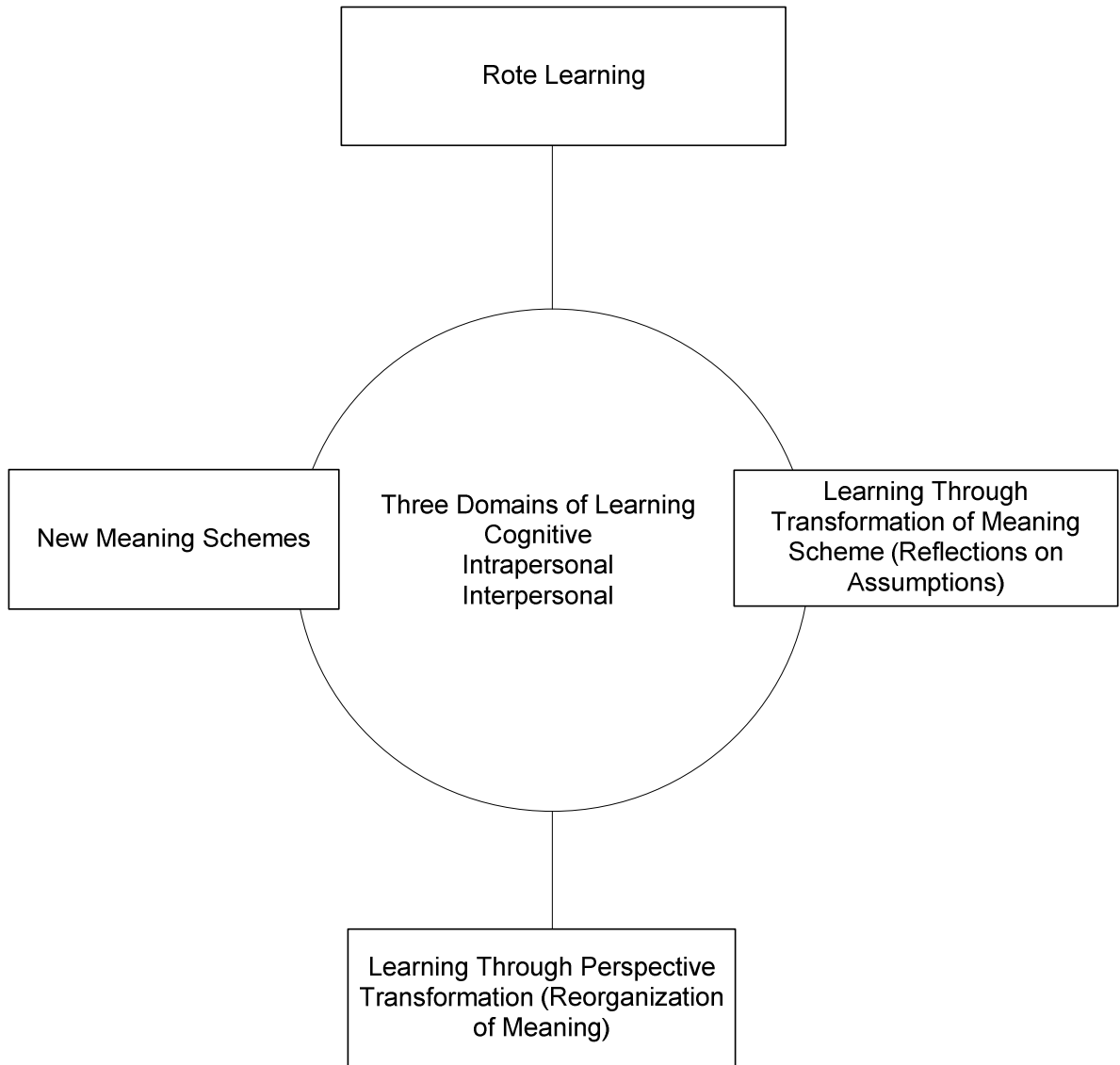
```
                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │         Rote Learning         │
                    └──────────────────────────────┘
                                  │
                          ╭───────────────╮
           ┌─────────────│                 │─────────────────┐
           │  New Meaning│ Three Domains of│ Learning Through │
           │   Schemes   │    Learning     │ Transformation of│
           │             │    Cognitive    │  Meaning Scheme  │
           │             │  Intrapersonal  │  (Reflections on │
           │             │   Interpersonal │   Assumptions)   │
           └─────────────│                 │─────────────────┘
                          ╰───────────────╯
                                  │
                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Learning Through Perspective  │
                    │ Transformation (Reorganization│
                    │        of Meaning)            │
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 Adapted from King, P., & Baxter Magolda, M. (2005). A developmental model of intercultural maturity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(6), 571-592, and Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Learning through perspective transformation involves an awareness of "specific

presuppositions upon which a distorted or incomplete meaning perspective is based"

(Mezirow, 1991, p. 94). The learner can alter prior perceptions by "transforming that

60

perspective through a reorganization of meaning" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 94). Mezirow

(1991) contended that learning through perspective transformation is a critical element

of transformative learning:

> This is the most significant kind of emancipatory learning. It begins when we
> encounter experiences, often in an emotionally charged situation, that fail to fit
> our expectations and consequently lack meaning for us, or we encounter an
> anomaly that cannot be given coherence either by learning within existing
> schemes or by learning new schemes (p.94).

Mezirow drew heavily from the work of Freire (1970). Both authors focused on

critical reflection and the transformative process of adult learning, and both theories

center on changes that come as a result of critical reflection. Freire (1970) asserted that

critical reflection leads to social change, while Mezirow (1995) focused on the

transformational process of the individual, asserting that no social change can occur

without a change in the individual first (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Mezirow (1991)

examined how transformation of perspective occurs. Mezirow provided important

insight on how students can transform themselves through learning, uncovering

previously held or unseen perspectives and discovering how these unexamined patterns

of thinking can limit their decision-making and in fact govern their behavior.

Mezirow's (1991) work is supported by the arguments of scholars (Perry, 1968;

Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2001; King & Kitchener, 1994,

2004, among others) who have argued that developing complex cognitive processing

skills involves a process of encountering ideas that cause dualistic views to be

challenged. King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural

Maturity has furthered this argument in terms of viewing learning through a holistic lens that requires cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of development and can be measured in terms of behavior rather than by attitudes.

King and Baxter Magolda's Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) utilized Kegan's (1994) Model of Lifespan Development. Kegan's consideration of "self-authorship" (Kegan, 1994, p. 185) as occurring within three domains provided a holistic framework for understanding how adults manage and interpret complex life tasks (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Kegan connected three aspects of development: 1) cognitive, or the process of how knowledge is gained and meaning is made 2) intrapersonal, or the arrival at a better understanding of the self, and 3) interpersonal, or the increased ability to relate to and understand others without feeling threatened by differences (Kegan, 1994; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). King and Baxter Magolda (2005) contended that intercultural maturity occurs within these three domains of development, and specifically used the word "maturity" in their model to refer to "the developmental capacity that undergirds the way learners come to make meaning" (p. 574). King and Baxter Magolda (2005) contended that the reason attempts to achieve the frequently stated educational goal of producing interculturally competent citizens often fails because attempts are often one-dimensional and are presented in the form of knowledge or skill-sets rather than a gradual maturity that is developed in a holistic fashion.

King and Baxter Magolda (2005) presented a 3 x 3 matrix (see Table 4 below) illustrating how intercultural maturity develops and integrated examples of the development of intercultural maturity taken from prior longitudinal studies conducted by Baxter Magolda (1992, 2001) and Torres (2003) to provide examples. The examples

illustrate how "seemingly separate strands of development (cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal)" (p. 586) are related as students develop intercultural maturity over time. The authors also relied on human development, student development, and intercultural experts such as Perry (1968), Chickering and Reisser (1993) and M. Bennett (1993).

Data Collection and Analysis

This qualitative investigation utilized Creswell's (2007) narrative research design. To Cresswell (2007), narrative research includes the study of an individual or group of individuals for the purpose of examining patterns of meaning that emerge from individuals' experiences. For this investigation, I utilized two sets of data: 1) Existing data (Reflective Essays) that had been collected by Culture Corps staff in their attempt to analyze international students' experiences in leading Culture Corps projects, and 2) Semi-structured interviews. In the following sections, I will discuss how I analyzed both sets of data. I begin with a discussion of the analysis of the Reflective Essays, followed by a discussion of the pilot interviews and the semi-structured interviews.

Essay Analysis

I began my analysis by using 156 reflective essays provided to me by the director of the Culture Corps program. My rationale for beginning this way was to identify themes discovered in the essay analysis that could give cause for me to change or alter the interview questions, although no changes to the questions occurred as a result of examining the essays. The six questions that formed the basis for the Reflective Essays were first developed in the year 2000 and have been a required

component of Culture Corps projects during the past seven years. The questions, which

have remained the same since they were written, follow Table 4.

Table 4

A Three-Dimensional Trajectory of Intercultural Maturity

Domain of Development and Related Theories	Initial Level of Development	Intermediate Level of Development	Mature Level of Development
Cognitive (Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2001; Belenky et al., 1986; M. Bennett, 1993; Fischer, 1980; Kegan, 1994; King & Kitchener, 1994, 2004; Perry, 1968)	Assumes knowledge is certain and characterizes knowledge claims as right or wrong; is naïve about different cultural practices and values; resists challenges to one's own beliefs and views differing cultural perspectives as wrong	Evolving awareness and acceptance of uncertainty and multiple perspectives; ability to shift from accepting authority's knowledge claims to personal processes for adopting knowledge claims	Ability to consciously shift perspectives and behaviors into an alternative cultural worldview and to use multiple cultural frames
Intrapersonal (Cass, 1984; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Cross, 1991; D'Augelli, 1994; Helms, 1995; Joseelson, 1987, 1996; Kegan, 1994; Parks, 2000; Phinney, 1990; Torres, 2003).	Lack of awareness of one's own values and intersection of social (racial, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation) identity; lack of understanding of other cultures; externally defined identity yields externally defined beliefs that regulate interpretations of experiences and guide choices; difference is viewed as a threat to identity	Evolving sense of identity as distinct from external others' perceptions; tension between external and internal definitions prompts self-exploration of values; racial identity, beliefs; immersion in own culture; recognizes legitimacy of other cultures	Capacity to create an internal self that openly engages challenges to one's views and beliefs and that considers social identities (race, class, gender, etc.) in a global and national context; integrates aspects of self into one's identity
Interpersonal (M. Bennett, 1993; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Gilligan, 1982; Kegan, 1994; Kohlberg, 1984; Noddings, 1984).	Dependant relations with similar others is a primary source of identity and social affirmation; perspectives of different others are viewed as wrong; awareness of how social systems affect group norms and intergroup differences is lacking; view social problems egocentrically, no recognition of society as an organized entity	Willingness to interact with diverse others and refrain from judgment; relies on independent relations in which multiple perspectives exist (but are not coordinated); self is often overshadowed by need for others' approval. Begins to explore how social systems affect group norms and intergroup relations	Capacity to enjoy meaningful, independent relationships with diverse others that are grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences; understanding of ways individual and community practices affect social systems; willing to work for the rights of others

Table from King & Baxter Magolda (2005), p. 576.

Essay Questions

1) What did you learn from doing this project? (New skills or ways of doing things differently in the U.S., for example).

2) What came as a surprise to you?

3) What challenges did you encounter? Were some of them cultural, social, or procedural, for example?

4) What did you learn from working with other people on the project?

5) What did you learn from working with your project sponsor?

6) What would you do different if you did this project again?

After obtaining IRB approval, the director of the Culture Corps program gave me existing reflective essays via electronic archives, written by international students who have led Culture Corps projects between the years 2001-2006. The essays began in 2000, but were no longer available, and in fall 2005, there were no essays collected due to the fact that the Culture Corps director was away that semester and the program was temporarily under other leadership. In the total data set, there were 156 reflective essays.

From this data set, I determined a saturation point. The "assessment of saturation" (p. 174), according to Morse and Richards (2002), is as follows:

Data gathering must continue until each category is rich and thick, and until it replicates. It is saturation that provides the researcher with certainty and confidence that the analysis is strong and the conclusions will be right. (p. 174)

Initially, I had determined that after reading all 156 essays, I would take a sample of between 50 to 100 reflective essays out of the total data set, stopping when the themes

that emerged from the data began to repeat themselves. I assessed saturation after I had

read 40 essays, but continued my analysis until I had 60 essays that spanned the years

2001 to 2006, which were all written by individuals who had completed at least one

Culture Corps project.

I had estimated that approximately 10 percent of the project leaders had

completed more than one project, and an estimated three percent had done team

projects. In this analysis, the team projects were not used. I had planned to do a possible

sub-analysis, an examination of time one and time two projects, depending on the

numbers of repeat projects, but after my initial read-through of all 156 essays, I

determined that this would not be a relevant analysis.

I began by reading through all of the essays, looking first for themes and then

coding for further analysis. As Morse and Richards (2002) have stated, themes do not

magically emerge from the data, but are derived from the researchers' insight and work.

A theme is defined as "common thread that runs through the data" (Morse & Richards,

2002, p. 113), but it is also driven by the researcher, who is "making informed

decisions, thinking, linking, and abstracting" (p. 130). Although resources were not

available to establish inter-rater reliability through another individual's efforts in

checking my work, I did establish a degree of intra-rater reliability in the coding by

checking for my own consistency in coding decisions. I did this by reading my coding

on several different occasions. The procedure for this was as follows: I read through the

material, coded the data, and then waited for at least one day and reread the essay

material and saw how I had coded it. I did this several times. I made minor changes. For

example, I had originally coded the essay theme "Self-Discovery" as "Diversity," but

upon further readings, determined that the comments put into that category involved getting to know other cultures better and getting rid of personal stereotypes. Although the word diversity still fit, I made the decision to call it "Self-Discovery (identity)" because the comments illustrated this theme rather than one of simple being in a diverse environment. Beyond changing wording to provide more accurate descriptions of the themes, no changes were made.

I did not use NVivo7 qualitative software to identify the essay themes; however, as I read through the essays, I prepared them for additional analysis with NVivo7 software by stripping the names off the essays and organizing them via the themes I had identified by reading the essays and noting the frequency with which the themes were mentioned. I also categorized the essays as I read, compiling them into categories of those who had completed a project alone, those who had completed a project alone and repeated the experience, those who had participated in a group project, and, finally, those who had participated in a group project and were repeating that same experience. Table 5 represents the total number of essays read and the categories in which they were placed. Note that in fall 2005, there were no essays collected. This is because the Culture Corps director was away that semester and the program was temporarily under other leadership.

I selected a sample of the Reflective Essays written by international students who had completed a Culture Corps project alone, as opposed to a group project, and this number equaled 60. Initially, I read all 156 Reflective Essays. I did the best I could to separate the essays into the categories mentioned above as I read through them, because I was examining individual development and did not want to analyze projects

done by several people. The set of 60 essays used in the analysis consisted of solo

projects. When I analyzed the essay data further to answer sub-questions using NVivo7

qualitative software, some of the language may have indicated that the projects were in

fact not done alone; however, I stayed with the original selection process.

Table 5

Number of Reflective Essays by Solo and Group Categories, 2001-2007 (N=156)[a]

Semester	Solo	Solo & Repeat	Group	Group/Repeat
Fall 2001	12	0	5	1
Spring 2002	9	5	2	5
Fall 2002	11	3	3	4
Spring 2003	4	6	5	5
Fall 2003	10	6	10	1
Spring 2004	5	9	1	0
Fall 2004	1	6	1	1
Spring 2005	0	0	0	1
Fall 2005[b]	0	0	0	0
Spring 2006	7	2	4	0
Fall 2006	1	3	2	0
Spring 2007	0	2	2	1
Totals by category	60	42	35	19

[a]N = 156 but numbers may reflect repeat
participants
[b]No essays were collected for Fall 2005

I examined the essays to identify themes and also see whether or not the content

of the essays might assist me in determining potential interview questions. The essays

did not change the interview questions, but rather served as a guide to further continue

investigation and indicated that an analysis of essays was not adequate for determining

students' reflections on having participated in Culture Corps in any sort of depth or accuracy.

I did not analyze the essays on a question by question basis for two reasons. First, not all of the questions were consistently answered in the order that they were given; for example, some students answered question number one within the text of question number six, in a stream-of-consciousness style of writing. Second, the purpose of this study was to identify themes that emerged from students' reflections on their experiences leading a Culture Corps program, rather than to identify answers to the essay questions in a linear fashion.

Essay quality varied widely. I had initially determined to examine all of the essay data first, but due to the varied quality of the essays, I made the decision to begin the interviews after reading through the essays and noting the themes that emerged from the essays. I classified the themes in the essays as having high, moderate, or low frequency. Those themes that were mentioned 2/3 of the time or above were considered high frequency. Those mentioned from 1/3 to 2/3 of the time were considered moderate frequency. The themes mentioned under 1/3 of the time were considered low frequency. After noting themes in the essays, I compared them with the themes that emerged in the interview data to address my main research question. I then proceeded to further analyze the interview and essay data by using NVivo7 software to answer sub-questions one and two. After analyzing the interview data, I examined the essay data and the interview data in NVivo7 to answer sub-question three, which asked which conceptual framework serves as the best match for this study. I used NVivo7 with both essays and interviews to analyze sub-question three, by importing the essays into NVivo7 and

analyzing them through codes I determined through the conceptual frameworks mentioned below.

As mentioned above, I analyzed essay data and interview data to see which Conceptual Framework fit the best: Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (1978, 1991) or King and Baxter-Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005). As data are coded, a "coding scheme" can be created (Jorgenson, 1989, p. 110, as cited in Nguyen, p. 65).

A pre-determined coding scheme was allowed for comparison and contrast between data provided through reflective essays and data from interviews conducted with 16 Culture Corps project leaders. From Mezirow (1991), I initially derived codes to outline levels of learning that were as follows:

1) No learning

2) Rote learning

3) Learning within framework of existing schemes

4) Reflections on assumptions

5) Reorganization of meaning

These codes were meant to reflect four types of learning, based on the Mezirow's (1991) explanation of what the four types of learning mean. I later altered these codes to more closely fit these levels of learning and to reflect the Mezirow's explanation of each of the levels. The new codes are listed below, followed by further discussion of what they mean:

1) Recipe learning

2) New meaning schemes

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3) Reflections on assumptions

4) Reorganization of meaning

The first code, "no learning" was eliminated, because no one in the essays or interviews mentioned learning nothing at all, making that code unnecessary. The second code, titled "rote learning", therefore became the first code, and I also changed it to "recipe learning" (learning through meaning schemes). Although both are terms Mezirow uses to describe the first stage of learning, learning through meaning schemes, recipe learning more accurately reflects how a person simply adds knowledge to the existing mix of facts, while rote learning connotes memorization of facts. The second code became "new meaning schemes," (learning new meaning schemes) while the third code and fourth codes kept the original code names, "reflections on assumptions" (learning through transformation of meaning schemes) and "reorganization of meaning" (learning through perspective transformation), respectively.

From Baxter Magolda (2005), three more codes were added, as follows:

1) Interpersonal (increased ability to relate to others without feeling threatened by different lifestyles and worldviews)

2) Intrapersonal (a better understanding of self through interaction and interdependence with faculty, mentors, staff, and colleagues)

3) Cognitive (academic, or the process of how knowledge is gained and meaning is made).

Interview Analysis

Pilot Interviews

Before beginning the interview portion of this dissertation, I first conducted two

pilot interviews with current Culture Corps project leaders in order to identify any

possible problems with the questions I had prepared and also to simply practice doing

the interviews. I selected the pilot interviewees because they were convenient, easily

accessible interviewees, but because of this and because this was considered as practice,

these pilot interviews were excluded from the interview analysis that followed. The

interview questions were informed by Leech's (2002) work on techniques for semi-

structured interviews. I included informal prompts below each interview question for

the two reasons Leach (2002) has offered: "They keep people talking and they rescue

you when responses turn to mush" (p. 667). The interview questions were as follows:

Interview Protocol: Interviews with Culture Corps Project Leaders

1. Tell me if conducting a Culture Corps project has benefited you, and if so,
    how.
    - Prompt: Leadership skills, organizational skills, knowledge about how
      U.S. higher education system is different or similar to home country
      higher education system.
    - Follow-up question: Tell me a little bit more about if you have any new
      skills or new knowledge as a result of having led a Culture Corps project.
    - Prompt: Any specific skills or knowledge gained.

2. One of the purposes of Culture Corps is to give international students the
    opportunity to share their culture with the community. To what degree did
    the program help you to do this?
    - Prompt: Experiences while leading project and any barriers (or
      encouragements) faced in implementing project.
    - Follow up question: What do you think your fellow Culture Corps
      project leaders got out of the experience?
    - Prompt: Others' experiences, either good or bad, and possible
      suggestions for improvement.

3. Did doing a Culture Corps project influence the way you think about students and school in the United States?
   - Prompt: Academic and social integration in host country.
   - <u>Follow up question</u>: Did you make friends during the time you were leading the Culture Corps project?
   - Prompt: Feeling a part of the United States.

4. What did you learn about your own beliefs about yourself while leading the project? About others?
   - Prompt: Assumptions about self and others.

5. Did leading a Culture Corps project aid you in adjusting to university life in the United States? If so, please tell me a little bit more about that…
   - Prompt: Overall experience and impact of Culture Corps.

As a result of the two pilot interviews conducted, Question #3 was changed slightly. It originally read as follows:

Did doing a Culture Corps project influence the way you think about students and school in the United States?

After speaking to pilot interviewees, I determined this question was very misleading, because my intent was to ask Culture Corps project leaders specifically about U.S. American college students. Based on my literature review, I had learned that international students often have difficulty adjusting to a completely different educational system and culture (Paige, 1990; Lee & Rice, 2007) and are often disappointed in the fact that they do not establish friendships with U.S. American college students (Schram & Lauver, 1988; Perrucci & Hu, 1995; Otten, 2003). I wanted specifically to know what international students' experiences were with the U.S. higher education system and with U.S. American students; thus, as a result of confusion in the pilot interviews, I reworded the question as follow:

Did doing a Culture Corps project influence the way you think about higher

education in the United States? About U.S. college students?

After this slight change, the question remained the same throughout the rest of

the interviews.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The number of semi-structured interviews to be conducted was initially 20, and

was intended to be conducted with international students who have led a Culture Corps

project within the last two years. However, due to difficulties contacting students who

could do interviews, I broadened my search beyond the last two years and contacted

students from a wide range of participation years and also stopped at 16 interviewees. I

found this number to be adequate because the responses to the questions reached

saturation, which has been defined earlier as reaching a point where there is enough

thick, rich description and the researcher begins to note that themes show a pattern of

repeating themselves, indicating that questions can be examined by using the qualitative

data (Morse & Richards, 2002).

To find interview participants, I used a list drawn from the Reflective Essays

provided to me by Culture Corps. My initial plan was to contact potential interviewees

via campus email addresses found through the university's website and also to call

some of the departments from which potential interview participants had graduated to

see if contact information was available. Both of these approaches did not yield current

contact information, however. I sent interview requests using campus email addresses.

However, since most of the university email addresses I had were old and presumably

most of the students no longer had access to these campus email addresses and since

Culture Corps does not keep a record for past participants, I persisted by others means

until I had what I thought was a sufficient number of interviewees who agreed to and

were in fact interviewed.

The alternate means of contacting past Culture Corps project leaders included

using the websites LinkedIn, MySpace, and Facebook. LinkedIn and MySpace did not

help me in finding interviewees, but searching for contacts through Facebook provided

good results. I contacted a total of 22 people via a combination of email and Facebook

messages, and of that 22, 16 granted interviews, yielding a 73% response rate.   A copy

of the letter I sent to potential interviewees explaining this investigation is provided in

Appendix B. A consent form for the interview, which was provided for all participants,

is provided in Appendix C.

I conducted these interviews in order to determine Culture Corps project

leaders' perspectives on the Culture Corps program, with particular attention to the

nature of their reflections on their experiences in Culture Corps. All interviews were

semi-structured, which allowed the interviewees the chance to provide perspectives

which were then compared with themes identified in the analysis of the reflective essays

mentioned above.

After establishing contact via Facebook or email, I obtained consent for the

interviews via email and scheduled the interviews either by phone or by email. Since

Culture Corps project leaders are international students and tend to relocate after

graduating, interviews were conducted in a variety of ways according to circumstance:

either in person, by phone, and by SKYPE. All face-to-face interviews were conducted

at coffee shops during a visit I made to the study institution in April 2008. Many students, however, were no longer in the area, so I established times to do SKYPE interviews with those students who use SKYPE, and phone interviews with those students who preferred this method. SKYPE calls were recorded with PAMELA, an online recorder compatible with SKYPE. For face-to-face interviews and landline phone conversations, I used my digital voice recorder to record the calls. The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes, and I established with each interviewee that a 30 minute follow-up interview for clarification may be necessary. Some clarifications were necessary, but when this was the case, we accomplished clarification via email. I transcribed all of the interviews almost immediately after each interview, and sent a copy of the transcription to the interview participant so that he or she could make any changes to the transcript. No major changes were necessary in the 16 interviews conducted. After checking with each interviewee to ensure the transcripts of the interviews were accurate, I then prepared the transcriptions for NVivo7 Analysis by using sub-headers, which serve as a way to begin organizing and coding the interview data.

These codes were taken from the interview questions that are listed above on page 62 and are as follow: 1) I-Q1- CC project has benefited, 2) I-Q2-Share culture with community, 3) I-Q3-Influence thinking U.S. higher ed, 4) I-Q4-Learn about own beliefs, and 5) I-Q5-Aid adjusting to university life. For illustration purposes, here is a verbatim transcription of how one of the 16 interviewees responded to each of the five interview questions. The questions are listed directly below each sub-header.

I-Q1- CC project has benefited

Question 1: Tell me if conducting a Culture Corps project has benefited you, and if so, how.

It benefited me in the following ways:

Leadership/Motivation in college life: "The Culture Corps project helped me actively get involved in college activities and student communities compared to before I started the project. Through the project I got to know other students who can be interested in participating and potential mentors who could help me organize my project. From the project I could know more about what is happening in college and students community in general, which later encouraged me to have wider perspective and active involvement in college life."

Organization skills: "I was trained to organize one project from the scratch, by following brainstorming, specifying the subject to present, seeking for sponsors, booking venues, time management, advertising, budgeting, resource management and getting feedback. I doubt I understood fully what I listed just above when I was actually conducting the project, but later on I found the importance to experience those. For instance, now I work in business and each element I practiced in the project gives me some hints on how to organize meeting well."

Active vs. Passive: "Compared to the education field in my own country (Japan), US education field gives student opportunities much more even outside of the classroom. I had very positive impression while preparing my Culture Corps project that I was very encouraged to do this and people actually give me feedback and reaction about what I do. I'm sure it is possible to organize the similar event in Japan, but with more

restriction and administration process, which would possibly let students get passively involved in their college community."

[*Interviewer*: Any other thoughts about differences between Japanese and U.S. higher education?]

"When I first heard of the Culture Corps program I thought I really wasn't going to be able to do it, because there were going to be a lot more things that I would have to think about –submitting all the paperwork, and stuff like that. That was just my assumption, because I'm from Japan and my country is just like that, you know. Before starting everything I have to do all the paperwork and get approval which is going to be a quite tough process and also I automatically thought that way before I actually tried to do a Culture Corps project. Before I went to the director's office and talk about the possibility of my doing a Culture Corps project; then I actually thought that it was going to be quite fun and actually way easier than I thought. They give students opportunity first to try and see how much they can do and they'll be able to spend their own time for the project themselves. They cannot only just do the project because they also have to spend their time studying and so I really liked that way. That was really encouraging to me. I not only liked the Culture Corps project but other things as well. If I want to join something, then I can join as long as I am capable of, so that's really …they don't really give you limitations first---they always give you a possibility or opportunity first and start from there and see what's going to happen from there and I really like that way. That was very encouraging."

[*Interviewer:* This had to have taken courage to do a project....what motivated you to do this?]

"The motivation …actually one of my good friends actually started her culture Corps project before me. I joined her program and learned so much and I learned from her, seeing how she organized it, and how she prepared very good things, and I felt well maybe I might be able to do these things just by myself and in my own way. At the time I already thought maybe I'd need to come up with my own ideas and GLBT is my background sort of so I brought my idea to the Culture Corps director and she quite liked it, thankfully. She said it was something really original and new and so that I should try and do it."

"One more thing, I guess…There were always like people around me who were willing to support my project, so that was also another big motivation for me. I was not quite sure if I could do the GLBT presentation by myself so it was very encouraging for me that I know that there are people around me supporting my ideas and project so that was actually a really big thing. At the time I already like came out to most people and like my close friends and my family and had no problems, but like, speaking about potentially my private thing to the public and participants whom I don't really know --- that could be a bit intimidating thing for me, so I was not quite sure if I could do that, but you know, again, they encouraged me to do so and it turned out to be a very good result."

"I could not really see what would be happening after I did this, and so it was a bit scary at first, but it was quite good. Sometimes it was like surprising because one of my classmates was there and said, "Oh, I didn't know that you were coming" and things like that. "

[Interviewer: You helped a bunch of people you were not even aware of…]

[*Interviewer's note*: in the following, the interviewee talks more about how later on found the experience of having done a Culture Corps project to be significant]

"First, my mentors and advisor sort of gave me some ideas about how to start preparing those projects. I was actually kind of doing what I was told to do, sort of… I was just following their guidance. At the time I not fully digesting all the things that they gave me; I was not fully understanding what I was doing but after completing the project and now I am in the business field, working in a company, and everything that I do now kind of overlaps what I have done for the Culture Corps project in terms of organizing or preparing something so the experience that I had when I was preparing for this Culture Corps project really helped me understand what I am doing right now in my job or other occasions that I have for organizing something or preparing for events and stuff, so that's kind of what I meant."

"I can give you one example of what I have done so far in my business life. I organized a study trip for Japanese Medical Students, for them to learn global health systems and things like that. My job was to organize the project—like a two weeks trip to the Philippines for them and made a contact with a counterpart in the Philippines and also possible supporters in Japan and also the students who were going to participate in the project and letting them know how the project will be going and things like that. The whole project starting with a brainstorm session and then narrowing down the ingredients that I have in my head or the ideas that I discussed with other co-workers and then contacting all the counterparts and supporters from other supporters as well, and I could just follow every step, remembering what I had done in my Culture Corps

project so I didn't get lost when I was preparing for the student trip thing and so that way it really helped me."

[*Interviewer*: how did you prepare for verbal presentations in English?]

"I had some speech communication classes and I had to do some kind of verbal presentation, but it was only like three minutes for my courses. For my Culture Corps presentation, I really had to prepare for like one hour, two hours programs, to be fully ready for that I had to really practice it up, I guess."

[*Interviewer*: How did you do your verbal presentations in English?]

"I first introduced myself and explained what I was going to present today, and then I showed movie clips or something, and then explained "this is blahblahblah," and did question and answer sessions. My presentations usually took about one hour and a half."

I-Q2-Share culture with community

Question Two: One of the purposes of Culture Corps is to give international students the opportunity to share their culture with the community. To what degree did the program help you to do this?

"My mentors gave me a big encouragement, as they have experiences in organizing events and are good at it. I had tremendous follow-up and feedback from them. Possible barriers were advertising the events that affected how many people I could collect for my project. My project was based on verbal presentation, so preparing speech and Q&A were always difficult. I spent quite some time on them."

"Fellow Culture Corps project leaders would definitely get deeper insights on their own culture and country after conducting their projects. They will become capable of knowing their own country and culture, and also telling other students effectively. Also, they get connections with faculty members and fellow students, which would be great assets for them even after graduation."

"One suggestion for project leaders is to be specific on what they would like to present to their participants. I imagine they often get tempted to include more essences but stay focused on one topic and think through well upon preparation. That would make the program go smooth and successful. And always enjoy their own projects."

I-Q3-Influence thinking U.S. higher ed

Question Three: Did doing a Culture Corps project influence the way you think about higher education in the United States? About U.S. college students?

"After the project I think I became active getting involved in college life and US/International students community. Through the project I made a lot of friends and we still keep in touch after leaving the US. Conducting a project was one good way to experience how events in general would be organized and implemented in the US. I learned systematic viewpoint."

[Interviewer: About U.S. American college students….]

"I kind of got an impression during that project and I thought U.S. American students are more active, proactive in a way. They actually organize their own projects or study groups. I find it that they are quite good at creating a new program or a new project, [and they] have a bit of leadership skills. I don't know if they are trained from their

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early school years --- I am not quite sure --- but I started seeing that they are quite good in the way they present their communication skills or leadership skills."

I-Q4-Learn about own beliefs

<u>Question Four:</u> What did you learn about your own beliefs about yourself while leading the project? About others?

"I think the first thing which came to my mind was just confidence issues. I was not really sure if I was capable of doing this kind of program. I did not know if I was capable of dealing with GLBT issues. I mean, that's like something which is a very personal thing for me and I was not quite sure if I could do this, but I actually went ahead and just conducted those presentations and I talked about myself, as well, and I had a good response from those who participated and, um, so, I kind of learned that it was just okay to be open and just express myself to others and that's I guess the biggest thing that I learned in this project."

"Yes, when I was doing that project, one of the guys who was at the lounge came to me and said, you know, like, thank you so much for what you have just been doing, like, I mean, he was an American student but on campus he said it was just so difficult to find this approach into your place that everybody can just get together and just hang around, I mean they had a student lounge in the student union, but in a different style, in a different way, so he said it was such a… I don't know thank you thank you and thank you and I felt quite happy after I heard that. Also, some other international students came to my sessions and they all enjoyed what I did and we kind of established a friendship as well which are still ongoing, so that's actually a really good experience that I had from this presentation and project."

I-Q5-Aid adjusting to university life

Question Five: Did leading a Culture Corps project aid you in adjusting to university

life in the United States? If so, please tell me a little bit more about that…

"It certainly helped me enjoy my college life as much as I could. After the projects, I

got more friends, more faculty members and more ideas of what I can do to represent

my own culture as well as myself. It seemed more and more international students were

willing to conduct their own Culture Corps projects, so that motivated me to come up

with originality, something unique only I can organize and present."

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of this investigation. First, I describe the findings according to the themes that emerged first from reading the reflective essays, and then from an analysis of the interview data, thus answering my main research question regarding what themes emerge inductively from international students' reflections about having participated in a program designed to internationalize higher education. I describe and compare the themes, and then present results of the interview data and provide examples to illustrate each of the themes. Second, I use both essay data and interview data to address sub-question one, which asks what kinds of skills may be gained in such a program. I compare what was mentioned in the reflective essay data to what interviewees mentioned learning by having done a Culture Corps project. Third, I use interview data only to address sub-question two, which asks whether or not projects are effective in encouraging self-efficacy and increased involvement in the host country. In question two, to make the analysis clearer, I break the question into two categories, separating the terms self-efficacy and involvement. Finally, to answer sub-question three, which asks which theoretical framework appears to be the best fit for this investigation, I match essay and interview data to the frameworks and then compare the results of each analysis

Verbatim quotes were used to illustrate each of the themes, but any information that may possibly identify individuals was removed. Additionally, any names

mentioned in quotes have been changed to avoid any possible identification of the other individuals involved in Culture Corps at the study institution.

Themes from the Analysis of Reflective Essays and Interviews

The main research question for this study was the following: What themes emerge from international students' reflections about their participation in a project-based program designed to internationalize higher education? In this first analysis, no pre-conceived categories or levels of response were used to guide the coding of the responses. I answered this question by reading through the 60 reflective essays, and then by analyzing semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 Culture Corps project leaders.

Table 6 indicates that eight themes emerged from the analysis of the 60 reflective essays. Table 6 provides lists of the eight themes, phrases to describe each theme, and the frequency that each theme was mentioned. In the identification of themes, it was understood that a given reflective essay included comments related to more than one theme. I have included quotes that illustrate each of these themes. These themes were given a label of high, moderate, or low frequency in terms of the frequency with which they were mentioned in the reflective essays. Following Table 6 and the illustrations of the emergent themes, I discuss the results of the interview analysis.

Essay Analysis: Quotes to Illustrate the Themes

Self-Discovery (Identity)

One high frequency theme in the reflective essays was self-discovery, or identity development. International students who had implemented a Culture Corps project

mentioned getting to know other cultures better, getting rid of their own stereotypes about others, and finding things out about themselves.

Table 6

Emergent Themes from Reflective Essays

Themes	Description	Frequency
Self-discovery (identity)	Getting to know own cultures better Getting rid of cultural stereotypes Compare/contrast cultures	High
Teaching Experience	Gain or improve of teaching skills Shock regarding informality of U.S. classrooms	High
Interaction with Others	Disappointment in lack of interaction with other Culture Corps leaders Networking opportunities Language barriers Connections to international community Making friends with U.S. students	High
Communication Skills	Increased confidence in speaking English Organizing and presenting information Research and writing skills	High
Leadership Skills	Facilitation, Collaboration, Negotiation skills, Servant leadership role	Moderate
Organizational Skills	Time management Advertising and Promoting Projects Coordination of volunteers Grant-writing experience	Moderate
Impressions about U.S. students	Insular attitude, lack of world knowledge Eager to learn about other cultures High level of interest about other cultures	Moderate
Mentors	Good mentors make a difference Disillusionment from unanswered emails from faculty, staff, and mentors	Low

One project leader remarked about the interchange of ideas that occurred during as he worked on his project:

> "During our conversations on various topics not only did the students get some insights on how Norwegians think and act, but also did I learn more about American ways. Personally I find this interesting and valuable. Especially since we touched on topics you hardly discuss with people on the street."

Another international student, not reflecting on culture but rather on his discovery about his ability to lead and complete a successful editorial projects, stated:

> "I learned that I was capable of leading an editorial team and seeing things through."

Teaching Experience

Teaching Experience was another theme mentioned with high frequency in the essays. International students quite often mentioned an appreciation for having gained teaching experience. One student, who taught through a program geared to elderly students, mentioned the value of having done a Culture Corps project because it gave him experience in teaching adult learners:

> "I did not have much experience teaching American adults in a classroom setting. This course offered me an excellent chance to get to know some in-depth knowledge about what US elders are concerned about, what knowledge they have, what they want to learn, and how I could help them learn. My academic studies are in the area of adult learning, and this teaching experience gave me a valuable opportunity for practice."

Another international student mentioned learning about teaching, and about the importance of getting to know his audience:

"I learned that teaching is not only telling what to do. Teaching also understands students' interests and their background."

Interaction with Others

Another high frequency topic was international students' desire for interaction with others in the host country, which was communicated clearly through their comments. Leading a project requires getting to know other people, and reflective essay writers stated this often. One student mentioned the opportunity to meet others that she would not have met in his area of study, for example:

"I was coming to the U.S. to learn about dentistry, but through the Culture Corps I met a lot of other people, that I wouldn't normally have met."

Leading a project appeared to be a way to make friends. As another project leader mentioned:

"I met a lot of new people in many fields by doing this project. I learned new way to communicate with people."

Communication Skills

The final high frequency topic was communication skills, and English language skills in particular. Planning a Culture Corps project appears to involve a lot of effort, especially for those students whose first language is not English, because the entire project, from the proposal and planning stages to the implementation stage, must be done in English. The exercise of doing a project, however, appears to have a positive effect on individuals' communication skills. Students mentioned gaining confidence in

presentation skills, research and writing skills, and English language skills, all of which

fell under the category of communication. One individual mentioned practicing

presentation skills and becoming better at them:

"I needed to amuse the audience. It was quite tough for me because of my poor

English skill. I studied presentation by myself, sometimes discussed with my

friend who is taking presentation class, and finally I could have a really fun and

informative presentation."

Another student who did a project spoke of becoming more at ease speaking in

front of an audience:

"Through the experience, I learned how to speak in front of people. I became

more comfortable speaking as I complete the sessions each times."

Leadership Skills

Leadership skills were mentioned with moderate frequency, and were often

described by the actions taken when leading. One Culture Corps project leader, for

example, mentioned activities involving leading:

"…starting a new student organization, writing a formal letter, recruitment of

the committee members, reservations of conference rooms and event facilities,

making agendas for the committee meeting, facilitating meetings…"

Another mentioned having learned the importance of creating energy and enthusiasm

towards a project, of involving others and not solely relying on his own work, but rather

on his leadership and capacity for delegation:

"This project helped me learn about the management and organization of any

new project. The most important skill that I acquired is the realization that

running a successful project requires a team of individuals and a successful synergy of thoughts between them. It is not a ONE MAN JOB."

Organizational Skills

Another moderate frequency topic was organizational skills. When project leaders spoke of organizational skills, this was often conveyed in the context of the importance of having an organized, well-planned event. As one individual stated:

"I learned that the discussion sessions had to be broken down into clear and manageable segments, and I should have an outline of all these segments in my head, even before I go in for conducting the sessions."

The magnitude of the duties involved in leading a project taught its leaders how to create a clear focus in a project and organize all the activities involved in making the project be successful. In speaking of the difficulties of event planning, one international student quite succinctly said the following:

"It really taught me how to get my priorities straightened out and to multi-task."

Impressions about U.S. Students

The final topic mentioned with moderate frequency were comments international students made about U.S. students. These comments were often conveyed in terms of surprise at their interest or knowledge in their culture. One project leader, who had shown movies from her culture for a semester, said the following:

"Some people know Japanese current movies more than I do. They often studied background, actors, and actresses of the movies beforehand and when I explained them, they have already know."

Another project leader also expressed surprise about the level of interest shown:

"I was surprised with the level of international interest when it comes to understanding Indian culture."

Mentors

Mentors, also referred to as sponsors, were mentioned with low frequency in the essays, and when they were mentioned, it was regarding an experience that affected the student in some significant way, either positively or negatively, usually regarding the mentor or sponsor's willingness, or lack of willingness, to help. One student had a good experience with his mentor, commenting on how important the role of mentor is in the Culture Corps program:

"One of the great advantages of the project was having the chance to work hand by hand with my sponsor. Sponsors in general are people with a big deal of experience, who know much better than international students what being at the university is like. I greatly enjoyed working with my sponsor. Not only was he able to teach me how to take on the facilitator's role in a series of events, but he also explained to me many aspects of the American culture I did not know this far. From the professional, cultural and personal points of view, I firmly believe that the relationship with the project's sponsor is the key to the project's success or failure."

Another international student, who had the opposite experience as the one quoted above, expressed his disappointment and frustration in one simple statement:

"The project sponsor remained absolutely hidden to me."

Interview Analysis

To do the interview analysis, NVivo7 qualitative software was used to assist in sifting through the data by coding the interview questions, refining them by merging responses into common topics, and then with continued coding into themes and patterns. As a subsequent section indicates, the themes from the essays coincided with the themes from the interviews, but that the NVivo7 interview analysis provides much more depth and detail than the data from the reflective essays. From the interview analysis, five themes emerged, and are as follows: 1) Personal Beliefs and Attitudes, 2) Communication and Languages, 3) Community and Cultural Interaction, 4) Skills, and 5) Education. Within these five themes, I then organized the qualitative data into sub-themes or sub-categories that corresponded with the themes and appeared repeatedly throughout the responses.

The interview data was much more extensive than the essay data. Results of the NVivo7 interview analysis indicated that the strongest, most commonly cited themes in the interview data were cited by 60% or more of the 16 interviewees. Sub-themes in the interview data that were mentioned by 60% or more respondents were classified as primary, while those cited from between 30 to 59% of the respondents were considered secondary. Any sub-themes below 30% appeared within some overall themes and in that case they were listed, but given less consideration than those with higher percentages of response for the analysis of this study. Sub-themes that repeated themselves in more than one overall theme were eliminating after determining that they were in fact from the same material and had nothing to add.

Table 7 below lists the themes and sub-themes, with the number of individuals who made comments pertaining to a sub-theme and the percentage of interviewees who mentioned it. Note that the second theme listed, Communication and Languages, has no subthemes. The importance of communicating in the host country in English needed no further description as the theme was consistently strong and clear. A discussion of these themes and sub-themes, illustrated by verbatim quotes by interviewees, is also presented. Please note that errors made in English in the quotes that illustrate the themes were not corrected in order to keep them in the voice in which they were stated.

Theme One: Personal Beliefs and Attitudes

The first theme was Personal Beliefs and Attitudes. The sub-themes were 1) Comments About Own Abilities (69%), 2) Learning from Others (56%), 3) Events influencing Beliefs (56%), 4) Comments About Own Beliefs (50%), Surprises about Others (31%), and Changing Assumptions (13%). Of the sub-themes, only one was considered a primary sub-theme, four were considered secondary sub-themes, and one was considered a tertiary sub-theme.

Primary Sub-Theme One: Comments about Own Abilities

An increased belief in one's own abilities was the strongest theme in this category. Interviewees mentioned gaining confidence in their abilities while having done a project. As one individual stated:

"I gained confidence that I can do international events to international audiences. I gained confidence about public speaking and also I gained confidence about I can work with anyone in the world."

Table 7

Emergent Themes from Interviews and Percentage of Times Sub-themes Mentioned (N=16)

Themes	Sub-themes (Descriptions)	N	%	Sub-theme
Personal Beliefs and Attitudes	Comments About Own Abilities	11	69	Primary
	Learning from Others	9	56	Secondary
	Events influencing Beliefs	9	56	Secondary
	Comments About Own Beliefs	8	50	Secondary
	Surprises about Others	5	31	Secondary
	Changing Assumptions	2	13	Tertiary
Communication and Languages	(no subthemes)	14	88	Primary
Community and Cultural Interaction	Getting to Know Other People	14	88	Primary
	Sharing Cultures and Communities	13	81	Primary
	Academic and Social Integration	11	69	Primary
	Challenges	9	56	Secondary
	Mentors and Networks	9	56	Secondary
	Reflections	9	56	Secondary
	Suggestions and Comments	8	50	Secondary
Skills	Communication & People Skills	13	81	Primary
	Leadership Skills	10	63	Primary
	Organization Skills	7	44	Secondary
	Miscellaneous Skills	6	38	Secondary
	Teaching Skills	3	19	Tertiary
Education	Social Integration	15	94	Primary
	Perceptions about People	12	75	Primary
	Personal Growth	11	69	Primary
	Higher Education Perceptions	11	69	Primary
	Self-Efficacy & Pride	10	63	Primary
	Financial	8	50	Secondary

Other Culture Corps project leaders mentioned discovering abilities they previously did not think they had. For example, one student mentioned how she discovered she had a talent for teaching:

> "I did not even know what it meant to teach. So, when I first started working with Kristina on a Culture Corps and I had to go in classrooms and give a lecture on some specific subject or what the professor wanted me to teach about, um, you know I just fell in love with teaching."

Secondary Sub-Theme One: Learning from Others

Culture Corps project leaders appear to have benefited from the interaction they had while conducting the project, all the way from the idea stage to implementation. Learning from interaction with peers was mentioned with some frequency. One student, who mentioned struggling with issues of self-confidence which were based on her ability to speak the English language, had this to say:

> "So through this experience I was kind of like I had to tell myself I can do this sometimes…you know…I just always doubt that I can do this…..do people understand what I am saying. But working with Clara, she already has great English communication skills when she came here already because she studied when she was really young in English. She has been speaking English since elementary school. So and I see such confidence or self-efficacy of international students and see that there is no problem doing the same thing as U.S. students."

Another project leader spoke of learning from diverse groups of people in global discussion forums, in which students, faculty, and staff can gather, hear an expert talk about a world issue, and then discuss the issue from their diverse perspectives.

According to this project leader, discussion forums of this nature can provide people with broader perspectives on world issues by examining and discussing the issues from many different angles:

"With discussing world issues, you discuss from the framework you already have, from your own lens, and this tells you why people see the situations very differently. This has given me a great opportunity to listen to presenters from different cultures, they are experts on the topics and we have the opportunity to discuss among the people from different cultures."

Secondary Sub-Theme Two: Events Influencing Beliefs

The majority of students interviewed spoke of what they had learned in terms of events. Carrying out a project with Culture Corps appears to be a type of on-the-job training for many. One past project leader, now working as a professional in his field, spoke of how he initially tended to want to do everything by himself, but learned the power of involving others and delegating tasks:

"I learned about myself that I like to do things by myself a lot and it usually is not very helpful especially when you have to organize events. It is much better to involve people. So, I believed that organizing things by myself could be very efficient because I could do that very quickly, but I found that it is better to spend time and energy to involve other people because it really helps a project like this – it makes it more open because people get more excited and they spread the word much better, they have ideas and so I think it changed my belief that involving other people could be much more beneficial than I thought."

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Another past project leader reflected on the project in terms of personal change resulting from event planning. Implementing a project of this nature appears to offer opportunity for growth:

"I think I became a self-starter after I started the Culture Corps project. In India, parents support you while you study and my parents did too till my Master's. Education is not very expensive in India but generally private schools are expensive. My parents were taking care of my education. When I came here, I started doing things on my own. To know that you can fund yourself and do cool things and put up shows was something new that I did."

Secondary Sub-Theme Three: Comments about Own Beliefs

Interview respondents spoke of their beliefs being altered or changed by interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds. One respondent spoke of eliminating stereotypes, and she spoke of her own prejudiced feelings against Asian people, crediting having worked with Asians in her project as the reason she was able to change her beliefs:

"It helped me a lot in getting rid of stereotypes, so personally it benefited me a lot because I had a lot of stereotypes about Asian people and I'm not sure where that came from. It might be because I grew up in a town that that didn't have a lot of foreign people. So…it helped me a lot to…like, I love Asian people, they are so much fun to be around, but before I started Culture Corps, I was avoiding them, I didn't want to talk to them, all that stuff…so I don't know where that came from, but…so now, personally I benefited from it because I got the stereotype away."

Another respondent did not speak in terms of new beliefs, but rather of the importance of conveying her own convictions. To this individual, providing students a forum with which to express their own beliefs about world issues and also to listen to opinions from other perspectives was important enough to motivate her to do a project:

> "I really value the importance to have opportunity on campus to discuss world issues from different perspectives -- not just listening to lectures from experts but trying to provide opportunities for students to express their opinions on world issues. It is really important to express what they think. It is higher skills to presenting to others, to get views out, so that's really helping students to process their views and different perspectives."

Finally, another respondent spoke of the importance of having an international approach to higher education:

> "I know the successful person should have three 'I's: Integrity, Intelligent and Industrious; but now, I like to add one 'I': International."

Secondary Sub-Theme Four: Surprises about Others

Surprises about others involved some unpleasant surprises regarding encountering prejudices and difficulties in communicating with others. One interviewee, who had cheerfully spoken of how she eliminated her own stereotypes of others, was very disappointed at the turnout for a GLBT event:

> "And it might be a side note, but we had maybe half of the people that usually come to the Coffee Hour at the Queer Student Culture Center. It was really disappointing for me."

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Another individual expressed disappointment in the difficulty she faced in getting people to keep their commitments. Her project was to compile a recipe book, and she was continually surprised at how people would say they would send her a recipe, and then never follow through:

"…It is difficult to talk to Americans, or for that matter students are studying here. Their face may show something but then they may do something else. So, I as a person would really like to stick to something that…The problem is since I am on the other side of the table, had I been in their position, actually if someone maybe had approached me and asked, "Oh, can you give me a recipe?" maybe I would like, "Oh, well, I will surely give you one" but then once I get back to my routine job I am like 'To hell with the recipe; I have so many other things to do'".

Tertiary Sub-Theme One: Changing Assumptions

This sub-theme was mentioned by only a small minority of students, but it is worth mentioning because the responses were quite rich in description. One interviewee spoke of how his assumptions about Americans in the U.S. had been greatly affected by the media prior to going to the United States to study, but were dramatically changed after spending time there:

"I guess I had no clue, really. What you get in a country like mine from the media is this portrayal of the big-city American and the differences between the East Coast and the West Coast. So, when you come to a place like Minnesota or like Illinois, for that matter, you find an entirely different picture. I mean these people here and there are just their own thing, right? So I guess that finding

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yourself sort of betrayed by this whole media scheme of displaying this East Coast or West Coast coolness, then you come to say, a place like Saint Paul, that is pretty conservative or you are driven to Mankato or to, I don't know, Saint Cloud, then you see that things are really that way and I mean, this is just such a huge country and really people don't talk a lot about this whole fly-over zone thing, right? It's the East Coast or the West Coast. So, I guess I had an entire set of expectations coming to the states that wasn't really met when I arrived in Minnesota."

The second individual who commented about changing assumptions spoke in terms of teaching others to be aware of and change their thoughts regarding other cultures:

"I say, 'I come from Tunis' and they say, 'What's your main language?' and my language is a mixture of Arabic and non-Arabic words which is Berber, right? And then they say, 'Oh, Arabic. You must be Muslim.' And I say, "Yes, I am Muslim. We have other religions, but I happen to be Muslim. And their first reaction is "Well, how do you dress back home?" So by teaching them about Islam and Tunis and our culture and our tradition…..I teach them the way it is and not the assumptions that they make. If I teach them that, I guess I am helping them accept me and not make any assumptions or judgments. If you educate someone then even if they make a judgment, they'll make an objective judgment, or so you hope, as opposed to "All Muslim women are veiled" or "All Muslim women are wearing burkes like in Afghanistan."

Theme Two: Communication and Languages

Communication and Languages was a very strong theme in the interview data. This theme was mentioned by the majority of interviewees and stands alone without sub-themes. When interview respondents spoke of communication and language issues, their messages came across very clearly that this is a vital issue for students who take on any sort of leadership position on campus or in the surrounding community. Culture Corps may provide the means for students to have an opportunity to increase their communication and language skills. Culture Corps project leaders repeatedly mentioned how important good communication skills are in leading a project, and also mentioned the importance of knowing the English language and also the opportunity that exists with internationalization programs such as Culture Corps to refine English speaking skills. One previous Culture Corps project leader, reflecting back on her experiences, expressed having had feelings of insecurity in her graduate program:

> "I felt very inferior in the classroom especially as international student, because English is not my first language and communication styles and teaching styles are very different. I was very much accustomed to lecture based approach in the classroom."

Communication is a difficult subject by itself, but adding the struggle of having to present something in English if that is not a first language can present extra challenge. One previous project leader spoke of the preparation involved in doing a presentation for a project of this nature, and contrasted it with preparation for prior classes:

> "I had some speech communication classes and I had to do some kind of verbal presentation, but it was only like three minutes for my courses. For my Culture

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Corps presentation, I really had to prepare for like one hour, two hours

programs, to be fully ready for that I had to really practice it up, I guess."

Efforts appear to be worthwhile, however. Programs designed to allow international

students to build on their existing knowledge and challenge themselves to present to

audiences in their host country appears to build communication skills and confidence in

their ability to succeed in their host country. One project leader mentioned having

struggled with a lack of confidence, but overcoming it and developing a feeling of

competence in public speaking to any audience:

"I gained confidence that I can do international events to international

audiences. I gained confidence about public speaking and also I gained

confidence about I can work with anyone in the world. "

Preparation for leadership roles is apparent here, plus an overall preparation for the

global workforce. One project leader, long since graduated from his degree program and

now in the workforce, had this to say about the preparation he received at Culture

Corps:

"I learned how to interact with different groups of people even in terms of jobs. I

interact with people in Bangalore and New York, and part of my ability to do

this had its roots in the project. I would go that far. It is a very different thing

going to a lecture and just listening to a professor and just giving exams…and

working with different groups of people, understanding different opinions gives

a lot of insight into a culture and different groups of people. This is something

that will probably stay with me for the rest of my life."

The opportunity to interact and work with others from diverse cultures appears to be a rich experience that may prove worthwhile for a long period of time and in many different ways.

Theme Three: Community and Cultural Interaction

The following sub-themes are included in Theme Three: 1) Getting to Know Other People (88%), 2) Sharing Cultures and Communities (81%), 3) Academic and Social Integration (69%), 4) Challenges (56%), 5) Mentors and Networks (56%), 6) Reflections (56%), and 7) Suggestions and Comments (50%). Here, two of the sub-themes were primary, five were secondary, and none were tertiary.

Primary Sub-Theme One: Getting to Know Other People

Culture Corps projects appear to be a means of encouraging interaction among different cultures, both on campus and in the surrounding community. Interviewees' comments regarding this topic illustrated the potential that Culture Corps and other programs like it have in encouraging students' growth and learning via increased involvement with others. One past Culture Corps project leader commented on her involvement in the Tibetan community in Minneapolis:

"I came to know more about community in the state of Minnesota, especially the Tibetan community, and the people who migrated from India and China as political refugees. Without this project of Culture Corps, I would never have had a chance to get to know people from outside of campus. It is very hard for international students, especially graduate students, to get to know people from outside of campus. That's one of the reasons I decided to do something --to connect people from university and from those outside of university."

Another project leader spoke of her experiences teaching in adult students in a life-long learning program. She remarked that the students helped her in her adjustment to her new job as a teacher:

> "And one thing I really liked about the elderly community in the U.S. is that they are so accommodating, you know, I mean they would they would just go all out to make me feel comfortable in the class."

Primary Sub-Theme Two: Sharing Cultures and Communities

Sharing Cultures and Communities was mentioned by a majority of interviewees; however, it is important to mention that students did not always share their own culture, and in fact sometimes mentioned having little desire to do so, either because they had done it before or were wary of those activities that could oversimplify their culture. Although many international students did teach a class or present information about their culture in some way, such as in a series of movies from their countries, many international students did not want to do that, and mentioned that the point of Culture Corps is to facilitate cultural interaction and create a more internationalized environment in which perspectives from across the world could be shared. One respondent explained the importance of encouraging students to learn about issues from varied perspectives as a form of global education:

> "I really value the importance to have opportunity on campus to discuss world issues from different perspectives -- not just listening to lectures from experts but trying to provide opportunities for students to express their opinions on world issues. It is really important to express what they think. It is higher skills

to presenting to others, to get views out, so that's really helping students to process their views and different perspectives."

Another project leader who did a project to raise money to aid individuals in Sri Lanka after the Tsunami commented about how she facilitated the sharing of numerous different cultures in her fundraiser:

"For my Tsunami project, I arranged activities to raise funds for housing in Sri Lanka. We organized with my other fellows. We organized lots of food for the invitees. We also organized a Sri Lankan dance and different types of dance --- modern dance and very traditional old dance, and we invited not only the university community but also the neighboring communities. I think it benefited not only the university community but also the neighboring community. Also, we had an interesting debate at the very beginning. I invited representatives from different...we invited Buddhist people, we invited Christian, Hindus, and Muslims...and we had a kind of discussion...we shared very diverse views and these views were interchanged."

Other interactions in sharing cultures and communities were less formal. For instance, one interviewee who taught a course on her country made friends with some of the students in the class. After discussing arranged marriages in her country, the topic of marriage became one for conversation in less formal arrangements. She mentioned speaking to her students and being invited to a wedding in Minnesota as a means of contrasting her country to the United States, and also out of simple friendship:

"So then one of the ladies, she said, 'You know, my son is actually getting married in summer so we would love to have you and your husband come over.'

I was so moved, you know, my goose-bumps almost raised and I'm like, oh, wow, that will be a wonderful opportunity for me and so I said, yes, I think we all are for it and I will be seeing an American marriage for the first time."

Primary Sub-Theme Three: Academic and Social Integration

Feeling a part of campus community, both academically and socially, appeared as a strong theme. Interview participants mentioned feeling more like a part of academia because of having done a Culture Corps project. Academic and social integration were often not viewed as separate. The project leader below made comments about both meeting friends and making connections, as well:

"Here, you make connections. Because I do this project I know a lot of people, a lot of stuff, so your networking is bigger, bigger. So sometimes it is very helpful for you to do something. Because in here we didn't have relatives, we just have friends, so networking is very important."

Another individual, who had mentioned friendships and connections made through having done a project, described briefly how this can happen:

"If you are writing a proposal where you are going to go and speak in 16 different lectures, 16 different topics and you are going to talk and need different faculty, set up a meeting with them and convince them that you have something to offer…..all of that broadened my network at the university. I met great people who became my friends and I still visit with them."

One respondent spoke of having become increasingly involved in campus life and then still keeping in touch with people he met after graduating and moving back to his home country:

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"After the project I think I became active getting involved in college life and US/International students community. Through the project I made a lot of friends and we still keep in touch after leaving the US."

Another respondent, who had done several Culture Corps projects, spoke of the many ways he learned about American culture in particular:

"I feel like all these projects allowed me to have a stronger or closer relationship with American culture one way or another. And I guess that was just through direct contact with American people. So it was in many different capacities--working with them, working for them, teaching them, or being taught by them…but the main skill is I guess this life-skill that has been being able to interact with Americans at different levels."

Secondary Sub-Theme One: Challenges

Interviewees commented on the challenges they faced while implementing Culture Corps projects. Most challenges were logistical challenges: how to organize and advertise an event, how to find a speaker, and how to get enough participants to go to the events, for example.

The following quotes, from several different individuals, illustrate the issues they mentioned:

"I had difficulty finding people to participate. Among my acquaintances, most people are grad students and they did not have time to commit."

"My main barrier was looking for speakers."

"My biggest barrier was that it was hard to get people involved. The University of Minnesota has a huge student body. The best way to reach out and get many students involved is to partner with different student groups. I was good at grant writing, so I had the money. My biggest problem was how to spread the word out and get people to come in."

Secondary Sub-Theme Two: Mentors and Networks

Mentors and networks was a frequently mentioned theme. Mentors, however, were not mentioned solely in the context of being mentored by someone such as an advisor or a project sponsor, who is usually faculty or staff. Mentor relationships also appear to have taken place informally. Mentor/student relationships were formed when international students taught through a program that offers courses to retired professionals interested in learning about and travelling to other cultures. The students, in this case, appear to have mentored their teachers by providing encouragement and offering advice on how to better conduct the class, deal with difficult students, and better adjust to the United States. As one former project leader commented:

"I was being challenged by the students. They were asking really good questions. Sometimes I would go too overboard to make them understand. And then there would be other students in the next class telling me, 'You know, maybe you are taking the comments of the students too seriously. You need to do your job and there are some students who would be challenging you, so your job as a teacher should be to just focus on what you are supposed to teach and just don't try to accommodate everybody.' I'm like, 'Oh, okay'….so those were some good learning moments for me and I mean, as a whole, I think that class

taught me a lot. I was surprised to see my evaluation. Everybody said that they

loved the course."

Project leaders had official mentors or sponsors who had agreed to guide them

in their projects, but these mentor/sponsors were not consistently mentioned in the

interview data as providing extensive guidance and support. When mentioned, however,

mentors appear to have helped a great deal:

> "My mentors gave me a big encouragement, as they have experiences in
>
> organizing events and are good at it. I had tremendous follow-up and feedback
>
> from them."

Secondary Sub-Theme Three: Reflections

Interviewees who had graduated from the university and had begun their careers

often reflected back on have done a project, and connected it with what they are doing

and thinking now. One interviewee spoke of wanting to start supporting international

students in the university where she now works in her home country:

> "One of the things I want to start with my colleagues is to start supporting
>
> international students. But this is a public university so the funding is very strict.
>
> So if I want to start something like this, I need to go to a lot of meetings and
>
> need permission from the vice president of the university, so that process is a
>
> little bit complicated, but this city where the university is located is in a suburb
>
> of Tokyo. People are quite active in culture, so people from this university might
>
> be interested in getting involved with this project."

Other just simply reflected back on the experience in general. One former project

leader, now a professor at another university, stated she started talking about her

country in a Culture Corps project, but continues to do so today:

> "I think it if weren't for Culture Corps, this experiment, this cultural experiment
>
> or exchange would have never existed, for one. Tunisia would have never had
>
> the exposure or the attraction that it had with those students and since then, even
>
> when I took a full time job, I did manage to talk about Tunis and you know, not
>
> to the extent that Culture Corps did help me do, but still, every time, everywhere
>
> I go, I talk about Tunis and then use my training in Culture Corps and get people
>
> excited about it and this year alone, I have sent 20 undergrads and 6 faculty to
>
> Tunis."

Secondary Sub-Theme Four: Suggestions and Comments

Many interviewees made suggestions and comments about the Culture Corps

program. Interviewees expressed feeling sometimes very isolated in their project

endeavors; although they were aware of others doing different projects across campus,

they many times never even officially met one another. Interviewees requested a

common meeting of all project leaders, one in which ideas might be shared and support

might be offered. As one interviewee expressed:

> "I know that there are a lot of people doing Culture Corps projects on different
>
> topics, but I never know who else is doing what. If we could have, either at
>
> beginning or end of semester a Culture Corps participants get together and talk
>
> about our projects. I always viewed this is something people should do and I

think I've said it twice. I would definitely want this to be put on the agenda

through your recommendations when you write up your results."

Another interviewee viewed more group work among project leaders as a necessary

element in Culture Corps:

"I think the Culture Corps should encourage the group project. This cooperation

benefits all students to know and learn what and how other people work. This

cooperation supplies the opportunity for the project conductors to feel they are

not work alone. They can get help from others if unexpected situation happens.

Culture Corps could be a big family."

In addition, others expressed the sentiment that Culture Corps could be much

more impactful if implemented on a wider scale:

"Culture Corps could be much bigger if their reach is wider. I think they can

become something much, much bigger. They have the potential to become

something much bigger. Get people to do more out there, bigger scale projects

and maybe get them more funding."

Theme Four: Skills

Theme Four discusses Skills as a category of interview responses, and its sub-

themes are illustrated by type of skill: 1) Communication and People Skills (81%), 2)

Leadership Skills (63%), 3) Organization Skills (44%), 4) Miscellaneous Skills, (38%),

and 5) Teaching Skills (19%). Here, two sub-themes were considered primary, two as

secondary, and one as tertiary.

Primary Sub-Theme One

Communication and People Skills was mentioned by a majority of interviewees. Project leaders gained confidence by doing projects. One interviewee mentioned gaining people skills by working and communicating with a diverse variety of people while doing her project, and benefiting from the efforts required to do so. As she stated:

"I improved my people skills a lot because I started to work with so many different student groups. I reached out to different student groups and had discussions with them."

Many who mentioned communication spoke of English language skills at the same time, this being the chief communication problem that they feared might arise. One project leader spoke of her doubts about her English, and how she gained confidence by teaching a class:

"I was hesitant more so because considering that English is not my first language, I grope for words when I talk in English….I mean, I know what the word is, but it's just not coming out, you know, so I'm like maybe that will be one of the major challenges when I teach courses. I talked with some of my students with whom I really started getting along and they said they never really felt it when I talked in the class. I was surprised to see some of their evaluations. They said, 'Oh, very good communication skills.' I said, 'Well, I was not really expecting this!'

Primary Sub-Theme Two: Leadership Skills

The experience of having had an idea for a project, convincing others to approve the project, and then implementing the idea appears to either develop or bring out

leadership skills in project leaders. Involving others is most times inevitable, as even if a project is done solo, there is always help that must be sought, even if it involves reserving a classroom or ensuring the proper audio-visual equipment is available. One project leader mentioned leadership in a broad sense, conveying much of what is involved in planning and implementing a project:

"I also learned a lot how to work with people, how to organize events in the university, how to promote my message, how to attract people to different events, and I also learned that it's very important to involve other people, because involvement of other people leads to…they become motivated by this project and they spread the idea and then they bring other people and it just grows better like this."

Another project leader reflected back on how the project helped her to develop qualities necessary for her to implement the project:

"When I came here, I realized you had to go out and ask for things. Leading a project gave me these attributes. I became much more of an extrovert in the U.S. When I started leading projects and doing things, I had to question people's opinions and this definitely helped me adjust to American culture, not just university life."

Secondary Sub-Theme One: Organization Skills

Organization Skills was mentioned with some frequency and appeared as the only secondary sub-theme. Organization skills were most often mentioned in a matter-of-fact way, but were also mentioned in more detail, in terms of projects and dividing up responsibilities among individuals, as the following quote illustrates:

"I can learn about how to contact the department if I want to distribute some useful information to students and faculty. And then, I also learn about how to communicate to team members to divide responsibilities for this project."

Secondary Sub-Theme Two: Miscellaneous Skills

Interviewees mentioned gaining many new skills and fine-tuning others through the process of leading a Culture Corps project. This sub-theme was created because of the wide variety of skills mentioned by project leaders. Skills mentioned included grant writing, web design, research skills, computer skills, and presentation skills, among others. One individual spoke of being challenged by several tasks she had to do during her project, and having benefited from learning these new skills:

"As a Culture Corps project leader I had to, as I said, write a proposal, make a poster, or posted announcements on a website. It was very challenging because I never did it before."

Another interviewee enjoyed learning how to design flyers to advertise her project:

"That was a kind of good skill that I learned – how to design a flyer. The flyer, by the way, was real cool and I really liked my flyer. I thought I could very well try to hands in creative designing."

One student, who was taking an Evaluation Studies course, used the place where she was teaching a class to do an evaluation assignment:

"I was taking an evaluation course and used the Adult Learning Institute as the program to evaluate for it. I also evaluated the program and conducted interviews and focus groups."

A few other examples of skills mentioned are as follows:

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"For about a semester or so, I tried to publicize global discussions on my personal website. It's called web design skills if you may say that."

"I interacted with designers to get copy ready for our ads, for example, I learned about copy design and how to market and present."

"I improved my grant writing skills."

Tertiary Sub-Theme One: Teaching Skills

Teaching skills was mentioned by a minority of students in the interviews. Those who did mention teaching, however, were very enthusiastic about their experiences. One individual mentioned falling in love with teaching through Culture Corps, and attributed her Culture Corps experience to the career as a professor that she has today:

"One thing I honestly, strongly believe, actually, is that it is because I did so many Culture Corps projects, that I practiced so much teaching and teaching styles, and I still have great reviews from colleagues and students….is because, first of all because I love teaching, so if I come up and teach a class, it can't be boring. It has to be enticing; it has to break at different points; all that creative thinking and creative organization comes from Culture Corps. So, it comes naturally to me now to put lectures together."

Another project leader, who had doubted her ability to teach because she had never done it before, gained a great deal of confidence and had a very good experience with her class:

"When I ended the class, I ended up with thirty two students, and that is a very good retention rate and usually they say that even if a class starts with 25

students, they are usually just left with 10 or 12 students. So, that kind of

boosted my confidence and I thought "Oh, it's neat that I can teach!"

To this, she added:

"And it was like I never really saw any negative evaluations…and, well, maybe

I am like blowing my own trumpet, but I really felt nice because I thought

teaching was going to be very challenging and a struggling block for me, but it

really turned out to be very nice."

Theme Five: Education

The fifth, and last, theme contained the following primary and secondary sub-

themes: 1) Social Integration (94%), 2) Perceptions about People (75%), 3) Personal

Growth (69%), 4) Higher Education Perceptions and Comparisons (69%), 5) Self-

Efficacy and Pride (63%), and 7) Financial (50%).

   Primary Sub-Theme One: Social Integration

   Social integration appeared under the theme of Community and Cultural

interaction, but is included here as well because it is not a duplicate but rather provides

information regarding social integration under the theme of education. One interviewee

increased his enjoyment of his college experience by having led a project, plus added

motivation and added confidence in his ability to design and implement creative

projects:

"It certainly helped me enjoy my college life as much as I could. After the

projects, I got more friends, more faculty members and more ideas of what I can

do to represent my own culture as well as myself. It seemed more and more

international students were willing to conduct their own Culture Corps projects,

so that motivated me to come up with originality, something unique only I can organize and present."

Another project leader remarked that Culture Corps provided a means for him to adjust to his new life more easily by providing a forum with which he could have the opportunity to interact with many different people:

"When you are a student you are basically trying to stay afloat with your academics and with the culture and the new city, and the new country, for a guy like me who had never been to the states, right? Um…that opportunity actually is really neat because it gives you a more thorough experience of the United States and it allows you to interact with different groups of people that are university-related in different capacities. So…I mean of course it was instrumental in my process of adjusting to the United States and I think that my college experience in the states would have been incomplete without it."

Primary Sub-Theme Two: Perceptions about People

Culture Corps project leaders sometimes expressed concern for U.S. American students' lack of knowledge about other parts of the world. One interviewee emphasized the importance of preparing students for today's much smaller world:

"We live in the same earth. The modern technologies of transportation and communication let people live more close than before. The students will face the market not the local size, but the international level after they graduate from college. A good university should supply an environment for student to know what the foreign people concern and their culture, education as well as living style."

The tone of the interviewees' concerns seemed hopeful, however. One interviewee went as far as to mention students' lack of knowledge about her country as one of the reasons she began doing a project in which she taught people about her country:

> "The reason why I started doing Culture Corps specifically about is because I realized that students didn't know anything about Tunis. But what I learned about them is you know, once you get them excited and you show them aspects that they might never see in books or on TV ….you know, they are very curious, so they either take it on their own to travel to that part of the world or to read more or they ask you where they can get some books and which books you would recommend, so what I learned about American students of all ages all across all aspects, I guess is that they are curious."

Another individual agreed with this sentiment, relating how, in her experience leading a global discussion group about issues worldwide, she attracted more U.S. American students than international students to the events:

> "One thing that kind of surprised me is that I would think that this kind of global discussion would attract a lot of international students to come to the session, especially, say when there is session on Iran or just the Middle East. I would usually send out emails to relevant student groups and I hoped that they would come, but to my surprise, most of the students that came are actually the U.S. students. I wouldn't say it's a bad thing, but I was just a little surprised. I thought that by doing this I would get to know more international students but I ended up meeting more domestic students."

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Primary Sub-Theme Three: Personal Growth

Interviewees mentioned learning and growing in many areas through leading a project, in both personal and professional arenas. One respondent credited her experiences with Culture Corps as an important influence on her decision to pursue a doctoral degree:

> "I did not even know what it meant to teach. So, when I first started working with Kristina on a Culture Corps and I had to go in classrooms and give a lecture on some specific subject or what the professor wanted me to teach about, um, you know I just fell in love with teaching. It was so fascinating and rewarding to see all of those students raise their hands and ask questions and they were actually interested, you know. I guess it became addictive and I realized that, hey, I could do this, but it order for me to do this, I need a Ph.D.!"

Another respondent, who was apprehensive about discussing personal issues in an open forum, faced his fears, found support, and appears to have gained increased confidence as a result:

> "I was not quite sure if I could do the GLBT presentation by myself, so it was very encouraging for me that I know that there are people around me supporting my ideas and project so that was actually a really big thing. At the time I already like came out to most people and like my close friends and my family and had no problems, but like, speaking about potentially my private thing to the public and participants whom I don't really know --- that could be a bit intimidating thing for me, so I was not quite sure if I could do that, but you know, again, they encouraged me to do so and it turned out to be a very good result."

Projects like Culture Corps also seem to influence future careers. One interviewee, who had since returned to her home country and was working at a university there, reflected on her experience as influential to her current career path:

"I think this project, although I did it only twice, two years ago, I think it helped me to think a lot to think about my current career path. Because now I want to start some projects with community leaders who want to support international students at my university but I've been here for only three weeks but I've been thinking about how I can apply this Culture Corps to this university situation."

Primary Sub-Theme Four: Higher Education Perceptions and Comparisons

Interview respondents shared their perceptions of the U.S. higher education system and made comparisons based on what they knew of both systems. One respondent compared higher education systems in terms of culture, and credited having led a project for helping her become more familiar with how to adjust to U.S. Culture:

"When I came here, I realized you had to go out and ask for things. Leading a project gave me these attributes. I became much more of an extrovert in the U.S. When I started leading projects and doing things, I had to question people's opinions and this definitely helped me adjust to American culture, not just university life. India is a collectivist culture. Fitting into an individualistic culture in that sense made me much more of an individualist. Culture Corps got me integrated in the U.S. culture faster than those who don't do projects. I started doing things on my own."

Reflecting on her experiences with Culture Corps, another respondent reflected on

what she learned and how that made her feel more connected and more confident while

studying in the United States:

> "As a Culture Corps project leader I had to, as I said, write a proposal, make a
>
> poster, or posted announcements on a website. It was very challenging because I
>
> never did it before. Since I am from Japan, I am very lecture oriented I am not
>
> that outspoken compared with so-called U.S. college students. I don't want to
>
> make a generalization but because of the education system I am used to in
>
> Japan, I am not used to go on my own and make a project. So it's a very good
>
> culture experience to me. "

Still another individual remarked on the difference in educational systems in terms of

educational offerings:

> "One of differences I saw was between our educational system and the U.S.
>
> higher education system. I know friends who've done engineering in India. I
>
> did my first six months in India, and then transferred. I really noticed the
>
> flexibility of the American educational system."

Primary Sub-Theme Five: Self-Efficacy and Pride

Leading a project from its idea stage to implementation can serve to build the

belief in oneself to complete other projects or perform other tasks, as well. One

interviewee who had mentioned struggling with issues of confidence surrounding her

ability to speak English in public had this to say about what she had gained through

leading a Culture Corps project:

"I gained confidence and also working equal with all nationalities and now I am

very confident that I can go and work anywhere in the world."

Another interviewee told how having done a project continues to help her, long after

graduating and moving into the workforce. She speaks in particular of asking for pay

raises, but her overall lesson was that in order to get what one wants, one has to speak

up in order to have a chance:

"This continues to help me in my work situation. Just knowing you can just go

ahead and just ask for things. In India that is considered rude: the boss would

give you what you seek, if you deserve it. Of course, pay negotiations happen

in India but just giving you some example--pay negotiations would have been

my biggest nightmare, but that is what I do at work now."

Another interviewee spoke of feeling pride in her country for the first time. She had not

ever considered being proud or not proud, for that matter, but rather stayed rather

neutral until teaching class on her home country to students who welcomed the

information. Using the national flag as an example, she expresses how she is proud of

her country:

"One of the things is that our national flag…you know, I understand that U.S.

national flag can be worn, you know…you can do anything with a U.S. national

flag….you can wear it as a lingerie or whatever. That is totally…we can't do

that in India, so it's like you cannot just play around with the national flag."

Secondary Sub-Theme One: Financial

Interviewees made both positive and negative statements about the financial

awards given by Culture Corps. One project leader who was not happy about her

financial award spoke of the time it took, and stated that it was not proportional to the award received. She suggested here that internationalization of higher education should be more connected to other programs in higher education, because by itself, Culture Corps has a very small reach:

"Internationalization of higher education has to be systematic and linked to many other programs. Culture Corps is very limited. Giving $1,000 dollars to do a project is not enough…..some people may interpret that as exploitation sometimes…you never know…..I don't do that because I look at the possibilities, but we have to have much more effort."

Another project leader, whose tuition had been covered, had a much more positive comment:

"Getting the monetary incentive--getting a tuition waiver--helped me put my heart into this project. I viewed I was getting a scholarship for doing something good. I wanted to put my best foot forward and it helped me that I didn't have to worry about how to pay my tuition."

Satisfaction with financial awards given, perhaps not surprisingly, could be related to the level of satisfaction with the amount of time involved to do the project for which the award was given.

Comparison of Emergent Themes from Reflective Essays and Interviews

Table 8 illustrates the themes that emerged from the reflective essays and the interviews. Themes from both essays and interviews appear to be consistent, but in the interviews, far more detail was given. For example, the first theme listed in the essay

data is Self-discovery (identity). A similar theme emerged in the interview data, but due to the volume of information, was organized into a wider variety of categories that all tied to discovering believes about one's own abilities, learning from other people, and personal growth, among others. A theme titled Mentors emerged in both essay and interview data, but with much more detail in the interview data. In the interview data, for example, Culture Corps project leaders spoke of informal mentors such as retired professionals who were now students in a program for people who wished to learn about other cultures. These retired professionals shared their knowledge in many ways with the Culture Corps project leaders, assisting them with learning things such as effective teaching techniques.

The themes Teaching Skills and Leadership Skills were consistent in both essay and interview data, although in the essays, more individuals wrote about teaching, and in the interviews, more individuals spoke of skills gained by leading a project. Organizational skills were consistent through both essay and interview data, and comments mainly concerned learning how to prioritize and multi-task. Communication was a strong theme in both the essay and interview data. This is likely because students who do not speak English as a first language by necessity must function in the language of the host country if they are to be successful in project implementation. For many, this is a significant obstacle, and a theme that repeated itself consistently throughout both sets of data. In the essay data, the comments were less detailed, centering principally on English language skills. In the interview data, the topic of communication still centered on the necessity of speaking English, but also expanded to related items in

communication, such as people skills and the skills necessary to be accepted into Culture Corps as a project leader and subsequently carry out a successful project.

Closely related to the theme of communication was Interaction with Others, which emerged in both data sets. Judging by their comments, international students placed a high value on the way Culture Corps facilitates interaction with a diverse variety of individuals, from faculty to staff to both domestic and international students. Again, the interview data was more detailed, providing sub-categories such as challenges in interactions, sharing cultures and communities, and suggestions and comments for future Culture Corps project leaders. Impressions about U.S. Students was another theme that matched across essay and interview data. Students in both the essays and the interviews mentioned the challenges that exist in trying to integrate with domestic students. It was frequently said that U.S. students are friendly, but busy, and can appear at first to be more amenable to participating in Culture Corps projects than they really are. U.S. students were said to be involved in many obligations and are often time-starved; thus, it can be hard to convince them to attend events that they do not see as directly beneficial.

Note that financial benefits did not emerge as a theme in the reflective essays, but did emerge in the interviews. This is likely due to the manner in which information was given. The reflective essays were done in writing as a part of having led a Culture Corps project, while the interviews were a much different, perhaps easier format. Speaking in an interview allows room for clarifications and additions to questions, while essay format limits a person much more to the questions asked.

Table 8

Comparison of Themes from Reflective Essays and Interviews

Themes from Essays	Themes and Sub-themes from Interviews
Self-discovery (identity)	**Personal Beliefs and Attitudes,** Own Abilities, Learning From Others, Events Influencing Beliefs, Own Beliefs, Surprises about Others, Changing Assumptions, Personal Growth, Self-Efficacy and Pride
Mentors	Mentors and Networks
Teaching Experience	**Skills,** Teaching Skills
Leadership Skills	**Skills,** Leadership Skills
Organizational Skills	**Skills,** Organization Skills
Communication Skills	**Communication and Languages, Skills,** Communication and People Skills, Research and Computer Skills
Interaction with Others	**Cultural and Community Interaction,** Sharing Cultures and Communities, Academic and Social Integration, Challenges, Mentors and Networks, Reflections, Suggestions and Comments
Impressions about American students	**Education,** Social Integration, Perceptions about People, Higher Education Perceptions and Comparisons
	Financial (Benefits)

Research Sub-Questions

In addition to the primary research question, three sub-questions were asked, which are listed here.

> Sub-question 1: What skills does a Culture Corps participant obtain by designing a Culture Corps project?

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Sub-question 2: Are international students' experiences in leading a Culture Corps project effective in encouraging self-efficacy and increased involvement in the host country?

Sub-question 3: Which theoretical framework does a better job of matching the categories of impact generated by an analysis of students' reflections about their participation?

After identifying themes in the interview data, I also coded the data for each of the sub-questions. In NVivo7, I coded the sub-questions based on the wording of each sub-question. For example, sub-question one of the research question reads: What skills does a Culture Corps participant obtain by designing a Culture Corps project? This, in NVivo7 Qualitative software coding, became RQsub1—Skills designing CC project. I then merged all qualitative data pertaining to skills gained during a Culture Corps project into that category. All of the sub-questions were coded in this manner. A list below this paragraph is provided in order to show how the research sub-questions were coded in order to organize the data and address each research sub-question.

RQsub1—Skills designing CC project

RQsub2a---Self-efficacy

RQsub2b—Involvement---host country

RQsub3—Theoretical framework best matches

The following sections address each sub-question as listed above.

Sub-Question One Analysis: Skills Obtained

To answer sub-question 1, I analyzed the interview and essay data and compared skills obtained. Both reflective essay writers and interviewees mentioned skills as an important benefit of having led a Culture Corps project. To compare the skills

mentioned, I used NVivo7 software to code the skills mentioned in the essay data and the interview data and set them up side-by-side. Table 9 lists the percentages of times each skill was mentioned in the essay data compared to the times each skill was mentioned in the interview data. A discussion of these skills is also provided.

Table 9

Essay and Interview Responses: Percentage of Times Themes Mentioned

Skills Listed	% in essays	% in interviews
Communication and People Skills	45	81
Leadership Skills	17	63
Organizational Skills	30	44
Miscellaneous Skills	12	38
Teaching Skills	55	19

Essays (N=60) Interviews (N=16)

There are considerable differences between the theme percentages mentioned in the essay and interview data. This could due to the method of obtaining the data. The essay data was existing data, while the interview data was a result of semi-structured interviews for which one of the main purposes was to see what international students had learned as a result of conducting a Culture Corps project. Also, the first question in the interview questions asked specifically about the benefits of having done a Culture Corps project, and the prompt was skills obtained.

Communication and People Skills

Communication and People Skills were mentioned 45% of the time in the essay data, and 81% of the time in the interview data. In the essay data, most of the comments belonging to this category came from experiences teaching a class. Project leaders mentioned changing their teaching style out of the necessity to communicate better with

U.S. students. For example, an international student who taught Flamenco dancing, for example, had to change from a more nonverbal style she had learned in both Japan and Spain, to a much more verbal, explanatory communication style in order to teach her U.S. students more effectively. In the interview data, more mention was made of Communication and People Skills in terms of learning how to better communicate in the English language and how to network with others both personally and professionally.

Leadership Skills

Leadership Skills were mentioned only 17% of the time in the essays, and 63% of the time in the interviews. This could be due to the experiences of the interviewees, who had not been teachers during their projects but rather had organized other events such as discussion groups on global issues. In the 60 essays, more individuals appeared to be focused on items other than leadership. Mention was made in the essays, however, of leadership notions such team building, delegation, and follow-up.

Organizational Skills

Organizational Skills were mentioned 30% of the time in the reflective essays, compared to 44% of the time in the interviews. Items mentioned in both data sets both surrounded the skills gained while organizing a project, such as finding speakers, reserving rooms and presentation equipment, and preparing and then cleaning up the room after the event is over. More detail was provided in the interview data than in the essay data, but this could be because the essays were written material and the interviews were spoken, which for many is a much easier form of communication, allowing room for clarifications, corrections, and additional information.

Miscellaneous Skills

In the essays, 12% mentioned skills other than the main ones listed, and 38% of the interviews provided similar information. This category was created because many skills mentioned in essays and interviews did not belong into one major category, but were worth mentioning. For example, some students, in preparation for their events, needed to conduct library research. In the pursuit of information on their home countries, for example, some international students mentioned seeking the help of librarians and subsequently becoming more familiar with the library system at the study university. These students mentioned gaining better research skills. Other skills mentioned in this category were items such as marketing, grant writing, designing flyers, and web design.

Teaching Skills

Teaching Skills were mentioned by 55% of the essay writers, while only 19% of interviewees mentioned this category. Many Culture Corps project leaders teach, but the majority of project leaders in my sample of interview participants for this study were not involved in teaching as a project. This could explain this discrepancy. It is interesting to note that those who did mention obtaining teaching skills in the interviews appeared very passionate about their new experience. As one interviewee stated,

"I just fell in love with teaching!"

Sub-Question Two Analysis: Self-Efficacy and Involvement

Note that research sub-question two is divided into two parts. To more clearly present results related to this question, it was divided into two parts: a) self-efficacy, and b) involvement. In analyzing data pertaining to Sub-question two, data were

obtained in response to a very specific interview question which asked individuals to discuss whether their experiences in leading a Culture Corps project were effective in encouraging self-efficacy and increased involvement in the study university. By way of contrast, data used in examining Sub-question one were obtained from general questions from the Reflective Essays that did not require that participants refer to specific aspects of their experience in Culture Corps, and from a question in the interviews which asked what participants had learned from doing a Culture Corps project. For Sub-question one, an indication of the percentage of participants who noted a particular type of response is relevant information, whereas it is not relevant for sub-questions 2a and 2b since all interviewees commented about self-efficacy and involvement in the study university.

Part A: Self-Efficacy

Sub-question two asked if international students' experiences in leading a Culture Corps project were effective in encouraging self-efficacy and increased involvement in the host country. This sub-question was broken into two parts in order to better analyze and understand the answers to this question. According to the answers to this sub-question, self-efficacy, or a feeling of being able to face a problem or task and successfully resolve or complete it, may be helped along in project-based programs such as Culture Corps. Consider the project leader who taught a class on her home country, who doubted her ability to teach due to her lack of experience:

> "The course coordinator there said that this was a very big class and usually
>
> students don't stay. When I ended the class, I ended up with thirty two students,
>
> and that is a very good retention rate and usually they say that even if a class

starts with 25 students, they are usually just left with 10 or 12 students. So, that

kind of boosted my confidence and I thought 'Oh, it's neat that I can teach!'"

Having had success in one project may lead to success in future projects. One

individual, who had graduated and moved onto his new life as a business professional,

spoke of using his experience designing and implementing a project in Culture Corps in

the business world, where he was asked to plan a study trip for Japanese medical

students to learn about global health systems:

"My job was to organize the project—a two weeks trip to the Philippines for

them and made a contact with a counterpart in the Philippines and also possible

supporters in Japan and also the students who were going to participate in the

project. The whole project starting with a brainstorm session and then narrowing

down the ingredients that I have in my head or the ideas that I discussed with

other co-workers and then contacting all the counterparts and supporters from

other supporters as well, and I could just follow every step, remembering what I

had done in my Culture Corps project so I really didn't get lost when I was

preparing for the student trip thing and so that way it really helped me."

Another interviewee described some of the issues international students have

when first arriving to their host country, then discussed the opportunity provided by

Culture Corps to implement a creative project. To this interviewee, this chance to have

organized a project made gave him a feeling of self-efficacy:

"You are an international student and you are trying to basically survive in the

new culture, in the new city, in the weather, and all these things. Oftentimes that

scenario is not there because you are just kind of trying to stay afloat. So, I mean

it gives you the opportunity to do it and that's the beauty of it. Then, however

you do it is your own decision, and like I said, I did different things – I taught

classes; I was part of the organization committee for different events, that type

of thing, so I did have the opportunity to provide my cultural input from

different perspectives, but the program as such kind of allowed me to do it in a

very free-form way."

Project leaders faced challenges and overcame them, and benefited from a

feeling a self-efficacy upon seeing their projects come to a successful completion.

Although it comes as no surprise, perhaps, that a project such as this should build this

feeling, it makes a statement about the worth of projects of this nature in aiding students

to use their existing skills and knowledge and build on them, facing sometimes difficult

tasks, but benefiting from the results.

Part B: Involvement in Host Country

Interviewees mentioned becoming increasingly involved in campus life through

doing a project. Involvement in the host country was multi-faceted. Some respondents

mentioned that this project led to professional and academic contacts, but not to

friendships. As one interviewee stated:

"Friends…I think it just made more professional contacts in the university. I just

got to know much better people who promoted different events, and different

professors, and I met some people organized these presentations and I think we

got to know better each other but I don't think it was about friendship."

Another respondent connected directly to one of the main purposes of Culture

Corps, internationalization of higher education:

"I think doing Culture Corps makes me actively involved in the

internationalization process of this university."

Friendships, however, were also frequently mentioned as coming from having

done a project. As one project leader stated:

"Friends…yes, actually because it is not easy to get more people in every event,

we have to contact our own friends and say 'Please come.' One of Evelyn's

friends comes to every event and now I can say hello to her. Also, International

student society is very narrow. I just met other friends and people say 'Hey Yu-

Li…I saw you here.'"

However the increased involvement in the host country may be described, involvement

appears to be occurring and it appears to be encouraged by leading or participating in a

project.

Sub-Question Three: Theoretical Framework Matches

For sub-question 3, I turned back to the essay and interview data and analyzed

the reflective essays and the interview transcripts separately, using codes that

represented King and Baxter Magolda's and Mezirow's theories to see which

framework did a better job of matching the categories generated by the analysis of

students' reflections about their participation. Sub-question three asked the following

question: *Which theoretical framework does a better job of matching the categories of*

impact generated by an analysis of students' reflections about their participation? Two

theories have been discussed as possible lenses for understanding international student

growth and learning when participating in project-based learning programs. King and

Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity, which uses

Kegan's (1994) notion of learning as involving cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal experiences, examines behavioral indications of intercultural maturity. Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory, with its roots in adult learning theory, observes how learners use prior experiences and existing knowledge to shift or change perspectives.

The codes that fit Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory are as follows: recipe learning (learning through meaning schemes, or adding to existing facts); new meaning schemes (learning new meaning schemes, in which perspectives do not change much but are added to slightly as new roles are introduced); reflections on assumptions (learning through transformation of meaning schemes or recognizing wrong patterns of thinking and introducing the possibility of permanent changes); and, finally, "Reorganization of meaning" (learning through perspective transformation, or completely changing one's perspective as a result of recognition of and reflection on previous assumptions and distorted thinking patterns).

From King and Baxter-Magolda (2005), I used the codes the authors borrowed from Kegan (1999), which are as follows: 1) Interpersonal (increased ability to relate to others without feeling threatened by different lifestyles and worldviews), 2) Intrapersonal (a better understanding of self through interaction and interdependence with faculty, mentors, staff, and colleagues), 3) Cognitive (academic, or the process of how knowledge is gained and meaning is made).

In this sub-question, I used both essays and interviews as a means of triangulation, to seek support for themes that emerged from the data analysis. Table 10 presents an overview of the results of the coding of reflective essays and interviews in

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the context of cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal categories as proposed by

King and Baxter Magolda (2005). An illustration of the data of King and Baxter

Magolda's categories when initial, intermediate, and mature levels of intercultural

maturity are specified is also provided. Finally, the data are examined in the context of

Mezirow's (1999) levels of learning, and illustrations of those levels are given.

Table 10

Essay and Interview Responses: Percentage of Individuals Mentioning Framework

Frameworks	% in essays	% in interviews
King & Baxter Magolda—Cognitive	68	69
King & Baxter Magolda—Interpersonal	67	100
King & Baxter Magolda—Intrapersonal	52	44
Mezirow--New Meaning Schemes	72	100
Mezirow--Recipe Learning	63	44
Mezirow--Reflection on Assumptions	63	88
Mezirow--Reorganization of Meaning	7	44

Essays (N=60) Interviews (N=16)

When examining the percentages for the essays in Table 10, the percentage for

King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Cognitive and Interpersonal categories were very

similar at 68% and 67%, whereas the percentage in the Intrapersonal category was

much lower at 52%. In the interviews, King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) categories

varied even more: The Cognitive category was 69%, while the Interpersonal and

Intrapersonal categories were 100% and 44%, respectively. When examining the

percentages for the essays under Mezirow's (1991) categories, New Meaning Schemes

was 72%, Recipe Learning and Reflections on Assumptions were 63%, and Reorganization of Meaning was only 7%. The interview percentages are quite different than the essays. In the interviews, New Meaning Schemes was 100%, Reflection on Assumptions was 88%, and Reorganization of Meaning was 44%, much higher percentages than those found in the essays. The one percentage that was lower in the interviews was Recipe Learning at 44%, compared to the essays at 63%.

King and Baxter Magolda: Cognitive

King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) cognitive category conveys the process of how knowledge is acquired and meaning is made. While 69% of the interview participants mentioned items that fell into this category and 68% of the essays mentioned this, as well, the responses did not portray the development of intercultural maturity, as King and Baxter-Magolda intended. Instead, the acquisition of knowledge is portrayed, and while it is important to understand what students are learning, it does not necessarily reflect anything other than the gaining or the fine-tuning of skills. Below are illustrative quotes from the essays and interviews.

In the essays, one individual spoke of the challenge of implementing a project in English, which is not her native language:

"Creating the promotional materials, communicating and presenting the project idea to the resource persons, facilitating the game, and appropriately picking up the participants' cues during the debriefing, all have to be processed in the second language."

She then added how she managed some of the challenges of presenting in a language not her own:

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"One thing I learned from the experience is that it is always better to bring some

handouts or typed materials in meeting people and mentor as the oral

communication sometimes creates misunderstanding or does not convey what is

intended."

One interview participant reflected on his experience leading a Culture Corps project

and how the acquisition of knowledge that he gained during the project assisted him

later on in the workplace. While the illustration of acquired knowledge and skills is

quite apparent and the learning is definitely being applied, intercultural maturity is not

mentioned:

"I was trained to organize one project from the scratch, by following

brainstorming, specifying the subject to present, seeking for sponsors, booking

venues, time management, advertising, budgeting, resource management and

getting feedback. I doubt I understood fully what I listed just above when I was

actually conducting the project, but later on I found the importance to

experience those. For instance, now I work in business and each element I

practiced in the project gives me some hints on how to organize meeting well."

King and Baxter Magolda: Interpersonal

King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Interpersonal category illustrates how

individuals obtained a better self-understanding by interacting with a wide variety of

people in different contexts. This portion of the conceptual framework seemed to be a

better fit than what was portrayed in the cognitive category above. In the essays, 67% of

the individuals mentioned gaining insight from having worked with others, while 100%

of the interview participants mentioned this category.

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An illustration from the essays shows a project leader who improved his communication skills through the experience of interacting with others while leading a project:

"By doing the project, I knew much better about my ability to communicate and to coordinate. I regarded myself as out-going and approachable. Through the workshop, I realized my skills at communication and gaining acceptance were really quite limited. The second most important thing I learned from the work is that only diligence and commitment can bring me respect and cooperation from my fellow workers."

One of the interview participants spoke of the experience of working with many different people and learning from the variety of perspectives that these individuals provided:

"I feel like being part of these projects and being able to interact with Americans and people from other parts of the world, for that matter was very enlightening in the sense that it allowed me to see things from different perspectives and really a lot of that, a lot of the contributions – the mental and the intellectual contributions that I received from these people, I did not even expect. So…I know this is kind of cliché and whatnot, but it's one of those things that I feel helped me to broaden my vision of culture and, like I said before, I am very fond of my Culture Corps experience."

King and Baxter Magolda: Intrapersonal

King and Baxter-Magolda's portrayal of the intrapersonal category reflects the ability the individual has to encounter different worldviews and lifestyles without

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feeling threatened. An analysis of comments found that 44% of interview participants

mentioned something in this category, while 52% of the essay writers mentioned

something that reflected this type of learning. An illustration of the intrapersonal

category from the essays came from an international student who compared his

experience as an international Latino student to others, gaining both personal and

political insight:

> "I learned that my experience as a Latino-international student is by no means
>
> different from what other international and U.S.-born Latinos have gone
>
> through. The greatest lesson I am taking to myself after this semester is that
>
> Latinos come to the United States to look for better opportunities without
>
> forgetting their roots. However, there is a very clear division among Latinos
>
> from different countries and even there is some sort of backward discrimination
>
> from Chicanos and Mexicans with Indian blood to white Hispanics. There is a
>
> large need for people working on this issue since a divided minority is a weak
>
> minority. During the events I learned that Latino people are interested in
>
> debating topics that concern our Latino identity."

One interview participant spoke of how she recognized and eliminated a

prejudice she had held against Asian students, and connected her insights about her

prejudice with a problem she later encountered when another individual, afraid of being

thought of as homosexual, did not want to hang up posters for an event with Culture

Corps and the Queer Student Culture Center. As the interviewee stated:

> "I learned to appreciate other cultures a little bit more, and I hope they did, too. I
>
> mean, if they had prejudices, that they got rid of those. Like, two weeks ago we

had the Queer Student Culture Center at the SWCH, and one of the guys on our

team said, 'If I hang up those posters, then they'll think I'm queer too.' And

that's kind of depressing…So I hope as he has had that SWCH with the Queer

Student Culture Center, that he realizes that they are just normal people, as well-

--that there's nothing to be ashamed of if somebody is queer, or to hang posters

up that advertise the Queer events. So I hope that he got the same thing out of

that I got out of with the Asian people."

King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Initial, Intermediate, and Mature Levels

In addition to coding data to see which framework applied better, I took a step

further and examined the data according to King and Baxter Magolda's framework.

Below are illustrations of how the data appeared when examined through this particular

lens. As Table 11 indicates, none of the responses in either the essays or the interviews

fit the initial level of intercultural maturity in cognitive and interpersonal categories,

with the exception of 2% of the responses in the essays in the intrapersonal level.

Illustrations of comments, therefore, begin at the intermediate level.

Illustrations of Intermediate and Advanced Levels

Below are illustrative quotes from the interview and essay data which serve as

examples of which qualitative data fit was coded into each of the levels to examine

King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) notion of intercultural maturity. I begin with

intermediate levels of each category, and then move to advanced.

Cognitive

Kegan's (1994) notion of cognitive development was aimed at examining the

process of how knowledge is gained and meaning is made out of new knowledge. King

and Baxter Magolda (2005) added to this in their framework, examining intercultural maturity through this lens. King and Baxter Magolda (2005) viewed intercultural maturity in terms of behavior. In the cognitive category, intermediate development is described as shifting from dualistic thinking to being able to see multiple perspectives and to process knowledge internally, rather than to expect knowledge to come from external authorities. Individuals in the intermediate level are able to accepting uncertainty and suspending judgment truth (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Individuals at the mature cognitive level have refined this ability to accept uncertainty and are able to consciously shift between many perspectives and worldviews (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Table 11

Percentage of Response Levels in King & Baxter Magolda's Framework

Levels	% in essays	% in interviews
Cognitive --- Initial	0	0
Cognitive ---Intermediate	22	13
Cognitive--- Mature	7	6
Interpersonal --- Initial	0	0
Interpersonal --- Intermediate	50	44
Interpersonal --- Mature	28	94
Intrapersonal -- Initial	2	0
Intrapersonal -- Intermediate	53	50
Intrapersonal -- Mature	20	69

Essays (N=60) Interviews (N=16)

Cognitive: Intermediate

Responses in the cognitive category pertained to experience gained while implementing a project. In the essays, one individual spoke of differences in teaching styles according to culture:

"I got to know how languages are taught at this university. What I experienced was a different style of teaching languages than what I got to know when I was in high school. It was much more open for discussion, topic about students concerns, creative teaching."

A response from the interviews that was considered to be at an intermediate level involved increasing communication skills by the experience of integrating multiple perspectives in the context of team building:

"From a skills side, the communication aspect--forming discussion and building discussions, bringing people together and understanding what would work."

Cognitive: Mature

Mature responses in the cognitive category illustrated an ability to weigh various perspectives and move between them while benefitting from the advantage that one appears to gain from viewing knowledge from different angles. From the essays, an example of the mature cognitive level is illustrated in the comment below, in which the author stated that part of preparing for his presentations involved preparing for potential questions from many different perspectives:

"Although I am comfortable with public speaking and have made presentations in my home country, it is different presenting and speaking in another country. In my culture, public speaking and presentations are not very interactive, on the

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other hand, in the United States, its lot more interactive; audience ask questions, sometimes even beyond the scope of the topic. I was nervous in the beginning and found it challenging to prepare the presentation and potential questions which may be asked during the presentation. I had good knowledge about the Indian culture but I also had to know about other South Asian countries."

One interviewee spoke of how she benefitted from leading a Culture Corps project in the context of her education and the comparisons she could make between her country and the United States, which she planned on using in her upcoming fieldwork for her doctoral research:

"Through this organization, it sort of gave me more knowledge of the current U.S. political and socioeconomic situation……. As sort of a requirement, I have to read those foreign policy association magazines. I would say that if it hadn't been this, I would not be that politically well informed. Also, my own research is citizenship education. Although I am researching on China, I get a strong sense of feeling of how U.S. people are participating, so this is a way of me being a Chinese person, studying and researching in the U.S….getting their notion of citizenship and education. I wouldn't try to replicate in China but when I go back to do my field work, I will try to have a sense of comparison."

Interpersonal

Kegan's (1994) described his concept of the interpersonal aspect of development as a lack of feeling threatened by difference when relating to others who do not share the same worldviews. In terms of their framework, King and Baxter Magolda (2005) described the intermediate level of interpersonal development as "willingness to interact

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with diverse others and refrain from judgment" (p. 576). Individuals at this level are beginning to explore differences. At the mature level, individuals demonstrate an increased appreciation for differences and a willingness to work for the rights of others. Below, examples of this cognitive level from the essay and the interview data at the cognitive intermediate and mature levels are provided.

Interpersonal: Intermediate

An illustration of the recognition of other cultures is illustrated in the quote below, in which an interviewee speaks of how he was better able to get to know more about American culture in terms of viewpoints, and to compare this new knowledge to his perception of his culture:

> "It highlighted how people express their views and, in terms of where I come
> from, India, I was in a situation where people are not very direct in their
> viewpoints. Culture Corps changed me a lot of ways in that regard and helped
> me know how Americans really were… they are very direct and objective
> based."

Another interviewee speaks of a sense of self in terms of recognizing a prejudice against all Asian people, and then eliminating that prejudice through interactions she had in her project:

> "So…it helped me a lot to…like, I love Asian people, they are so much fun to be
> around, but before I started Culture Corps, I was avoiding them, I didn't want to
> talk to them, all that stuff…so I don't know where that came from."

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Individuals did not always immediately recognize differences between cultures. One individual spoke of how some of the subjects he was asked to talk about caused him to consider the differences between Norway and the United States:

"Because of some of the topics I was asked to talk about, I really had to sit down and think 'How is this really? How is Norway different from the USA , and how can I explain that to them?'"

Interpersonal: Mature

Quotes that illustrated the mature interpersonal level showed diverse relationships in a more complex, meaningful way. One interviewee, for example, used her project to do an art show, and spoke of how she had to convince a university committee to allow her to have the project because the show was controversial:

"When the sex workers art show came, I had to make a case in front of the grant committees about how the university community would benefit from the show. As soon as the committees heard about the show, they said, 'It may seem like the committee that supports the initiative is taking a stance on legalization of prostitution' and that they will not be able to support the initiative. But I kept pushing and explaining about how 'It's not about taking a stance; it's about giving them a platform to voice their thoughts, and the committee may or may not agree fully to what they have to say!'"

An example from the essays came from an individual concerned with encouraging students to speak their minds on important issues:

"I learned that the way that a professor can communicate differently with students so that students feel free and safe to express their differing points of

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view and lack of knowledge about various topics. Many of these topics are highly sensitive, such as racism, discrimination, difference, diversity, inequalities, and power."

Intrapersonal

Kegan (1994) described the intrapersonal category of development involves arriving at a better understanding one's self. In terms of their framework, King and Baxter Magolda (2005) described the intermediate level of intrapersonal development as an "evolving sense of identity and a tension between internal and external definitions which prompts self-exploration" (p. 576). King and Baxter Magolda (2005) then describe the mature level of intrapersonal development as a "capacity to engage in meaningful, interdependent relationships with diverse others" and "an understanding of ways individual and community practices affect social systems" (p. 576).

Intrapersonal: Intermediate

At the intermediate level, individuals increasingly recognize and legitimize differences between cultures (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). In the essays, one person spoke of the viewing his language and culture from another student's perspective:

"I thought it was interesting to be on the other side, the side where the language in question is your own native language and the students are trying to learn that language."

One interviewee who discussed his increased recognition of the complexity of culture in the United States provided this example:

"What you get in a country like mine from the media is this portrayal of the big-city American and the differences between the East coast and the West coast.

So, when you come to a place like Minnesota or like Illinois, for that matter, you

find an entirely different picture. I mean these people here and there are just

their own thing, right?"

Intrapersonal: Mature

At the mature level of development, individuals have a "capacity to create an

internal self that openly engages challenges to one's views and beliefs" (King & Baxter

Magolda, 2005, p. 576). At this stage, a stronger sense of self is created. "Aspects of

self," according to King and Baxter Magolda, are "integrated into one's identity" (p.

576). Perhaps through welcoming challenges, the individual develops a more internally

defined sense of who he is and what he believes, and remains willing to engage in

challenges to those thoughts and beliefs.

Essay data provided examples of this level. One Culture Corps leader, who had

initially felt apprehensive about conducting a project based on GLBT issues because it

made him feel vulnerable, later appeared to have integrated this aspect of himself into

his identity.

> "I was very happy to receive the comment from them that these events were
>
> very informative and useful to get people's attention toward GLBT community
>
> in the university. During working on this event, I knew that there needed to be
>
> more awareness and attention about GLBT population in the university climate
>
> in a positive way, and that people in the GLBT office have worked very hard for
>
> that purpose. If I would do another event, I would like to work with them again
>
> and to create a program to provide more positive attention toward GLBT
>
> community in general."

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Interviewees also made remarks that illustrated this mature level. As one individual stated:

> "It's my belief that it is very important to expand your own
>
> perspective….Having opportunities to question your own ways to think and
>
> exposure to different perspectives constantly is very, very important to do."

Mezirow: Recipe Learning

Mezirow's (1991) Learning through Meaning Schemes reflects learning that conveys "habitual, stereotypic responses to information received through pre-existing, known categories of meaning (p. 92). Mezirow likens this type of learning to improving one's golf swing, but does add that "in the case of self-reflection, we learn the limits of our tolerance for ambiguity." Recipe Learning is adding to knowledge without gaining much insight, if any, upon the nature of the knowledge itself. In the reflective essays, 63% mentioned Recipe Learning, while 44% of the interview participants mentioned it.

Recipe Learning can be useful, of course. In the essays, one individual discussed the importance of breaking down projects into manageable tasks:

> "I realized that it was not enough to be confident and clear about what my goal
>
> was. I learned that the discussion sessions had to be broken down into clear and
>
> manageable segments, and I should have an outline of all these segments in my
>
> head, even before I go in for conducting the sessions."

Another essay writer increased her research skills while implementing teaching a class about her culture:

> "I had to learn how to be an efficient researcher in a library environment. By the
>
> end of the project I had gained the skills to efficiently find literature in a library.

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Since being a student I think this particular expertise will help me in my own

studies."

The interview analysis also illustrated recipe learning. One interview participant

put the knowledge she gained through two years of leading Culture Corps projects into

a guide for others who may follow her in future, similar projects:

"Over the past two years I have developed some kind of template that I can use

for me to ease the burden of my work as well as for future global discussion

leaders."

Another interviewee, unfamiliar with U.S. American culture and its higher education

system, improved her efficiency in contacting departments. As she stated:

"I have a three step process to ask the departments... 1) email, 2) call, and 3)

visit--with a flyer. Most cases step one and two works."

Mezirow: New Meaning Schemes

In Mezirow's (1991) stage titled Learning New Meaning Schemes, the learner

takes extends existing perspectives, but stays within the range of already acquired

knowledge. New Meaning Schemes often occur through identification with others and

in taking on new roles. Results of the coding indicated that 100% of the interviews and

72% of the essays illustrated this role. This is not surprising; the nature of the Culture

Corps program is to provide international students a way to use their existing

knowledge, fine-tune it, and hopefully learn new things. Many people mentioned trying

on new roles. In the essays, many individuals commented on trying on the role of

teacher for the first time. As one person wrote:

"I had so far only experienced the other side of the classroom. Now I was

standing for the first time in front of the class. I appreciated this very much,

since I would like to become a professor and I highly respect professors with

good teaching abilities. Moreover, I was pleased to experience the American

way of teaching. Its open atmosphere and interactivity showed me a different

approach on teaching."

Another Culture Corps leader, who taught a class on Korean culture, wrote how she had

learned a lot about herself and improved her teaching skills:

"I, myself learned a lot about Korean traditional culture while I prepared the

Culture Corps activities. In addition, I became more confident in teaching

college students."

Interviewees also mentioned taking on new roles. One interviewee reflected on her

experiences as a leader:

"Leadership skills – that helped me a lot, too….like last semester, to be 'the

boss,' so to speak. I mean, they make fun of me because I always say "the boss,"

but leading a project helped me a lot, too".

Another interview participant, who had discovered she had an affinity for teaching,

stated:

"I did not know I could teach until I did the Culture Corps."

Mezirow: Reflection on Assumptions

Mezirow's (1991) Learning through Transformation of Meaning Schemes

involves recognizing a need to change prior ways of thinking through a reflection on

assumptions held either consciously or unconsciously. This is the step before Mezirow's

Transformative Learning stage. In this stage, individuals may question previously held beliefs because they have seen other, different ways of thinking. Truths become less fixed and more situational in this stage, allowing for real reflection to begin to occur. In the essays, 63% of individuals mentioned this type of learning, and in the interviews, 88% of the participants mentioned it.

One essay writer wrote about how her teaching style changed after she reflected on how her culture may have affected her teaching style:

"I learned that my teaching style is heavily affected by the Japanese teaching style, even though I have never taught before. For example, I expect students understand what I try to teach, then notice that I have to talk the reasons and theories of them otherwise students do not understand what I am talking about. For example, the movement of arms in Flamenco comes a lot from movement of picking fruits. When I taught how to move fingers and arms, I explained the original meaning and I could see that they understood how I expect them to move from their faces. In the U.S. teaching setting, I need much more reasons to prove that I am teaching a right thing."

Another student reflected on the ages of students in his host country:

"I was surprised by the mixture of young and old students in the class, which is not common in my university."

One interview participant spoke about overcoming the limitations he placed upon himself regarding the possibility of doing a Culture Corps project:

"When I first heard of the Culture Corps program I thought I really wasn't going to be able to do it, because there were going to be a lot more things that I would

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have to think about--submitting all the paperwork, and stuff like that. That was just my assumption, because I'm from Japan and my country is just like that, you know. Before starting everything I have to do all the paperwork and get approval which is going to be a quite tough process and also I automatically thought that way before I actually tried to do a Culture Corps project. Before I went to Kristina's office and talk about the possibility of my doing a Culture Corps project; then I actually thought that it was going to be quite fun and actually way easier than I thought."

Another interview participant spoke of her project as providing opportunities to reflect on new ways of viewing things:

"Interacting with these different artists and playwrights opened my eyes to different issues and enabled me to look at these issues from a different perspective."

Mezirow: Reorganization of Meaning

Mezirow's (1991) Learning through Perspective Transformation is the last, and least common, of Mezirow's forms of learning. In this stage, an individual encounters a problem that cannot be solved with current ways of thinking. This stage often involves an emotionally charged situation in which the individual realizes prior distorted thinking and recognizes that the same perspective in which a problem arose is not likely to provide enough material to solve it, thus making it necessary to think through and redefine the problem.

It is interesting to compare interview and essay responses in this category, because only 7% of the responses from the reflective essays showed any indication of

fitting in this form of learning, while 44% of interview respondents mentioned something that could fit here. This might be explained, however, by the fact that the essays had to be written, and not everyone possesses the same level of writing skills or desire to communicate information. The interviews provided much more information, perhaps due to a different means of conveying information.

An individual who wrote a reflective essay reflected on some of what he had learned through teaching—by first recognizing students' lack of knowledge and then seeing gaps in his own knowledge and the opportunity to learn and grow from his own ignorance:

> "I learned that despite their interest, some of the students were quite naïve about certain topics (for example: the role of the U.S. in Latin America's human rights issues, the power of multinational corporations in setting labor policy overseas, etc). However, far from being a barrier to learning, this lack of knowledge turned out to be a powerful opportunity to create a collective learning opportunity. For example, one student asked 'So, then, why do governments sign these free trade agreements if they are not beneficial to their people?' Rather than answering the question myself, I restated the question to the class participants for them to respond in their own voice. The lesson I learned is that I can learn from my own ignorance. I can't know everything, but I can learn new things if I recognize my own lack of knowledge.

One interviewee spoke of the struggle she had with confidence, and how reaching out to the community challenged her and helped her change the way she felt about herself and her own abilities:

"I used to compare myself with other international students and American students who were doing the same program, so I would feel very inferior when it comes to language skills, communication skills, and learning skills, and I thought was I was not good enough to get a Ph.D., but throughout this project, I got to know this mentor and other students from this Tibetan medicine course and Tibetan people… and it provided me with other opportunity to explore the world, to explore the community in the states and that taught me classroom is not the only community, that university is not only one community for international students to explore or to go to….it's out there, that kind of thing…."

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this investigation was to identify themes that emerged from international students' reflections about their participation in a program designed to internationalize higher education, to see what is gained through such participation, and to find new ways of viewing international students' experiences. King and Baxter-Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity and Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory guided this study, both in terms of the initial framework used to analyze responses and the questions asked of interview participants. Research findings identified students' perceptions of the program, which skills and abilities they reported having gained or improved, plus suggested a modified conceptual framework for future investigation.

The first part of this chapter discusses the study's results, which will be related to the initial framework used to guide this investigation. A revised conceptual framework is then proposed, and the implications of the findings for policy, practice, and further research will be discussed. Limitations and discussions for further research are also given.

Summary of Results

The main question guiding this study pertains to the nature of international students' perceptions of their experiences in a project-based program designed to internationalize higher education. Within this broad research question, three specific

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sub-questions were posed regarding 1) skills international students may gain from leading a project, 2) whether or not their experiences may have encouraged a sense of self-efficacy and increased involvement in the host country, and 3) which of the two theories discussed in this study may serve as a better conceptual framework for subsequent research.

This study used two different qualitative data sets: existing data in the form of reflective essays written by international students who led a Culture Corps project, and semi-structured interviews conducted with past and present Culture Corps project leaders. Themes from the essay data were identified first by noting whether they were mentioned with high, moderate, or low frequency. Themes from the interview data were also identified through an NVivo7 analysis. Five main themes were identified, and then the data was further categorized into sub-themes for more detailed analysis. Frequencies for each the sub-themes were determined by noting the percentage of time they were mentioned. After reviewing the sub-themes in the interview data, the decision was made to consider the sub-themes as primary if they were mentioned more than 60% of the time, secondary, if between 30% to 59%, and tertiary, if they were mentioned less than 30% of the time.

The themes in the essay data that were considered to be "high frequency" were as follows: Self-discovery (identity), Teaching Experience, Interaction with Others, and Communication Skills. The themes in the interview data, from which sub-themes were then determined, were: Personal Beliefs and Attitudes, Communication and Languages, Community and Cultural Interaction, Skills, and Education. The primary sub-themes from the interviews matched with the essay themes, but provided more detail. Primary

sub-themes included items such as Communication and Languages, Cultural and Community Interaction, and Personal Beliefs and Attitudes. Both the essay and the interview data provided in-depth examples of these themes, as illustrated in Chapter Four.

The 16 semi-structured interviews conducted in this study provided more in-depth information than did the 60 reflective essays, but both sets of data suggested that leading an internationalization of higher education project such as Culture Corps can facilitate becoming more involved on campus and in the surrounding community, and it may also lead to a better overall university experience.

In the essays, Interaction with Others was a high frequency theme, and matched closely with the interview sub-theme Social Integration, mentioned by 94% of interview participants. Consistent with the literature on the difficulty international students have establishing friendships with domestic students (Lee & Rice, 2007; Leask, 2006; Teekens, 2006; Babbitts, 2001; Peterson, Briggs, Dreasher, Horner, & Nelson, 1999), Culture Corps project leaders referred to the importance of social integration at the study university and the difficulties involved in doing so.

International students in both essay and interview data mentioned how difficult it was at times to make friends in the United States, and that domestic students are friendly, but busy, and often would commit to activities organized by international students but then abandon the idea before attending. One interviewee stated that this opportunity to become more involved in the university and in the university's surrounding community was even more important than the funding provided by Culture Corps, although finding a way to pay for school was an issue she had struggled with

throughout her years in graduate school. She stated what she saw as Culture Corps'
most salient strength:

"It is not about giving money to international students -- it is about giving
international students a kind of opportunity to get into university community or
community outside of campus."

The importance of financial awards, however, did appear as an emergent theme
in the essay data. Fifty percent of interviewees mentioned the importance of Culture
Corps's financial contribution to their studies. Financial awards for Culture Corps
projects vary according to a committee's decision on how much time the project will
take and how much effort will go into it (Thorunn Bjarnadottir, Personal
Communication, 2008). Several interviewees brought up the subject of how awards
vary, although many were hesitant to talk about finances directly.

.   Communication Skills was another high frequency theme in the essay data, and
can be compared to the theme Communication and Languages from the interview data,
a theme mentioned by 81% of interviewees. Communication and language skills were
perceived as a critical component of the Culture Corps experience. Projects that involve
international students can provide good opportunities for increased involvement in the
university and, for those who need it, a chance to practice their English language skills.
Concern over the importance of communicating in the English language was a theme
that occurred frequently across essays and interviews. International students who
conduct a Culture Corps project must by necessity be able to plan and implement the
project in English; this, added to the need to being able to speak the language of the
country one is living in made English an important topic. Communication skills in

general, however, were also mentioned frequently. Implementing a Culture Corps project involves speaking with a diverse variety of people, from faculty, staff, and students to community members, and this requires communication skills. The project must also be promoted, also involving communication skills.

In addition to Communication and Language Skills, other skills were mentioned. In the essay data, Teaching was mentioned with high frequency, while Leadership and Organizational Skills were mentioned with moderate frequency. In the interview data, Leadership was mentioned 63% of the time, making it a primary sub-theme, while Organization Skills and Teaching Skills were mentioned much less often, at 44% and 19%, respectively.

In terms of self-efficacy and increased involvement in the host community, terms that were examined from the interview data, findings showed that leading a Culture Corps project does provide a means for students to fine tune their existing skills and to gain others, and that their involvement in academia and its surrounding community by necessity leads to increased interaction with others. The very act of making the contacts necessary to implement a project seems to lead to increased involvement with the community and an increased confidence in one's ability to do so by virtue of the practice that comes from the project itself. Whether or not the project is a success may even be unimportant; students learn from doing and appear to increase their ability to lead more and more successful projects through planning and implementing a project, being exposed to new environments and ideas, and by interacting with faculty, staff, and students.

Finally, essay and interview data was examined from two frameworks discussed in this study: King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity and Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory. Essay and Interview Responses were examined in categories coded for each theory, and it was determined that Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory was the most useful framework for this study.

Implications

The implications of this study are divided into two parts: implications for research, and implications for policy and practice.

Implications for Research

This investigation was guided by two different conceptual frameworks. King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity served to examine behaviors that indicate levels of intercultural development by observing this through the holistic lens of three domains of learning—cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal. Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory provided a means for examining respondents' learning through four ways of learning. This initial framework attempted to combine these two theories and map out a way to understand how students learn and what level of learning is occurring. Results suggested a need for a revision of this initial framework.

Summary of Initial Framework

One aspect of this research concerned which of the two frameworks presented in the literature review might be best suited to analyze students' perceptions of their

experiences leading a project. While either framework could serve to analyze students' reflections about their experiences leading a Culture Corps program, Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory was a better fit. Mezirow's framework was easier to work with while coding because the framework captures levels of development in terms of learning, while Baxter-Magolda's model focuses on growth and behavior in terms of intercultural maturity, which was much less present in the data. Some Culture Corps project leaders did appear to have developed a certain degree of intercultural maturity, but comments were very difficult to categorize into levels. Perhaps because there are a wide variety of international students who participate in this program and the age ranges vary, it was difficult to see any solid indication of intercultural growth.

An analysis of the data was done looking at the percentages of responses that fit into the initial, intermediate, and mature levels that King and Baxter Magolda (2005) indicate in their model. To examine these levels, data from essays and interviews were coded into initial, intermediate, and mature levels in Cognitive, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal categories. Initial levels in all three categories in both data sets were 0%, with the exception of the Intrapersonal/ Mature level which was 2% in the essays. The Interpersonal/Intermediate was 50% in the essays and 44% in the interviews, while the Interpersonal/Mature level was 28% in the essays and 94% in the essays. The Intrapersonal/Intermediate was 53% in the essays and 50% in the interviews, and the Intrapersonal/Mature level was 20% in the essays and 69% in the interviews.

Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory was useful in examining the essay and interview data to see the learning that occurs when students take on new roles, such as leadership positions, and then express what they have experienced. Many

students mentioned the benefits of exposure to people from other cultures, which fits directly into King and Baxter-Magolda's Interpersonal category. In any case, this conceptual framework could be modified to provide a better lens with which to comprehend the data. Future studies that examine international students' experiences in internationalization of higher education programs could benefit from using more learning theory.

Revised Methodological Framework

The results of this study suggested a revised conceptual framework, which is summarized in Figure 3 on the following page.

King and Baxter-Magolda's (2005) Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity would be downplayed in any similar, future analyses of international students, mainly because age and experience are strong influences in intercultural maturity and, although some students did develop in this manner, others appeared to have already passed through those stages years ago. King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) framework was focused on undergraduate students, and the majority of Culture Corps project leaders are at a Master's degree level or higher. Kegan's (1994) notion of holistic learning, however, was at the center of King and Baxter-Magolda's theory, and examining student learning through cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of learning was useful in examining the data.

Mezirow's (1991) four distinct levels of learning were useful, especially New Meaning Schemes (72% in essays; 100% in interviews) and Reflections on Assumptions (63% in essays; 88% in interviews). New Meaning Schemes can indicate new roles acquired by students as they progress and try new things. Reflection on

Assumptions can indicate increasingly complex thinking as they move through the

demands that may be encountered through those different roles. Missing in the initial

framework was an indication of a reflective process in learning. Figure 3 below reflects

the changes made to the initial conceptual framework.

Figure 3: Revised Conceptual Framework
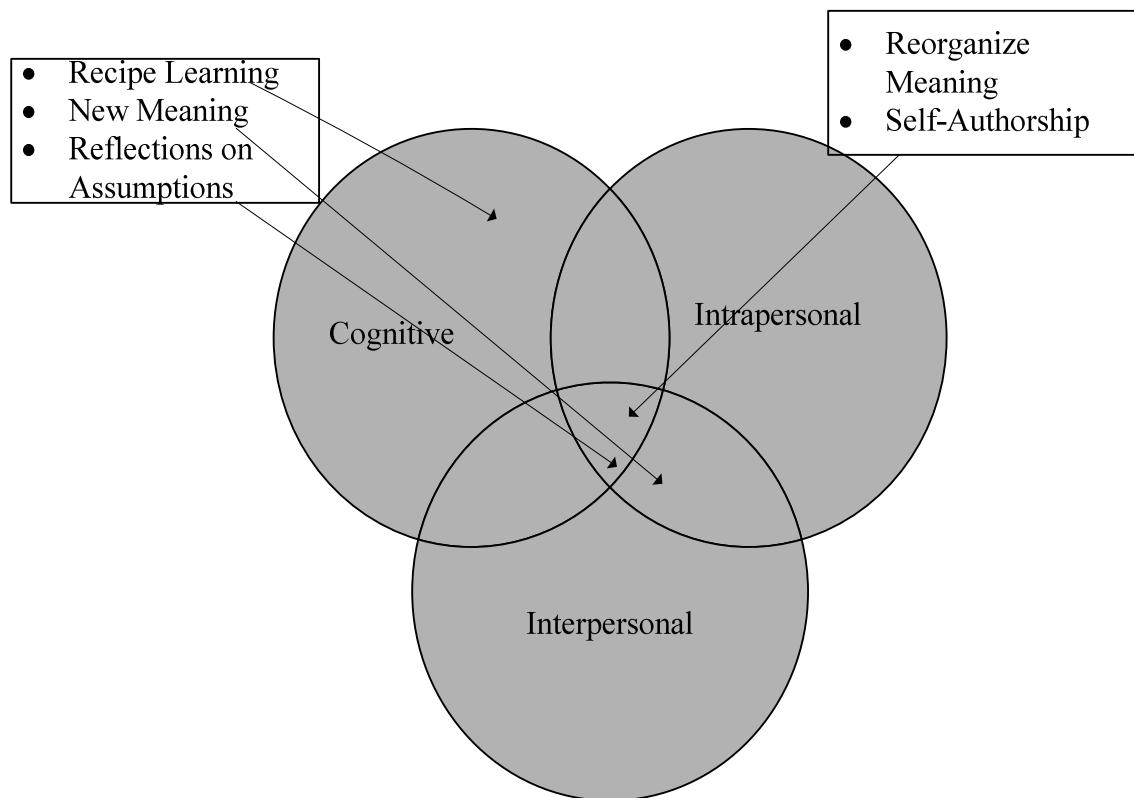
Adapted from King, P., & Baxter Magolda, M. (2005). A developmental model of
intercultural maturity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(6), 571-592, and
Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco:
Jossey-Bass.

Figure 3 illustrates how cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of

learning can overlap. Kegan's (1994) notion of self-authorship, taken from King and

Baxter Magolda's (2005) Model of Intercultural Maturity, is present, indicating that the

most profound learning occurs when all three domains are engaged. Mezirow's (1991) notion of Reorganizing Meaning is also present, indicating the notion of Transformative Learning, which coincides with self-authorship. Mezirow's (1991) remaining three levels of learning are also included in the revised framework. Recipe learning is mainly cognitive, while New Meaning Schemes is mainly in the intrapersonal and interpersonal domains. Reflection on Assumptions, the level prior to Reorganizing Meaning, could involve all three domains of learning. Mezirow (1991) has called the first level of learning "rote" or "recipe" learning to explain how some learning is simply a mixture of facts, with one ingredient added to the other (p. 93). The initial framework contained the word "rote," but was changed to "recipe" in this study as it appears to be a better description of this level.

Implications for Policy and Practice

This qualitative analysis has brought together two areas cited in the literature as needing more study: international student involvement and their experiences in their host countries (Lee & Rice, 2007), plus the development of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Evans, et al (2007) has argued that international education reaches only a small proportion of students, and this sentiment was reflected in the interview data, in which students talked about how hard it was to advertise and market their projects to get enough attendees. Much remains to be done before creating an atmosphere which consistently promotes an internationalized environment in higher education. Project-based programs designed to internationalize higher education are positive steps, but they must not be the only steps or they can quickly fall by the wayside as another fragmented effort met with minimal results. As was illustrated in

Table 3, each year from 2000 to 2007, only 1 percent of all international students in the study university have ever led a Culture Corps project. Consistent with the literature on how Internationalization of Higher Education must be approached, internationalization efforts must be communicated consistently and effectively throughout the entire institutional level (McCarthy, 2007; Evans, et al, 2007; Knight, 2004; Nilsson, 2003; Paige, 2003; Mestenhauser, 2002b; Ellingboe, 1999).

Research that shifts the focus of problematizing international student adjustment and instead looks deeper into their perceptions of their host country may provide insight on how to create the type of international environment that higher education needs to create the type of coherent, sustainable vision a university must have in order to take internationalization of higher education beyond its fragmented state. Marginson (2007) has argued that we should acknowledge international students' prior experiences. As Marginson (2007) contended, "it is this prior learning experience that brought them to the starting gate in a foreign country" (p. 7). Culture Corps can provide a means for international students to utilize their prior learning and become active participants both within and outside of the academic community.

This study suggests that international students can benefit from programs designed to internationalize higher education and, based on comments made in the interviews, participation in this type of program could increase if international students' awareness of programs of this nature were increased. Culture Corps could possibly increase the numbers of international students who lead projects. Unless internationalization of higher education is addressed in a systematic fashion, however, it will continue to be segmented into programs that have a minimal effect on the overall

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higher education system. Nilsson's (2003) concept of Internationalization at Home, which involves the entire university rather than a select population able to go abroad, best fits the idea of internationalization as a system.

Policies and practices supporting internationalization must be coherent and consistent. Interviewees appeared to agree with this sentiment, making comments unrelated to the interview questions that suggested feelings of frustration about the impact of the Culture Corps program. Project leaders were often frustrated by what has been identified in the literature as a lack of collective efforts in internationalization.

Nilsson's (2003) concept of Internationalization at Home and McCarthy's (2007) insistence that universities must communicate, invest in, and sustain a bold vision of internationalization that involves all levels of the university system were reflected in many international students' comments. While some participants stated having benefited both academically and socially from their experiences with Culture Corps, others reported having struggled due to various reasons: the most commonly cited item was difficulty in spreading the word about the events and getting students to attend. Culture Corps project leaders at times met with barriers such as uninterested or unavailable mentors, and a lack of knowledge about how to do tasks that should be routine, such as how to book a room for an event. The need for a much more effective, more systemic approach to internationalization of higher education was communicated in both interview and essay data. One can conclude that if the study university were to have what McCarthy (2007) has called "a bold vision"(p. B12), programs designed to internationalize higher education would be more visible and more wide-reaching. As one student said, "Culture Corps is a great project, but it's not enough, and not enough

people know about it." In a different interview, another international student commented, "Culture Corps could be much bigger if their reach is wider." This statement is an accurate assessment of Culture Corps: Only 1 percent of international students lead Culture Corps projects at the study university; there is clearly room for more participation. Not enough individuals are aware of the Culture Corps' existence. One project leader spoke of the lack of communication and awareness about Culture Corps. As she stated,

"I found out about Culture Corps because I attended the orientation session….There are some students who don't get funded…for us, it would be helpful if there were more of an awareness of Culture Corps. A lot of my friends who have been in the university for a long time don't know about Culture Corps."

Results of this study have indicated that many international students can contribute to internationalization of higher education, not only in sharing their cultures, but in facilitating discussions that assist students in gaining deeper, more global perspectives on world issues. Yet, as one interviewee stated, when she spoke of reaching outside of this circle, an awareness of what internationalization means is simply not present:

"I think doing Culture Corps makes me actively involved in the internationalization process of this university. It's hard because I'm in an international education program and this word is probably the most frequently appearing words in my daily conversation with people. So, to me, in my own

program, we sort of take it for granted and say, 'Sure, this is a good thing.' But when I go out and tell other people, their reaction is 'HUH? What is internationalization?' So I have to go out and sort of explain to other people. So I came to realize that outside our own little world, many people are still not aware of this kind of either process or project that is going on, so I have to really put myself out there."

A need for clear, consistent communication about internationalization of higher education is apparent here. Clearly, there is work to be done.

Limitations of the Study

There are many limitations to this investigation. First, the decision to limit this investigation to a single program will limit the generalizability of the findings to programs in other, similar settings. U.S. higher education is a highly diverse system which varies widely according to context (Brubacher & Rudy, 2002); that this study is limited to one program at one university limits its application to other settings. Second, the international students in this study were treated as a homogenous group and differences among countries and cultures were not considered. This approach was taken because a consideration of the many different areas of the world represented by the study institution's international students goes beyond the scope of this study. Third, much of the data used in this study was secondary data, or pre-existing data that the researcher was not involved in designing or collecting. Although the secondary data was consistent – the same six reflective essay questions have been asked and answered by Culture Corps project leaders for the last seven years—the content of the essays was

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limited. Writing abilities, and a willingness to write thorough responses to the essay questions or indeed to write the essays at all, varied widely; thus, essay quality was inconsistent. In addition, the essay questions were not based on theory, but rather were written in order to get feedback from students. Fourth, the essays were made as a requirement for those international students who wished to qualify to do another Culture Corps project, so quantities of essays are often limited, written only by international students who are interested in continuing to lead projects (Bjarnadottir, April 20, 2007, personal communication). Fifth, although I did establish intra-rater reliability through reading and re-reading my own coding on several occasions to ensure reliability of coding, no procedure for inter-rater reliability was in place in this study. Finally, although using semi-structured interviews strengthened the study and provided more detail regarding what international students perceive of their experiences leading a Culture Corps project, the study was not designed to assess the impact of Culture Corps in the context of a full set of campus experiences affecting international students. The interview questions were designed to capture attitudes and experiences, and could not take other factors into account such as individual maturity, integration into the campus community, and participation in extracurricular activities that may help support both social and linguistic growth.

Directions for Further Research

While this study may provide some insights into what international students' experiences may be in internationalization of higher education programs, it is merely a beginning, and several ideas for future research are suggested. For instance, a study

designed with pre and post tests, and an experimental and a control group, would

provide a more valid assessment of the impact of the program. Groups of international

students who do not lead Culture Corps and groups of international students who do

participate in the program could be interviewed at two different points. A standardized

test, such as the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), could be given. Interviews

could also be conducted with both groups, both before and after Culture Corps projects

have been implemented. This type of mixed methods approach to examining the Culture

Corps program could make the study more complex and add credibility. A case study

might also be beneficial by providing more description of the program and more

information regarding participants' perceptions of the program.

The long-term impact of Culture Corps could also be examined, and questions

could also be posed regarding the impact on the students, faculty, and staff who attend

Culture Corps events. Another important next step could be to see if the projects

Culture Corps leaders conduct have an impact on those who attend the events, and if so,

to what extent. The first step would be to begin with an analysis of how many

individuals attend, who the individuals are (mainly undergraduate students or graduate

students, for example), and what kinds of Culture Corps events are best attended. The

next question would then be to see how participants evaluate the events. An analysis of

short term and long term effects attending the events have on participants' sense of

international perspective could also be addressed.

Additionally, the relative value of the Culture Corps program compared to the

value of other international programs on campus could be examined. An analysis of the

extent that Culture Corps may or may not provide unique opportunities to students

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would prove particularly helpful, because any potential duplicate efforts in the study university could be identified and perhaps combined.

As observed in the literature review, much of the literature on international students continues to focus on adjustment to the host country, while much room is provided for future studies on the social context of higher education (Lee & Rice, 2007). Further examination of how international students can make friends and contacts within their host universities appears to be far more productive than continuing to ask how international students adjust, or fail to adjust, when little or no encouragement is given. Facilitating personal and academic development in international students could prove beneficial, not only for international students but for domestic students as well.

The themes mentioned in both data sets regarding networking and making friends both on campus and within the surrounding community suggest that leading a Culture Corps project might make life easier and more pleasant for international students. The difficulty that international students have in feeling a part of the host country might be lessened through involvement in programs that provide them a way to actively participate in university life, and could also provide a means of creating the atmosphere that Nilsson (1993) has described as Internationalization at Home.

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APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval

From: irb@umn.edu [mailto:irb@umn.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2008 4:20 PM
To: chap0220@umn.edu
Subject: 0802E26641 - PI Chaparro - IRB - Exempt Study Notification

The IRB: Human Subjects Committee determined that the referenced study is exempt from review under federal guidelines 45 CFR Part 46.101(b) category #2 SURVEYS/INTERVIEWS; STANDARDIZED EDUCATIONAL TESTS; OBSERVATION OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR.

Study Number: 0802E26641
 Principal Investigator: Debra Payne Chaparro
Title(s):
Are Our Efforts Worthwhile? International Students□ Perceptions of a Program Designed to Internationalize Higher Education

_____

This e-mail confirmation is your official University of Minnesota RSPP notification of exemption from full committee review. You will not receive a hard copy or letter.
This secure electronic notification between password protected authentications has been deemed by the University of Minnesota to constitute a legal signature.

The study number above is assigned to your research. That number and the title of your study must be used in all communication with the IRB office.
Research that involves observation can be approved under this category without obtaining consent.

SURVEY OR INTERVIEW RESEARCH APPROVED AS EXEMPT UNDER THIS CATEGORY IS LIMITED TO ADULT SUBJECTS.

This exemption is valid for five years from the date of this correspondence and will be filed inactive at that time. You will receive a notification prior to inactivation. If this research will extend beyond five years, you must submit a new application to the IRB before the study□s expiration date.
Upon receipt of this email, you may begin your research. If you have questions, please call the IRB office at (612) 626-5654.
You may go to the View Completed section of eResearch Central at http://eresearch.umn.edu/ to view further details on your study.

The IRB wishes you success with this research.

APPENDIX B

Introduction letter

Date

Dear [possible participant]:

My name is Debra Payne Chaparro, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Minnesota in the department of Education Policy and Administration, with a focus on higher education administration. My dissertation is about Culture Corps, a program through which you have led at least one project. As a person who has led a Culture Corps project at the University of Minnesota, your input in a short, semi-structured interview would be very helpful to me.
In the next few weeks, I will be sending you a request for your consent to interview you for my dissertation related to your experiences in leading a Culture Corps Project. Initial interviews are expected to take up to 60 minutes. In some cases, a follow-up interview may be required. I would prefer to conduct interviews in person, but I recently moved to Spain and will be unable to do so. As such, if you consent to do so, I will conduct the interviews by telephone after having established an appointment to call.

All information shared during the interview process will be confidential. All identifying information will be removed from the final copy of my dissertation. I will share my interview notes with you prior to them being included in the final dissertation, if you request I do so. I will also provide you with a summarized copy of my findings.

Your involvement in this study is very important to me, and I do hope you will consider participating.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Debra Payne Chaparro
Doctoral Candidate
University of Minnesota
Educational Policy and Administration
(34) 955-795-166 (home)
(34)-616-123-768 (cell)
chap0220@umn.edu

APPENDIX C

Interviewee Consent

Adapted from Rodriguez (2007)
http://www.edmeasurement.net/5244/5244info.html

Are Our Efforts Worthwhile? Applying Transformational Learning Theory to Understand Learning Outcomes in a Program Designed to Internationalize Higher Education

You are invited to be in a research study on the nature of international students' reflections on their experiences participating in programs designed to internationalize higher education. You were selected as a possible participant because you have led at least one Culture Corps Project through International Student and Scholar Services at the University of Minnesota. Your opinions, experiences, and suggestions will provide valuable information for this study. Please read this form and ask any question you may have before agreeing to be a part of this study.

This study is being conducted by: Debra Payne Chaparro, University of Minnesota.

Background information
The purpose of this study is to investigate the international students' perceptions of their experiences in participating in programs dedicated to internationalizing higher education in the United States. Specific attention will be focused on your impression of internationalization efforts in U.S. higher education and your suggestions on how to better approach and implement such programs.

Procedures
If you agree to participate in this study, I would ask that you do the following:
- Participate in a 60-90 minute phone interview conducted in-person by Debra Chaparro;
- Agree to consider participating in a 30 follow-up interview if necessary, either by phone or by e-mail.

If consent is granted, the interview will be audiotaped.

Risk and benefits of being in study
This study has no risks and there are no benefits to participation. You will not receive monetary payment for your participation. The interview will be completely anonymous and confidential. You will receive a brief report summarizing my dissertation research.

Confidentiality
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I may publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only researchers will have access to the records. Only the principal investigator and transcriber will have access to tapes of recorded interviews. All tapes will be coded with a numbered identification system. Only the principal investigator will have access to this coded system for identification of participants. All tapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the principal investigator's home office.

Voluntary nature of study
Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you do decide to participate, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Contacts and questions
The researcher conducting this study is Debra Payne Chaparro. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Debra at 34-955-795-166, by e-mail at djpchaparro@hotmail.com, or via SKYPE by finding username chap0220. You may also contact Debra through her adviser, Professor Darwin D. Hendel, by email at hende001@umn.edu or by telephone at 612-625-0129.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher or her adviser, please contact the Research Subjects' Advocate line, D528 Mayo, 428 Delaware Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455, or by phone at 612-625-1650.

You may have a copy of this form for your records.

Statement of consent
I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received sufficient answers. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Signature_____Date_____
_

Signature of
investigator_____Date_____

I give my consent to the audio taping of this interview.
Signature_____Date_____

Interview Protocol: Interviews with Culture Corps Project Leaders

(Questions informed by Leech's 2002 work on techniques for semi-structured interviews)

1. Tell me if conducting a Culture Corps project has benefited you, and if so, how.
   - Prompt: Leadership skills, organizational skills, knowledge about how U.S. higher education system is different or similar to home country higher education system.
   - Follow-up question: Tell me a little bit more about if you have any new skills or new knowledge as a result of having led a Culture Corps project.
   - Prompt: Any specific skills or knowledge gained.

2. One of the purposes of Culture Corps is to give international students the opportunity to share their culture with the community. To what degree did the program help you to do this?
   - Prompt: Experiences while leading project and any barriers (or encouragements) faced in implementing project.
   - Follow up question: What do you think your fellow Culture Corps project leaders got out of the experience?
   - Prompt: Others' experiences, either good or bad, and possible suggestions for improvement.

3. Did doing a Culture Corps project influence the way you think about higher education in the United States? About U.S. college students?
   - Prompt: Academic and social integration in host country.
   - Follow up question: Did you make friends during the time you were leading the Culture Corps project?
   - Prompt: Feeling a part of the United States.

4. What did you learn about your own beliefs about yourself while leading the project? About others?
   - Prompt: Assumptions about self and others.

5. Did leading a Culture Corps project aid you in adjusting to university life in the United States? If so, please tell me a little bit more about that…
   - Prompt: Overall experience and impact of Culture Corps.