Intercultural Development in the Short-Term Study Abroad Context:
A Comparative Case Study Analysis of Global Seminars in Asia (Thailand and Laos) and
in Europe (Netherlands)

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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April 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have to confess that this acknowledgements section was one of the most difficult parts of the dissertation to write because it is not possible to sufficiently express my deep appreciation to so many people in such a limited space. First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and respect to my committee members: Dr. Gerald Fry, Dr. Michael Paige, Dr. David Chapman, and Dr. Gary McLean. I have known Dr. Fry for more than ten years since he served on my master's thesis committee at the University of Oregon. While I was working in the corporate business sector after completing my master's degree, Dr. Fry continuously encouraged me to continue my Ph.D. studies, and provided generous and consistent support throughout my doctoral program. I deeply appreciate his devotion, care, and endless support, and admire his own desire to constantly learn new things. My position at the School of International Service at American University will start next semester, and I hope I can transfer the knowledge and dedication I have received from him to my own students. Dr. Paige, a key intercultural expert in the field, also guided me in many ways with his sharp perspectives and in-depth intercultural knowledge. I also appreciate his sense of humor and wisdom outside of the academic world, and his willingness to share even his musical and ice fishing talents.

One of the key goals for my future academic journey is to build bridges between different cultures, between different perspectives, and between academic research and its practical implications. I am grateful for Dr. Chapman's keen insights and knowledge about how to apply and transfer rigorous academic research to practical contexts. In the same practical vein, Dr. Gary McLean was always available no matter what time and on which continent he was located and willing to offer his in-depth knowledge and hands-on experience. I feel extremely lucky to have been able to receive such detailed and dedicated guidance from him in so many valuable areas.

Thanks also to Dr. Mitch Hammer for sharing his knowledge about the Intercultural Development Inventory and to Dr. Deanna Robinson, who was my MA advisor at the University of Oregon, for such warm support during my first experiences as a graduate student in the United States. I also would like to thank Dr. Carl Brant and University of Minnesota Global Seminar participants who have willingly participated in my surveys and Intercultural Development Inventory assessments, and shared their candid feelings and experiences through in-depth interviews. Without their trust, open mindedness and support, my dissertation could not have been completed. I am grateful to Colleen Meyers who has been such a dedicated teacher and supporter during my time in Minnesota. I also would like to offer my sincere thanks to Dr. Ernest Gundling for his valuable mentorship and support. He was very generous with his time and guided me with sharp and insightful advice. I would also like to indicate my special thanks to the

ABSTRACT

With the rapidly increasing emphasis on the internationalization of higher education, study abroad is emerging as one of the major ways to enhance students' intercultural competence. While national study abroad enrollment trends have shown significantly increasing numbers of students in shorter-term programs, the impact of short-term programs is largely unexplored.

The objective of this comparative case study is to assess the major program components that participants found the most valuable, and investigate the impact of their short-term study abroad experiences in two different locations (Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands). A mixed methods approach is utilized, including quantitative measures from pre- and post-survey questionnaires, pre- and post-sojourn assessments using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews. The theoretical frameworks used include social contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1991), the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1993), intercultural communication theories (Hall, 1956, 1976; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010), and cultural intensity factors (Paige, 1993).

Findings suggest that a three-week short-term study abroad program can have a positive impact on participants' intercultural sensitivity as well as professional and personal development, including career goals, educational aspirations, self-awareness, worldview and perspective change, global engagement, critical thinking skills, and motivation related to international affairs. Other benefits are that students who otherwise may not have had the time, financial resources, or inclination to participate in study abroad programs are able to gain a "foot in the door" in terms of international/intercultural experience. Variety in curricula including extensive field trips, the roles of on-site mentors, and the opportunity to interact with locals were major components that participants found valuable.

A total of 56% of participants showed enhanced intercultural sensitivity (as measured by the IDI) after completing the program. The statistical results, combined with interview data, suggest that factors such as individual readiness, the nature of activities in the host country, and the degree of difference between home and host country cultures all have an impact on intercultural development.

These findings have important implications for the design of short-term programs, and inform study abroad theories, policy, and practice. Overall findings show that what counts the most is *how* the program is designed and facilitated rather than *how long* the

program is. Students learn effectively only if the program is structured appropriately before, during, and after their experiences abroad. Since transformative learning does not occur without appropriate intervention and facilitation, it is essential to focus on *the quality* of the experience. Particularly important are the developments of constructive field trips, the emphasis of in-depth debriefing and critical reflection, and the need for appropriate training for program leaders.

The results of this study provide empirical support for the benefits of short-term study abroad. Short-term study abroad can make a difference; when it is appropriately designed, effectively implemented, learner centered, and responsibly assessed. With the dramatic increase of short-term programs nationwide, it is imperative to enhance program quality through creative, innovative, and systematic curricular designs that foster transformative and intercultural learning.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.

Motto of the Thai/Lao Global Seminar

The global community is growing closer, and the global economy is getting more interdependent and interconnected as the *world is becoming flat* (Friedman, 2005). Intercultural understanding and competence are increasingly featured in the core mission statements for higher education institutions. Being a member of this rapidly increasing global society requires "not only international experience, but also the capacity to engage that experience transformatively" (J. Bennett, 2008, p. 1). Intercultural competence is no longer a mere aspiration, but a '*must have*' skill. As increasing global competence in the next generation has become a national priority and an academic responsibility, study abroad is emerging as one of the best ways to attain international education. Study abroad programs have also become a recruitment tool, as prospective students make institutional selections based on study abroad opportunities, as well as academic offerings and campus life (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006). When programs are properly designed, thoroughly processed, and responsibly assessed, the sojourners of study abroad are indeed fulfilling part of higher education's mission (J. Bennett, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

It is apparent in most study abroad literature that the longer the period for study abroad, the more significant the opportunity for benefit and growth for participants (Fantini, 1995; Erwin & Coleman, 1998; Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004; Ingraham

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& Peterson, 2004; Vande Berg, Balkcum, Scheid, & Whalen, 2004). However, the

national study abroad enrollment trends during the past 16 years have been moving

toward fewer students studying abroad for a longer-term, with significantly increasing

numbers joining shorter-term programs. Even though the aggregate number of students

studying abroad has increased dramatically, a 244% increase from 1993-94 through

2007-08, the data show a steady decline in the number of students studying abroad for a

full academic year. In 1993-94, for example, 14.8% of U.S. students were enrolled in

study abroad programs for a full year, whereas in 2007-08 this percentage had dropped to

a mere 4.2%. Moreover, the same data show that the largest enrollment growth since the

1990s has occurred in programs that are less than one academic quarter in length,

growing from 38.2% of the total study abroad enrollments in 1993-94 to 56.3% of such

enrollments in 2007-08 (Institute of International Education (IIE), 2009).

Table 1-1. *Duration of Study Abroad from 1993 to 2008*

Duration	1993/94 % of total (*n* =76,302)	1995/96 % of total (*n* =89,242)	1997/98 % of total (*n* =113,959)	1999/2000 % of total (*n* =143,590)	2001/02 % of total (*n* =160,920)	2003/04 % of total (*n* =191,321)	2004/05 % of total (*n* =205,983)	2005/06 % of total (*n* =223,534)	2007/08 % of total (*n* =262,416)
Short-term (summer, January term, or fewer than 8 weeks)	38.2	40.5	44.6	47.5	47.7	51.6	51.4	52.8	56.3
Mid-length (one or two quarters, or one semester)	46.9	46.7	44.3	43.5	43.4	41.9	42.3	41.7	39.5
Long-term (academic or calendar year)	14.8	12.8	10.0	8.6	8.3	6.2	6.3	5.5	4.2

Data from Institute of International Education (2009)

According to *Open Doors*[1]*,* a total of 262,416 U.S. students studied abroad in the

2007-2008 academic year, representing an increase of 17.4 percent from the previous

year (IIE, 2009). The number of U.S. students receiving academic credit for study abroad

has increased 150% in the past decade. However, it is important to note that recent

growth is largely due to the increased availability of study abroad programs with shorter

duration than the traditional academic year. While the majority of U.S. students

participating in study abroad now choose programs that are less than one semester in

duration, the development or impact of short-term study abroad programs is largely

unexplored.

The Purpose of the Study

Short-term study abroad programs are playing an increasingly important role in

international education. The growing popularity of studying abroad is partially explained

by the availability of short-term programs, providing international study opportunities to

students who might otherwise have been unable to afford to participate in traditional-

length programs (Witherell, 2005). However, most research has focused on long-term

programs while there is increasingly greater interest among education institutions in

short-term programs (Vande Berg et al., 2004). Dwyer (2004) asserted that well-planned,

intensive summer programs of at least six weeks duration can have a significant impact

on student growth across a variety of important outcomes. However, "whether these

results would hold for the increasingly popular 1-5 week programs is unknown" (p. 161).

Further, few comparative studies exist concerning the impact of short-term study abroad.

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[1] *Open Doors* is a report published annually by the Institute of International Education (IIE) with funding from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Table 1-2. *Conceptual Definition of Terms*

For the purpose of this investigation, the following concepts are used:

- Short-term study abroad:

    In general a short-term study abroad program is defined as a "one-to-eight week program (less than a term), usually faculty directed and sponsored by a home institution or a consortium" (Spencer & Tuma, 2002, p. xiv). In this study, the duration of short-term study abroad is specifically defined as a three-to-four week interim session offered between semesters.

- Intercultural competence vs. Intercultural sensitivity:

    Intercultural competence refers to the external behaviors that individuals manifest when operating in other cultural contexts, whereas intercultural sensitivity refers to the developmental process that dictates the degree of an individual's psychological ability to deal with cultural differences (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004).

The goal of this study is to investigate the impact of short-term study abroad on student participants and identify factors which make for a successful short-term study abroad program. Table 1-2 presents a conceptual definition of the key terms used in this research. For the purpose of this study, two short-term global seminar programs, one in Asia and the other in Europe, provide the context for investigation. The two programs under investigation, *Understanding Southeast Asia*, and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam,* are both three weeks in duration. Neither Southeast Asia nor the Netherlands is a leading destination for U.S.-American students studying abroad (IIE, 2008a, 2008b)[2]; therefore,

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[2] According to the *Open Doors* 2007 reports, the top 20 leading destinations for U.S.-American students' study abroad are United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France, Australia, Mexico, China, Germany, Costa Rica, Ireland, Japan, Greece, Argentina, Czech Republic, Austria, Chile, New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil and Ecuador (listed by ranking).

further investigation into these areas will provide greater insight as to what attracts and motivates students to choose a particular country or region. This insight is valuable because it will assist higher education institutions in tailoring study abroad programs to meet student needs and interests.

Both *Understanding Southeast Asia* and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* are three-credit courses that take place during the May-June session and are led by University of Minnesota faculty. Prior to going abroad, participants attend pre-departure orientations that aim to assist in preparing students for the journey. Participants are given reading assignments and informed about program requirements. Once in-country, participants attend seminars during the morning, while afternoons are devoted to field trips and/or independent research. Courses are often co-taught with professors and guest speakers from the host country. Both programs place a heavy emphasis on cultural immersion and numerous experiential field trips, such as visits focused on traditional customs and events, and travel to local villages and cultural sites.

As study abroad trends at U.S. colleges are leaning more towards short-term programs, it is critically important to examine their impact. Current trends in the increase and popularity of short-term study abroad prompt the following research questions that motivate major inquiry for this study:

1. What are the major program components that participants indicate are most valuable from their short-term study abroad experience?

2-1. In what ways, if any, do participants differ in reports of their experiences in an Asian (Thailand and Laos) sojourn compared to those in a European (Netherlands) sojourn?

2-2. What are the similarities and differences in the cross-cultural stress factors reported by participants in the Asian (Thailand and Laos) study abroad program and those who participated in the European (Netherlands) program?

3. What, if any, are the significant differences in IDI scores when comparing pre-sojourn and post-sojourn results for the participants? Do the results vary by country (Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands)? What accounts for any differences found? What conditions contribute to a possible increase in participants' IDI scores?

4. What, if any, influence did short-term study abroad have on participants' professional and personal development?

This study aims to investigate the impact of short-term programs on those who participate, and from these findings to offer recommendations to make short-term study abroad more effective. This interdisciplinary research should help identify the major components of successful short-term study abroad programs as perceived by participants. Given that there are few systematic studies on the impact of short-term study abroad programs, this investigation will contribute to our understanding of what leads to the sustainable impact of such programs on students. With the new emphasis on study abroad not only nationally in the U.S., but in countries around the world, this inquiry will inform not only important intercultural theories, but also major efforts in policy and practice within the rapidly growing study abroad field.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of theoretical and empirical literature related to short-term study abroad. The theoretical grounding for this study includes five perspectives: the intergroup contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998), transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1991), intercultural development (Bennett, 1993), intercultural communication (Hall, 1976; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010), and intercultural relations (Paige, 1993). Included in the literature review therefore are studies related to intergroup contact and experiences gained through study abroad; transformative learning through study abroad experience; study abroad participants' intercultural sensitivity development; the influence of different cultural backgrounds and communication styles; duration of study abroad programs; and related research examining impact and outcomes of study abroad. For the purpose of this literature review, the specific focus is on issues related to short-term study abroad programs which have grown dramatically in the U.S. over the past decade.

Overview of Study Abroad

In contrast to the casual belief that international education is a modern phenomenon, the principle of educational exchange is in fact part of an ancient tradition, and the idea of studying abroad is as old as recorded history:

During the reign of the Emperor Asoka the Great of India (273-232 B.C.), the University of Taxila became a major international institution, attracting students from all over Asia Minor, and requiring its graduates to travel abroad following

the completion of their courses. In China the emperors of the T'ang Dynasty (620-907) fostered international education. Alexander the Great provided for a kind of Rhodes scholarship in his will. The early Roman emperors encouraged foreign teachers to come to Rome. In the Middle Ages the European university, essentially an international institution of higher learning, came into existence (Furnham & Bochner, 1982, p. 161-162).

The adoption of international educational experience for undergraduates in the U.S. really began with the junior year abroad programs which first developed in the mid- and late-1920s (Marion, 1974). However, these programs mostly attracted a limited number of wealthy students with foreign language majors and were "operated by women's colleges," (Dessoff, 2006, p. 22). The perception that international educational experience is predominantly for females still lingers among some male students and parents, and may have influenced current trends that reveal overrepresentation of female students' participation in study abroad.

The U.S. government and various educational foundations began to support a significant movement of students and scholars across cultural boundaries after the Second World War, and the phenomenon is often described as the "Post-Second World War boom in student exchanges" (Furnham & Bochner, 1982, p. 162). A good example is the Fulbright-Hays Program that began in 1946, which promoted international education opportunities for a number of U.S.-American students, teachers, visiting scholars, and foreign students.

It was during the mid-1950s that "study abroad for Americans was [becoming an] accepted instrument for the general education of many" (Abrams, 1968, p. 24). The

Peace Corps movement and its training program in the 1960s also mark a significant attempt to prepare people for work and study in another culture. Important early studies in the field, which were supported by the Social Science Research Council and published by the University of Minnesota[3] Press, inquired into the adjustment problems of foreign students in the U.S. (Furnham & Bochner, 1982). The two new concepts of "culture shock" and "U-curve of adjustment" were introduced in the literature. It is unfortunate that both of them were introduced with negative connotations for the psychological welfare of the sojourner. The notion of cultural shock "has been widely used (and misused) to 'explain' the difficulties of the cross-cultural sojourn" (p. 162). The U-curve of adjustment has three main phases: an initial stage of elation and optimism, followed by a period of frustration, depression and confusion, which then slowly turns into feelings of confidence and satisfaction (Furnham & Bochner, 1982). The concept of culture shock will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

With the increase in multinational trade during the post-war reconstruction period, not only higher education institutions but also government and the private sector started to pay attention to the promotion of international education and intercultural understanding. "Internationalization of higher education, including study abroad, is no longer merely desirable; it is a necessity" (Advisory Council for International Education Exchange, 1988, p. 21). "The opportunity for more young Americans to study abroad is

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[3] The University of Minnesota, offering 300 programs in over 70 countries and a faculty with leading scholars in the international education and study abroad field, is one of the institutions at the forefront of study abroad research. Moreover, the programs at the university continue to increase. The Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, for example, has made international experience mandatory, including both short- and long-term study abroad programs, as well as internships as part of their four-year degree undergraduate business curriculum (beginning in 2008) and full-time MBA curriculum (beginning in 2009) .

a goal shared by the President, the Secretary of State, and leaders in Congress, industry and academia" stated Allan E. Goodman, President and CEO of the Institute of International Education (IIE, 2008a). To help U.S. students gain access to a substantive international experience, the U.S. Department of State provides a number of funding opportunities including the Fulbright U.S. Student Program and the Gilman Scholarships for undergraduates.

In 2005, the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program reported a plan to increase the number of U.S college students who study abroad to a million by 2016-17 under the motto of: *What nations don't know can hurt them.* "The stakes involved in study abroad are that simple, that straightforward and that important. For their own future and that of the nation, college graduates today must be internationally competent" (Lederman, 2007, p. 2). Federal support includes the Bush Administration's American 2000 education initiative, which continued under Goals 2000 in the Clinton Administration. On January 5, 2006, President Bush launched the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), a plan to further strengthen national security and prosperity in the 21st century through education, especially in developing foreign language skills with an investment of $114 million in Fiscal Year 2007 (U.S. Department of State, Released on January 5, 2006). The significant point here is that there is a noticeable focus by the U.S. Government on the "critical need for foreign languages," such as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, and Farsi. While federal support has markedly increased especially since 9/11, the desire to strengthen U.S. national security and foreign policy should not be the primary driving force behind international and intercultural education, which has widely recognized inherent value. With the acknowledgement of

the importance of international study, the year 2006 was declared as the *Year of Study Abroad* (Loveland & Murphy, 2006).

The Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, passed in June 2007, is a visionary bill to address today's need for quality and feasible study abroad programs. This legislation creates a national program that will establish study abroad as the norm, not the exception, for undergraduate students. One of the main goals of this new legislation is to increase participation in quality study abroad programs.

A growing number of higher education institutions are making study abroad one of the mandatory requirements, and graduates with international experience are increasingly seen as more competent in the workforce. According to *Open Doors* 2007, eighteen U.S. institutions reported sending more than 80% of their students abroad, and forty U.S. campuses, primarily large research institutions, awarded academic credit for study abroad last year to more than 1,000 of their students (IIE, 2008b). In addition to numerous institutions that have contemplated institutionalizing study abroad as an outright requirement, Goucher College announced that it would begin requiring *all* its students to spend at least some portion of their undergraduate years studying in another country, making it the first U.S. college other than Soka University of America, a small Californian institution founded by the Soka Gokkai lay Buddhist sect in 2001, to do so (Lederman, 2006). Beginning with those admitted in Fall 2006, every Goucher student must spend at least three weeks studying in another country and the college has committed to providing $1,200 vouchers to help cover travel costs. The new mandatory study abroad program as part of the four-year undergraduate degree (beginning in 2008) and full-time MBA (beginning in 2009) business curriculum at the Carlson School of

Management at the University of Minnesota is an example of yet another contemporary trend toward greater emphasis on study abroad.

Duration of Study Abroad

It is evident in the literature that the longer the period of study abroad, the more significant the benefit and growth that accrues for student participants is thought to be (Dwyer, 2004). Fantini (1995) asserted that at least four to eight months abroad and second language acquisition are required for greater development of intercultural competence. Ingraham and Peterson (2004) showed a correlation between program length and three factors: personal growth, intellectual growth and academic performance – the longer the stay abroad, the higher the mean for these factors. By conducting the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), Erwin and Coleman (1998) pointed out that short-term study abroad for a summer or a month does not increase cross-cultural adaptability.

While most of the research has focused on the rationale of long-term programs (Vande Berg et al., 2004), the national trend shows that increasing numbers of students and investigations by educational institutions are focused on short-term programs. As mentioned earlier, more than half (56.3%) of U.S. students elect short-term programs (including summer, January term and any program of less than eight weeks) while only 39.5% of those students studying abroad choose semester study abroad, and just 4.2% spend a full academic or calendar year abroad (IIE, 2009). While brief sojourns and short-term programs expand the numbers of U.S.-Americans studying abroad, it is assumed that longer programs abroad provide better opportunities for language acquisition and deeper immersion in the culture.

Although many international educators have been skeptical of short-term experiences and would rather encourage longer programs if possible, research should be employed to explore the practical reality and its implications. If the national trend reveals increasing numbers and investigations in short-term programs, research should be used to find ways to make short-term programs

more effective. My passion in this study is to find out how to develop short-term study abroad that is as meaningful as possible. Rather than criticizing the short-term duration and emphasizing the importance of longer-term programs which are often not affordable and/or too intimidating for many students, this research focuses on the growing trend toward short-term study abroad and highlights the impact of these short-term programs. The next section explores the realities of short-term study abroad as described in the literature.

Short-Term Study Abroad

The largest growth in study abroad in the last decades has been in shorter programs. Short-term study abroad programs have emerged in recent years as an attractive alternative for many students who do not want to spend a long period abroad or are unable to do it for financial or other reasons. Therefore, short-term programs may encourage more underrepresented students to consider study abroad experience (Dessoff, 2006). In addition to cost feasibility, shorter study abroad programs also relieve concerns of students who have never traveled abroad before, and those of their families. Although a few weeks of study abroad experience may not make a significant change in participants' intercultural sensitivity level as the majority of the current literature criticizes, it may have value and significance as a catalyst to initiate a new perspective on

international experience. The impact of short-term study abroad can be substantial as

Connie Perdreau, Director of the Office of Education Abroad at Ohio University states:

> For some students, one- or two-weeks abroad is as big as going for a year because
>
> they might not even have thought before about getting on a plane and traveling
>
> that far. Spending two weeks in another country, even an English-speaking
>
> country, can have a major life-changing impact. It helps them get over their fear
>
> of the unknown, of going to another country. Going on the first trip, even for a
>
> short term, breaks the ice and can have a critical impact on a student's life
>
> (Dessoff, 2006, p. 23).

While the majority of study abroad literature emphasizes the effectiveness of

long-term study abroad programs (Fantini, 1995; Erwin & Coleman, 1998; Dwyer, 2004;

Engle & Engle, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Vande Berg et al., 2004), a few

recently published studies have endeavored to fill the gap in the research on shorter

programs (Chieffo & Griffins, 2003; Anderson et al., 2006; Redden, 2007a).

Acknowledging that the majority of current study abroad programs are now short-term

and faculty led (Chieffo and Griffins, 2003), Anderson et al. (2006) attempted to assess

whether one such program affects participants' intercultural sensitivity by conducting the

Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)[4] pre- and post-test for U.S.-American students

who participated in a four-week, faculty-led study abroad program in Europe (two weeks

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[4] The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a 50-item theory-based instrument that measures
intercultural sensitivity as conceptualized in Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural
sensitivity (DMIS). The DMIS conceptualizes intercultural sensitivity as a developmental phenomenon that
can be described in terms of six distinctly different intercultural worldviews, three of which are
ethnocentric (Denial, Defense, and Minimization) and three of which are ethnorelative (Acceptance,
Adaptation, and Integration). The IDI generates scores for Denial, Defense Minimization, Acceptance, and
Adaptation in addition to overall measure of intercultural sensitivity, which is referred to as the
Developmental Score. The IDI is often used to measure sojourners' intercultural sensitivity in the study
abroad field because it has a strong theoretical foundation, and proven validity and reliability (Hammer,
Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). The details of the IDI will be discussed in more depth later in the chapter.

in London, England and two weeks in Cork, Ireland). The pre-test was conducted the

first day of class and the post-test on the last day of class. While the pre-test was

administered to all twenty-three students in the course, the final sample size for the study

was sixteen due to missing data and individual participants' circumstances.

The preliminary results from Anderson et al. (2006) suggest that short-term, non-

language-based study abroad programs can have a positive impact on the overall

development of cross-cultural sensitivity. The participants significantly improved their

overall intercultural sensitivity as measured by the IDI development score (DS), and the

principal growth appears to be in the area of Reversal and Acceptance/Adaptation, which

means that as a group, the students lessened their tendency to see other cultures as better

than their own (Reversal) and improved their ability to accept and adapt to cultural

differences (Acceptance/Adaptation). However, while the students' overall score showed

significant movement, the change was not sufficient to move them out of one stage and

into the next; rather most students simply moved within a stage[5]. This modest change

may have occurred due to the short-term duration of the program or other factors.

However, this is not clearly explained in the study, which is a major weakness.

While this research partially replicates Anderson et al.'s (2006) pilot study,

Anderson et al.'s population size was small (n=16) and the study abroad site was limited

to Europe (two weeks in London, England, and two weeks in Cork, Ireland). This

investigation adds a significant contribution to the previous study in regards to the

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[5] According to Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), people develop
their intercultural sensitivity in each of the levels of intercultural development simultaneously. That is,
they do not have to completely resolve the issues involved in one stage before moving on to the next stage;
this is clearly what happened in Anderson et al.'s (2006) study. In this sense, the DMIS is not a pure stage
theory. Rather, it reflects the complexity of intercultural development. The DMIS will be discussed in
more detail later in this chapter as part of the major framework of this study.

following factors. First, the population size is forty-six rather than sixteen. Second, while the previously investigated short-term program was conducted only in English-speaking countries (England and Ireland), the short-term programs in this study were conducted in two different non-English speaking countries, the Netherlands and Southeast Asia (Thailand and Laos). Further, this study investigates differences in intercultural sensitivity levels between participants who studied abroad in a culture that is similar to the home culture compared to one that is much different. In addition, while the participants of the previous pilot study were homogeneous, consisting of all senior-level college students majoring in business administration who enrolled in a management course, this study contains variation in terms of participants' major, school-year, and age. Lastly, the triangulation of various methods including pre- and post-trip survey and in-depth interviews supports and better explains the changes in IDI developmental scores (DS) in this study, whereas the previous pilot study only conducted IDI administration and examined the change of participants' developmental scores (DS).

Chieffo and Griffins (2003) explored the University of Delaware's short-term programs showing how participating students grow in ways their stay-at-home peers do not. The goal of the project was to design a data-collection instrument that could be easily transported and administered to evaluate the outcomes of virtually any month-long study abroad program. The survey responses from over 600 study abroad students and over 400 on-campus students were analyzed and compared, representing 32 programs abroad and 32 sections of 22 courses on campus. There are some notable differences in the responses from the two populations (those who studied abroad and the on-campus group). The results confirmed that four-week study abroad programs have broad-based

benefits to students, regardless of program specific goals and structures. Significant differences between study abroad and on-campus students appeared for 15 of 20 survey items, indicating that those who studied abroad perceived that they had a greater sensitivity to language and culture, an improved functional knowledge of cultural practices, and a better understanding of global interdependence than students who remained on campus. Those who studied abroad generally reported engaging in international activities more frequently than those on campus, and they were more likely to agree with statements that reflected global and international concerns. While there was no correlation between the number of times students had studied or traveled abroad and their responses to other survey items, it is interesting to note that more than 40 percent of the on-campus students reported never having been abroad.

Although the study by Chieffo and Griffins (2003) did not measure actual student learning, attitude change, or skill acquisition, as many studies have attempted to do, it is significant in that students' perceptions were explored. The sample of study abroad students in this research is a rather special case (more than 40 percent of the students abroad categorized their major as professional or pre-professional, such as engineering, animal science, and elementary education) and may not be applicable to general study abroad trends and populations because the national statistics indicate that the top three major fields of U.S.-American study abroad students are social science (22%), business and management (18%), and humanities (14%) while engineering (2.9%) or education (4%) are less common fields in terms of study abroad participation (IIE, 2008c). The one-page simple survey questionnaire was not enough to fully examine students' insights. While researchers attempted to glean qualitative data through a short-answer question

with a half-page response at the end of the survey, the potential for collection of insightful data through this method was limited. The current study attempts to overcome this type of limitation by supplementing quantitative figures with qualitative data acquired through in-depth interviews with short-term study abroad participants.

While long-term study abroad is typically perceived as more beneficial than short-term programming, a recent study from the Georgia Learning Outcomes of Students Studying Abroad Research Initiative (or GLOSSARI) presented potentially significant results at the 59th annual National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (NAFSA) conference in 2007. Students who studied abroad in short-term programs of eight weeks or less had higher four-year graduation rates, regardless of SAT scores, than did students who studied abroad for longer periods of time (Redden, 2007b). As a possible explanation of this result, Richard C. Sutton (2007), senior advisor for academic affairs and director of international programs for the University System of Georgia Board of Regents, suggested that shorter-term, mainly summer programs might not interrupt other academic plans, whereas spending a semester or more abroad could get in the way of degree completion. With current trends towards dramatically increasing numbers of short-term study abroad programs, Sutton's finding draws considerable attention to the importance and impact of short-term study abroad. However, this single explanation may be of limited value by itself; further studies are needed especially in because annual surveys conducted at the University of Minnesota found that studying abroad generally does not delay graduation (University of Minnesota, 2005). On the other hand, it is critical to note that there is also an important confounding variable at play which the Minnesota surveys have apparently ignored. Since study abroad

participants generally come from higher socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds, they are not as likely to have to work while in college as students who are less financially privileged, which may affect time to complete the degree.

<center>Issues with Current Study Abroad Programs</center>

As the internationalization of higher education is driven by market needs, the quality of current study abroad programs is hugely influenced by globalization (Altbach, Reisgerg, & Rumbly, 2009). Global competence is a growing necessity for employment, and the percentage of study abroad students majoring in business has grown from 14% to 18% over the past decade (IIE, 2008c). Is it appropriate to conclude that international education is successful because the *number* of study abroad students and programs are continuously increasing? Or it is more important to shift the key indicator of success from the number of participants to the quality of student learning programs and their outcomes (Weinberg, 2007)?

The quantity of study abroad programs is aggressively increasing along with major federal funding, such as the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, which calls for the number of U.S.-American college students who study abroad to increase to a million by 2016-17. As the quantity increases, however, there appears to be less focus on the quality of programs (MacCabe, 2001). While international educators welcome the attention the Lincoln Commission's report has brought to study abroad, the method for reaching the goal of increased numbers remains a challenge, contributing to the debate of quantity over quality (Lederman, 2007). As the number of study abroad programs grows, increasing numbers of study abroad participants are left to learn on their own, in the "grand tour" model of study abroad. Criticizing the phenomenon of

measuring the success of study abroad by the number of students who participate, Weinberg (2007) asserted that it is important to intentionally and purposefully start to examine some of the current study abroad programs that send students abroad without appropriate preparation:

> Some universities and programs send college students into the world, with little preparation, for culturally thin experiences. Students make minimal effort to learn local languages or customs, travel in large groups, and are taught in American-only classrooms. They live and go to bars with other Americans. They see local sights through the windows of traveling buses. Far from experiencing another culture deeply and on its own terms, these students (at best) simply get the American college experience in a different time zone. It is worth noting as well that many of the study abroad destinations known as 'fun' don't even require language study and offer relatively minimal challenges to students' sense of place and culture. These also happen to be the places with the highest percentage of students (Weinberg, 2007, p. 1-2).

> Participating in study abroad is not a guarantee of intercultural competence.

Only when done right can study abroad allow participants to gain intercultural skills. Simply put,

> Students learn effectively only if we intervene before, during and after their experiences abroad. The Lincoln panel risks increasing numbers without producing the desired result. Too many study abroad participants are not necessarily becoming 'internationally competent'… Let's not just send students

on any program, but let's fund programs that have been proven to be successful (Lederman, 2007, p. 3).

Short-term programs are rapidly increasing and recognized as legitimate educational experiences for U.S. college and university students who are unable or unlikely to participate in semester or academic year programs abroad. Research on short-term programs has therefore become essential. It is time to seriously examine whether the increasing numbers reflect genuinely increasing awareness about international education, or simply reflect the urge to study abroad as one more thing to do in college in order to enrich a resume. The next section discusses the five major theoretical frameworks of this study.

Theoretical Framework

Five theoretical frameworks are used in this study: the intergroup contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998), transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1991, 1994), intercultural development (Bennett, 1993), intercultural communication (Hall, 1976; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede et al., 2010), and intercultural relations (Paige, 1993).

Intergroup Contact Hypothesis

What happens when study abroad participants interact with locals in the host country? While there has been a belief that intergroup contact reduces prejudice (Allport, 1954), its origin in the 19th century which was dominated by Social Darwinism reflected a rather pessimistic view that intergroup contact almost inevitably led to conflict due to hostility toward outgroups, and ingroup's sense of superiority (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005).

Following the Second World War, this has changed to a more optimistic view that

"shared interracial experiences with a common objective lead to mutual understanding

while when groups are isolated from one another, prejudice and conflict grow" (Pettigrew

& Tropp, 2005, p. 263). These social psychological disciplines and William's (1947)

four principles for reducing intergroup tensions provided the foundation and context for

Allport's social contact theory. Williams stressed that intergroup contact would

maximally reduce prejudice when: 1) the two groups share similar status, interests, and

tasks; 2) the situation fosters personal, intimate intergroup contact; 3) the participants do

not fit the stereotyped conceptions of their groups; and 4) the activities cut across group

lines (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). To account for the contrasting effects of intergroup

contact—often reducing but sometimes exacerbating prejudice[6], Allport (1954) adopted

the "positive factors" approach and specified four scope conditions for optimal contact:

1) the situation must allow equal group status within the situation; 2) common goals; 3)

intergroup cooperation; and 4) authority support. In regards to the equal group status,

Allport pointed out that eliminating discrimination by changing the external situation

(through law, for example) does not always necessarily eliminate prejudice. "After

discrimination has been eliminated and people come into equal-status contact with one

another, then their attitudes may be affected away from prejudice" (Evans, 1981, p. 61).

However, "equal status" is difficult to define and has been used in different ways

(Pettigrew, 1998). Effective contact usually involves an active effort toward a common

goal the groups share, and the attainment of a common goal should be an interdependent

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[6] While the prejudice is defined as "thinking ill of other without sufficient warrant" here, Allport also noted that there can be prejudice in favor or others: love prejudice and hate prejudice. He asserted "I've only defined hate prejudice here, but the psychologists' love prejudices would be the same thing—thinking well of others without sufficient warrant" (Evans, 1981, p. 59).

effort based on intergroup cooperation rather than competition (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). Intergroup contact has more positive effects when it is supported by authorities and social institutions. Recent research from Pettigrew (1998) added another condition to Allport's four positive factors: The contact situation must have "friendship potential" (p. 80), assuming that friendship requires the operation of conditions that approach Allport's specifications for optimal contact. "Intergroup friendship is likely to involve cooperation and common goals, and it is likely to indicate repeated, equal-status interactions in a variety of settings over an extended period of time" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005, p. 269). Contact studies have currently extended far beyond the original focus on racial and ethnic groups to test the effects of contact with different ages, sexual orientation, disabilities, and mental illness (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005).

Pointing out the failure to address process in Allport's intergroup contact hypothesis, Pettigrew (1998) suggested four interrelated processes of change through intergroup contact: learning about the outgroup, changed behavior, affective ties, and ingroup reappraisal. As ignorance promotes prejudice (Evans, 1981) and learning about an outgroup can improve intergroup attitudes and reduce stereotyping (Gardiner, 1972; Pettigrew, 1998), study abroad experience can become a catalyst to initiate the opportunity to learn about people whose cultural backgrounds, outlooks, and styles of communication are significantly different from one's own. "Prejudice is being down on something that you are negative about or rejecting… *because they violate our values* [italics added]…" (Evans, 1981, p. 58).

When something is different from our own values, or differently done from our own practice, it is often regarded unconsciously as wrong or evaluated somewhat

negatively rather than being simply accepted as different or acknowledged as diverse. In this regard, study abroad not only offers the opportunity to learn about the different cultural and social values of others, but more importantly, it provides an opportunity to become aware of one's own values and norms. The first step in learning about another culture is to be aware of one's own culture. This critical reflection was also emphasized by Mezirow's (1994) comments on transformative learning:

> We resist learning anything that does not comfortably fit our meaning structures, but we have a strong urgent need to understand the meaning of our experience so that, given the limitations of our meaning structure, we strive toward viewpoints which are more functional: more inclusive, discriminating and integrative of our experience (p. 223).

Pettigrew (1998) proposed a reformulation of intergroup contact theory, which he called constructive contact, which relates more closely to long-term relationships than to initial acquaintanceship. The *constructive contact* also indicates the importance of *how* the study abroad program should be conducted rather than just arguing about its duration. One of the characteristics of well-designed study abroad programs is the provision of maximum opportunity for immersion with locals through constant and in-depth contact in various social and cultural contexts. Out-of-class learning experiences and opportunities are designed as key curricular components in the two global seminars under investigation in this study.

The importance of out-of-class learning in study abroad has been discussed in several studies (Laubscher, 1994; Erwin & Coleman, 1998). Emphasizing that out-of-classroom experiences are correlated to the level of cross-cultural adaptability of

students, Erwin and Coleman (1998) discussed how residing in another country and traveling abroad with family were found to be more consistently related to cross-cultural adaptability than academic-related experiences abroad. In regards to study abroad programs, they suggest that because there may be more contact with host nationals in other types of intercultural experiences than learning abroad, study abroad curricula should include different opportunities for meeting host nationals.

The extensive intergroup contact in a maximum immersion environment required in the two global seminars examined for this study satisfy both Allport's (1954) conditions which encourage intergroup friendship and Pettigrew's (1998) fifth condition of friendship opportunity. While acknowledging the intergroup contact hypothesis, Stephan (1987) argued the critical need to consider the complexity involved in the link between intergroup contact and prejudice, such as characteristics of the contact setting, the group under study, and the individuals involved. These complexities play an important role, emphasizing the critical needs of well-prepared study abroad curricula.

Although the two global seminars investigated here are only three-weeks in duration, the key aspects of the curricula include in-depth contact with locals in various settings. The several field trips in the programs are not superficial tourism but rather fairly extensive experiences. For example, when *Understanding Southeast Asia* study abroad participants visit Santi Asokha Buddhist community in Chaiyaphum, they stay overnight at Chaiyaphum with local families. For critical reflection, students produce a subsequent mini-ethnography to gain deeper understanding. In Laos, students themselves fully participate in an actual *baci* ceremony[7] at the National University of Laos rather

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[7] The *baci* Ceremony is one of the most pervasive and basic among Lao customs integral to the culture, and occurs on a wide range of major occasions such as weddings, and welcoming and farewell parties. The

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than just watching it as spectators. The structure of the curriculum for each day is with

an effective combination of various academic and practical aspects. As another example,

after hearing a lecture on "Pragmatic Tolerance: Ethical Issues in Prostitution" from a

University of Minnesota faculty member during the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam*

program, students are assigned a number of related readings. The next morning, they

attend an in-depth seminar with a Dutch guest speaker on prostitution in the Netherlands.

That same afternoon, the class visits the Amsterdam Prostitution Information Centre and

engages in a walking tour of the red-light district. This cross-cultural teaching method,

which also combines theoretical and experiential learning, enhances the immersive nature

of the program and positively affects students' study abroad experience.

In more recent work Pettigrew and Tropp (2005), through a major and extensive

meta-analysis[8] of studies of intercultural encounters, has confirmed the validity of

Allport's (1954) hypothesis even in the absence of four positive factors, and suggested

modifications. While Allport held his optical factors to be essential conditions for

intergroup contact to diminish prejudice, the results of Pettigrew and Tropp's (2005)

meta-analysis indicate that "While these factors are important, they are not necessary. . .

performance of the ceremony requires a holy man who presents a "mini-sermon" and chants in front of a
magnificent flower arrangement. Various offerings such as pieces of chicken or an egg are made and placed
in front of the flower arrangement. After the holy man has finished with his sermon and chanting,
participants tie the long white cotton strings around the wrists of others and quietly offers good wishes for
those attending (Fry, 2002). By taking part in the *baci* Ceremony, study abroad participants can experience
the long-established Lao spiritual tradition and become fully involved in an important Lao custom.
[8] The meta-analysis utilized 515 individual studies with 713 independent samples and 1,383 non-
independent tests written between 1940 and the end of 2000. Combined, 250,089 individuals from 38
nations participated in the research (71% of study came from the United States). Survey and field research
constituted 71% of the studies, quasi-experiments 24%, and true experiments 5%. Slightly more than half
of the sample (51%) focused on racial or ethnic target groups, and the research typically used college
students or adult participants of both sexes. Along with including more than 300 additional studies, this
work extends an earlier preliminary analysis, presented in Pettigrew and Tropp (2005), in several important
theoretical and empirical directions. The analysis found that intergroup contact typically reduces intergroup
prejudice. Multiple tests indicate that this finding appears not to result from either participant selection or
publication biases, and the more rigorous studies have yielded larger mean effects (Pettigrew & Tropp,
2006).

Instead, Allport's conditions are better thought of as facilitating, rather than essential, conditions for positive contact outcomes to occur" (p. 271). Selection bias was criticized by Pettigrew and Troop (2006) because, "prejudiced people may avoid, and tolerant people may seek, contact with outgroups" (p. 753), and the research reveals that prejudiced people indeed avoid intergroup contact. However, the literature has found that the path from contact to reduced prejudice is generally much stronger than the bias (Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Troop, 2006).

Vande Berg (2008) discussed how preparing students with pre-departure programs and providing on-site mentors affects their intercultural development in significant ways. This discussion is well-supported by Allport's note included in Evans's research:

> Historical, sociocultural, character and personality factors, perceptual factors, … for example, if you don't know anything about the history of slavery in this country, you wouldn't know much about the nature of current prejudice. On the sociocultural level, factors including a way of life that gets established must be included with some of the distal factors which are actually translated into behavior (Evans, 1981, p. 59).

Providing a constructive pre-departure program which allows students to think beyond the surface level including historical and sociocultural aspects of the host country, rather than a typical "do's and don'ts with survival language skills" orientation is an important factor in preparing students for a successful study abroad experience. However, the pre-departure or on-site orientations in current study abroad programs often include a minimalist approach or one-hour orientations to credit-bearing courses (Summerfield,

1997). More importantly, the type of orientation and training delivered to participants is frequently dependent on many variables including the expertise of international education administrators and decision makers, which are unfortunately often questionable (Mestenhauser, 1998).

It is important to remember, however, that cultural knowledge gained from pre-departure orientation or other resources does not automatically lead to transformation or development of cultural competence (J. Bennett, 2008). Students can be knowledgeable about the history and sociocultural background of the host culture, but still be unsuccessful in their everyday interaction and communication. In addition, the assumption that language learning automatically accompanies cultural learning is misleading. Robinson (1988) points out the critical misunderstanding about culture learning as a "magic-carpet-ride-to-another-culture syndrome" (p. 33). This is an important mistaken assumption that language study will automatically open the door to another culture and to shared understanding, without any activities designed to promote intercultural understanding (Hong, 2004); the folly of believing that language can be "taught" and culture can be "caught" (Barro, Byram, Grimm, & Roberts, 1993). However, language learning is not sufficient for cultural learning. Becoming *fluent fools*, able to articulate language yet fail to understand culture, is even more risky and can cause "unrecoverable error" (J. Bennett, 2008, p. 6).

Allport's social contact theory emphasizes the importance of translating experience to attitude and behavior, which invites discussion of Mezirow's (1991) transformation learning theory. In *Dialogue with Gordon Allport* (1981), Allport said:

I would emphasize that the historical and sociocultural factors have to be

translated into the nervous system of the individual. They don't act automatically.

We have never answered why people pick up the historical and sociological

traditions and translate them into attitudes and behavior (p. 60).

Just as Allport stressed that *they don't act automatically*, Mezirow

(1991) emphasized that transformation occurs only with reflection and active learning,

the key factors of a successful study abroad program that are more likely to be present

when the international educator's role as a competent facilitator is fulfilled. Further, J.

Bennett (2008) emphasized the importance of optimally structured (Allport, 1954)

international contact (apart from limited tourism) and the vital role of the educator to

facilitate study abroad experience to achieve/gain transformative learning (Mezirow,

1991) in her recent study:

Cultural contact does not necessarily lead to competence. The mere intermingling

of individuals in intercultural contexts is not likely to produce, in itself,

intercultural learning. 'Learning emerges from our capacity to construe those

events and then to reconstrue them in transformative ways' (Kelly as cited in J.

Bennett, 2008, p. 7). In the study abroad context learners may be in the vicinity

of Asian events when they occur, but be having an American experience…

cultural contact does not always lead to a significant reduction of stereotypes…

optimally structured programs have larger effects …Once again, 'intervention

strategies are required' to achieve these outcomes (J. Bennett, 2008, p. 7).

J. Bennett's (2008) perspective on study abroad supports how closely the contact

hypothesis and transformative learning are correlated:

Unfacilitated intercultural interaction without preparation and debriefing often

fails to foster intercultural competence, decrease stereotypes, or engender

learning. In the context of study abroad, this preparation does not stand alone, but

is part of a systematically constructed sequence of pre-departure preparation, in-

country facilitation of critical incidents, and cognitive, affective, and behavioral

reintegration upon return. (p. 15)

Transformational Learning Theory

Study abroad programs provide an ideal opportunity for participants to develop a

greater capacity to adapt to and act upon prior knowledge and experience through critical

reflection (Taylor, 1998). This is at the heart of transformative learning, which "attempts

to explain how expectations, framed within cultural and psychological assumptions and

presuppositions, directly influence the meaning derived from experience" (Taylor, 1998,

p. 6). It is a "comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate,

and reformulate the meaning of their experience" (Cranton, 1994, p. 22). By their very

nature, study abroad programs foster transformative learning. In this regard,

transformative learning theory has been applied to the study abroad context (Whalley,

1996) and echoed in the related literature.

A study abroad program provides the opportunity for participants to adapt to new

experiences which result in perspective transformation. When a study abroad participant

encounters a new situation, the experience is filtered through one's meaning perspective

in order to interpret and give meaning to the new experience. The transformed meaning

perspective enables the development of a new meaning structure. It is this developmental

process which is "at the heart of Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation – a

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world view shift" (Taylor, 1998, p. 7). Daloz (2000) referred to this experience as

"constructive engagement with otherness" relating to empathy: from the perception of

'us' and 'them' to construction of a new 'we'. In referencing Daloz's (2000) research, J.

Bennett (2008) asserted it is from such trigger events that transformative intercultural

learning can take place. This recategorization process is also discussed in intergroup

contact theory: "After extended contact, people can begin to think of themselves in a

larger group perspective that highlights similarities among the interactants and obscures

the 'we' and 'they' boundary" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 75) although it is the final state that

few interacting groups actually reach. According to Hammer (2009), intercultural

competence development is a progression from a monocultural to an intercultural mindset

that reflects increasingly more complex perceptions and experiences of cultural

difference and commonalities (personal communication, March 29, 2009). Mezirow's

(1991) definition of perspective transformation included the core themes of "centrality of

experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse" (Taylor, 1998, p. 8), each of which

are at the heart of an effective study abroad program and provide the enduring impact of

that experience for participants: "Critical reflection and rational discourse are processes

of adult learning. Learning is defined as the social process of construing and

appropriating a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a

guide to action" (Mezirow, 1994, p. 222-223).

From Adler's (1972) perspective, this process can be explained as "culture shock

as the prelude to adjustment" (p. 1). Defining culture shock as "A gross reaction that

takes place within the individual in which the outward experiences of places, faces, and

situations are internalized in a different way" (p. 1), Adler (1972) criticized the

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inappropriate use of the term "shock" as causing confusion and misplaced emphasis on cultural experiences. He described three interrelated versions of culture shock: 1) a predominantly negative experience attributable to the personal loss of what is culturally, socially, and psychologically familiar; 2) a psychological illness or disease of those who venture out of their own culture; and 3) the crisis in behavior and attitude which occurs prior to successful adaptation and adjustment to new surroundings. While acknowledging these prevailing views of culture shock, Adler (1972) condemned their limited nature, and raised the important possibility that culture shock and a cross cultural learning experience are essentially the same phenomenon: "The real issue of culture shock is not how it can be eliminated, but what are the consequences of it" (p. 5).

As a result of culture shock in this view, individuals gain new perspectives on themselves and come to understand their own identity and culture (self awareness), as well as learn about values and attitudes of others (cultural awareness):

> Though culture shock can be a shattering experience it can also be a source of re-integration of personality. The greatest *shock* in culture shock may not be in the encounter with a foreign culture but with the confrontation of one's own culture and the ways in which the individual is culture bound (Adler, 1972, p. 9).

Adler's point was also stressed by J. Bennett (2008): "Cultural self-awareness is the first priority" (p. 17). Adler (1972) asserted that not everyone who stays abroad has a successful cross-cultural learning experience, but only those who can process culture shock as a catalyst and a stimulant to deeply understand themselves and their own culture do so. "In dealing with them, learning takes place" (Adler, 1972, p. 9), which is the core of critical reflection in the transformative learning process.

Overall, literature in the study abroad field shows that study abroad experience supports transformative learning. Sutton and Rubin's (2004) study concluded that students who studied abroad exceeded the control group on the following factors: functional knowledge, knowledge of world geography, knowledge of cultural relativism, and knowledge of global interdependence, which supports Mezirow's (1991) transformation learning theory in that the four factors reflect the learning of new meaning schemes, transformation of meaning schemes, and perspective transformation. Citing Piaget's model of "decentration," and the change in perspective gained from a sojourn abroad for international understanding, Yachimowicz (1987) discusses the decentration concept which resembles Mezirow's (1991) idea that meaning schemes are at first stretched, then new meaning schemes are learned, followed by an experience that eventually triggers perspective transformation.

Similar to Mezirow's (1991) emphasis on reflection as the key to the transformative learning process, the School for International Training (SIT) runs study abroad programs based on a model of providing international competence through: formal study (theory and coursework); field experience; reflection and a final product usually in written format (Heneveld, 1988). The well-designed curriculum that includes pre-departure, in-country, and re-entry training is necessary and critical for transformative learning as transformation of perspectives occurs *only* [italics added] with reflection and active learning (Mezirow, 1991). Mezirow (1991) focused on the learning of new meaning that eventually through reflection propels the individual to perspective transformation. Applying Mezirow's (1991) emphasis on reflection in the perspective transformation process to the context of study abroad, J. Bennett (2008) stressed the

necessity of processing critical incidents and facilitating intercultural experiences from study abroad "rather than just having them. It is only through the commitment to comprehensive design that transformative learning can take place" (p. 15).

Intercultural Development: The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) is a framework for explaining how people react to cultural differences based on the assumption that "as one's experience of cultural differences becomes more complex, one's potential competence in intercultural interactions increases" (Hammer & Bennett, 2002, p. 1). The DMIS conceptualizes intercultural sensitivity as a developmental phenomenon that can be described in six different intercultural worldviews: three ethnocentric stages (Denial, Defense, and Minimization) and three ethnorelative stages (Acceptance, Adaptation, and Integration). This theory holds that more ethnorelative worldviews have more potential to generate interculturally competent attitudes, knowledge, and behavior.

The DMIS is introduced as one of the theoretical frameworks in this study for two reasons. First, the underlying assumption of international educators and the recent trend of dramatically increasing study abroad programs is based on the idea that as participants' experience of cultural differences becomes more complex during study abroad, it is expected that their intercultural competence will increase. Second, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) instrument, used in this study to measure participants' intercultural sensitivity, is created based on the conceptual framework of DMIS.

The IDI is an instrument that measures individual or group intercultural sensitivity as conceptualized in the DMIS. The IDI is often used to measure a sojourner's

intercultural sensitivity in study abroad research because it has a strong theoretical foundation, and proven validity and reliability with alpha coefficients of 0.80 or higher for each of the subscales (Bennett, 1993; Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). The IDI is used in this study to assess the extent to which a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program can affect the intercultural sensitivity of participants. The IDI generates an "individual or group profile of 'worldview orientation to difference,' which indicates the capacity for exercising intercultural competence and which identifies the issues that are limiting of facilitating development of intercultural competence" (Hammer & Bennett, 2002, p. 5).

The following sections illustrate how intercultural theories relate to study abroad; Hall's (1956, 1976) concept of high- and low- context culture is reviewed first, and Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) five cultural dimensions are explored. Paige's (1993) ten cultural intensity factors are discussed, followed by empirical research on cultural context and the sojourner's study abroad experience.

Intercultural Communication Theory

High- and Low-Context Culture and Different Cultural Dimensions

Hall (1976), as an anthropologist, drew upon close observation, interviews and qualitative studies, to identify how people from some cultural backgrounds relied more on explicit verbal messages, minimizing the role of shared context, while others relied more on assumptions of shared context so that less was expressed in words explicitly. The former which Hall (1976) identified as low (or relatively low)-context characterizes cultures in which individualism is valued, while the latter represents high (or relatively high)-context characteristics of communication in societies which value interdependence

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and collectivism. Comparisons between these kinds of cultures have been conducted for decades through extensive quantitative studies, following the work of the Dutch scholars Hofstede and Hofstede (2005). High-context communication is frequent in many Asian societies with their emphasis on collectivistic, indirect, relationship-oriented, circular, and non-verbal communication style. Low-context communication is often more frequent in heterogeneous Western society with its emphasis on individualistic, direct, task-oriented, linear, and verbal communication style. Many phenomena that are considered self-evident in collectivist cultures must be stated explicitly in individualist cultures. The high- and low-context concept can often play an important role in the difficulties encountered when a study abroad participant from a low-context country, such as the United States, communicates with a person from a high-context country, such as Thailand.

This study examines how cultures in Thailand (higher-context) and the Netherlands (lower-context) differ in terms of their influence on participants' experience during their study abroad. Table 2-1 below identifies different dimensions of cultural scale and cultural distance[9] in the U.S., Thailand, and the Netherlands.

Table 2-1. *Hofstede's Dimension of Culture Scales*

Country	Power Distance	Individualism	Uncertainty Avoidance	Masculinity	Long-term Orientation
Netherlands	38	80	53	14	44
United States	40	91	46	62	29
Thailand	64	20	64	34	56

Developed from Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005

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[9] Cultural distance means the degree of similarity or difference between two cultures. High cultural distance indicates substantial cultural dissimilarity between two cultures, while low cultural distance indicates high cultural similarity between two cultures.

1. Power Distance

Power distance is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In the large-power-distance situation, inequality within a society is more visible in organizations and workplaces. In family relations, children are often expected to be obedient toward their parents. For example, "Respect for parents and other elders is seen as a basic virtue" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 51) in Thailand, which reflects the relatively large-power-distance score (64) in Table 2-1. In the small-power-distance situation, however, behavior toward others is not dependent on the other's age or status. For example, often children in the U.S. are more or less treated as equals as soon as they are able to act; being encouraged to express their feelings and ideas, and learning to say "no" to others fairly early in life.

2. Individualism versus Collectivism

In individualist society, the interests of the individual prevail over the interests of the group. In contrast, the interests of the group prevail over the interests of the individual in collectivist society, and the concept of "we" (or in-group) is the major source of one's identity. Individuals in collectivist society often grow up in an extended family, and "harmony" and "saving face" are important virtues. Families are very important in a collectivist society; therefore, selection of a marriage partner is often regarded as a crucial family event. As direct confrontation is considered rude and undesirable in a collectivist society, sojourners may face confusing encounters in terms of language usage, particularly for example, with the word "no" as Hofstede and Hofstede

(2005) discussed. The word *no* is seldom used because saying "no" is a confrontation; instead, "you may be right" or "we will think about it" are examples of polite ways of turning down a request. At the same time, the word *yes* should not necessarily be interpreted as a confirmation of approval. In Japan, for example, the word *yes* means merely "yes, I heard you," indicating maintenance of the line of communication. This cultural difference often causes huge miscommunication for sojourners especially if they come from a low-context cultural background, where the word is interpreted literally as an explicit code. As mentioned earlier, this kind of high-context communication is frequent in collectivist cultures whereas low-context communication is more typical for individualist cultures.

While obligations to the family in a collectivist society often mean shared financial resources, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) explained the case of the Netherlands and the United States, which have Individualism Index scores of 80 (Netherlands) and 91 (U.S.) as shown in Table 2-1 above:

> In the Netherlands, as in many other individualist Western European countries, the government contributes substantially to the living expenses of students. In the 1980s the system was changed from an allowance to the parents to an allowance directly to the students themselves which stressed their independence. Boys and girls were now treated as independent economic actors from age eighteen onward. In the United States (*which scores a little higher on the Individualism Index score than the Netherlands*) it is quite normal for students to pay for their own studies by getting temporary jobs and personal loans; without government support they,

too, are less dependent on their parents and not at all on more distant relatives (p. 87-88).

3. Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty Avoidance is defined as the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. A high ranking in Uncertainty Avoidance Index score reveals individuals in the society have low tolerance of uncertainty of ambiguity, and have a stronger need for predictability and for clear instructions or rules. The strong uncertainty avoidance sentiment can be summarized by "what is different is dangerous," while the weak uncertainty avoidance sentiment, on the contrary, is "what is different is curious" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 175). The Netherlands (53) and the U.S. (46) show medium levels of Uncertainty Avoidance compared to high index scores in Latin American, Latin European, and Mediterranean countries (from 112 for Greece to 67 for Ecuador) and some Asian countries, such as Japan (92), Korea (85), and Thailand (64).

4. Masculinity versus Femininity

According to Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) masculinity versus femininity category, a society is called *masculine* when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct, whereas it is called *feminine* when emotional gender roles overlap. In high masculine-scoring countries including Slovakia, Japan, Hungary, Austria, and Venezuela (from 110 for Slovakia to 73 for Venezuela), men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest and tender. In high feminine-scoring countries, such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden (from 16 for Denmark to 5 for Sweden), men and women's gender roles overlap and

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differentiation is not distinctive. With reference to the Masculinity Index scores of 62 in the U.S. and 14 in the Netherlands (see Table 2-1), the following illustrates how the different characteristics of masculinity and femininity in society influence children's behavior in school:

> Studies of schoolchildren in the U.S. asked boys and girls why they chose the games they played. Boys chose games allowing them to compete and excel; girls chose games for the fun of being together and for not being left out. Repeating these studies in the Netherlands, Dutch researcher Jacques van Rossum found no significant differences in playing goals between boys and girls; thinking he had made an error, he tried again, but with the same negative result. Child socialization in the feminine Dutch culture differs less between the sexes (Hofstede & Hofstede's, 2005, p. 130).

However, masculinity-femininity has been the most controversial among Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) five dimensions of national cultures due to its labeling and different values associated with these dimensions although the number and scope of validations of the dimension has continued to grow.

5. Long-Term Orientation (LTO) versus Short-Term Orientation (STO)

The fifth dimension indicates the fostering of virtues oriented toward long-term and further rewards-in particular, perseverance and thrift. The top six positions in Long-Term Orientation Index score are occupied by East Asian countries: China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, and South Korea (from 118 for China to 75 for South Korea). While countries with long-term orientations value saving and investment for the future, there are more social pressures toward spending and immediate profits in countries with

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short-term orientation values. The United States shows a significant Short-Term

Orientation Index score (29) compared to Thailand (56) and the Netherlands (44, see

Table 2-1). Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) stated that spending, not thrift, seems to have

been a U.S. value in the second part of the twentieth century, both at the individual and at

the governmental levels.

However, there is a major weakness in Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) fifth

dimension. Some aspects of long- term versus short-term orientation norms indicated in

this category are not clear. For example, while norms, such as "Respect for traditions,"

"Marriage is a moral arrangement," "Children should learn tolerance," and "Talent for

theoretical sciences," are indicated under the norms of STO, the opposite LTO norms

indicate "Respect for circumstances," "Marriage is a pragmatic arrangement," and

"Talent for applied, concrete sciences" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 212-217). As an

individual from an LTO cultural background myself, tradition, tolerance, and theoretical

science seem to be more related to LTO cultural values, while the norms of pragmatism,

being able to adjust to current circumstances and focus on applied science seem to be

more related to STO culture. Further critical analysis and in-depth discussions are

needed in this regard.

In the two Global Seminars examined for this study, U.S.-American students went

either to Southeast Asia (northeast Thailand and Laos) or the Netherlands for study

abroad. While differences may vary depending on individual participants' personal and

family backgrounds, from the first day of arrival, study abroad participants typically

experience conflicting moments as they face cultures that do not necessarily share their

beliefs and value systems. Participants who study abroad where the host country has

significant cultural differences compared to their home country may encounter more critical moments that lead to reflection:

> Our meaning structures are transformed through reflection, defined here as attending to the grounds (justification) for one's beliefs. We reflect on the unexamined assumptions of our beliefs when the beliefs are not working well for us, or where old ways of thinking are no longer functional. We are confronted with a disorienting dilemma which serves as a trigger for reflection. Reflection involves a critique of assumptions to determine whether the belief, often acquired through cultural assimilation in childhood, remains functional for us as adults. We do this by critically examining its origins, nature, and consequences (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223).

Considering the general characteristics of low-context U.S.-American cultural background and communication style, U.S.-American participants who study abroad in Asia may experience more critical moments compared to their counterparts who study abroad in Europe as many European countries share low-context cultural backgrounds with that of the U.S., while many Asian societies are based on a high-context cultural background (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede et al., 2010).

Intercultural Relations Theory: Cultural Intensity Factors

Paige (1993) presents a set of factors that can raise the level of psychological intensity associated with intercultural experiences. He posits that these factors can predict which types of intercultural experiences might be the "most challenging, difficult, and stressful" (p. 4) for sojourners during their study abroad programs. These ten cultural intensity factors include: cultural differences; ethnocentrism; cultural immersion; cultural

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isolation; language; prior intercultural experience; expectations; visibility and invisibility; status; and power and control (Paige, 1993). Theoretically, Paige's work is consistent with that of Hall (1956) and Hofstede et al. (2010) when he posits that the degree of cultural difference between host and home country can be one of the significant intensity factors that influence a sojourner's intercultural experience while abroad. The intensity factors index is a tool for evaluating the psychological intensity of intercultural environments.

Several anecdotal interviews indicate study abroad participants experience different intensity factors depending on various study abroad circumstances including the specific cultural background and communication style of the host country, individual participant's characteristics and personal background (e.g., third-culture kid[10], heritage seekers, etc.), and participant's ethnic background. For example, one of the most intense factors for one African-American student who studied abroad in Asia was "visibility" due to the homogeneous ethnic background of the host country. When students coming from a low-power-distance cultural background (such as Austria, Denmark, and Israel) study abroad in a country with a high-power-distance culture (such as Malaysia, Philippines, and Arab countries), "status" and "power and control" may become the most stressful intensity factors.

Redmond and Bunyi's (1993) study showed how cultural distance influences sojourner's stress level concerning cultural adaptation. Their research investigated how participants' stress management is related to the following six factors: intercultural

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[10] Third culture kids (TCK) are those who grew up in an expatriate environment due to their parents' occupations. They often develop a third cultural identity, which is integrated from their parents' culture and host culture. The research showed that the majority of TCK student' intercultural sensitivity levels maintained in Acceptance or Cognitive Adaptation stages of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Straffon, 2003).

competence, cultural empathy, adaptation, language proficiency, knowledge of the host culture, and social integration. The self-reported measurement from 644 international students who studied abroad in a U.S. university indicate that students from Western European countries which more commonly share cultural and linguistic backgrounds with the U.S. reported less difficulty in intercultural communication and adaptation than students from Asian countries which less commonly share cultural and linguistic backgrounds with the U.S.

Ward and Kennedy's (1999) study found a significant relationship between cultural distance and sojourner's sociocultural adaptation. Research revealed that the greater the cultural distance was between the sojourners' culture and the host culture, the greater the sojourners' sociocultural difficulties. From the survey of 115 study abroad undergraduate students, Malaysian and Singaporean students experienced higher sociocultural difficulties in New Zealand than did Malaysian students in Singapore. In their later study with longitudinal samples, Ward and Kennedy (1999) also found that cultural similarity is positively related to a sojourner's intercultural adaptation.

In contrast, Martin et al.'s (1995) study revealed different results from the perspectives of the expectancy value model. As mentioned earlier, the location and its cultural context can be one of the major factors influencing a sojourner's study abroad experience and cultural adaptation. Martin et al.'s (1995) factor analysis results indicated that 'location of the sojourn' has the strongest effect on fulfillment/violation of expectation among other factors. The notion of expectancy lies at the core of the communication process, and more importantly, these expectations are then used as criteria for evaluating experiences (Martin et al., 1995). Martin et al. (1995) conducted a

pre-departure expectation questionnaire and a post-return survey with 248 U.S.-American students. This study was conducted based on the expectancy value model, which suggests that it is the fulfillment of expectations about the sojourn that leads to positive evaluations and ultimately to satisfactory sojourner adaptation; violations of expectations lead to negative evaluation of the sojourn and problematic adaptation.

In contrast to the results of Ward and Kennedy (1999) and Redmond and Bunyi (1993), Martin et al. (1995) highlighted the interesting point that U.S.-American students who attended programs in England tended to have their expectations violated more negatively than those sojourning in other countries in 3 of the 13 areas: language, climate, and coursework. While U.S.-American sojourners often expect England to be very similar to their home country, in fact they confront very different cultural experiences including even differences in language. This phenomenon is also observed through students' journals from the *Maximizing Study Abroad* course at the University of Minnesota. I have been teaching this course since 2005 at the University of Minnesota and corresponding with study abroad students via on-line journals. In contrast to students' pre-departure assumption that language and culture would be similar to those of their home country [therefore making it easier to adapt in the host country], students who go abroad to England, Australia, and New Zealand often experience unexpected culture shock that includes shock relating to language practice. "This calls into question an assumption in the literature that the more similar the host and native culture, the less difficulty experienced by sojourners" (Martin et al., 1995, p. 103). Martin et al.'s study offers a greater contribution due to its longitudinal approach. While longitudinal study

has critical importance in study abroad research, it is unfortunate that there are very few longitudinal investigations in the current literature.

The expectancy value model reemphasizes the importance of well prepared pre-departure programs for study abroad participants. In order to avoid unrealistic expectations and subsequent negative violation of them, it is important to provide a realistic view of the host country in the pre-departure program since most students lack a good understanding of what to expect (La Brack, 1993; Martin et al., 1995). While the expectancy value model assumes that unmet expectations will always have negative consequences, study abroad participants' expectations may produce either negative or positive evaluations and outcomes, which are explained by expectancy violation theory (Burgoon, 1992). It is interesting that the majority of research based on this theory has focused on *nonverbal behavior*. Research has identified expectations of appropriate nonverbal behavior (in the U.S.), and investigated how individuals are evaluated negatively or positively when they violate these expectations, such as "standing too close" or "touching too much" (Burgoon, 1992). Culture is communication (Hall, 1956). Nonverbal communication, including eye contact, sense of personal distance/space, touching, use of pausing and silence, and concept of time play a critical role in intercultural communication, especially in high-context cultures where "reading between the lines" is regarded as a basic and important communication skill.

A recent study from The Georgetown Consortium Project (Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, 2009) shows interesting results concerning the relationship between study abroad participants' change of intercultural sensitivity score (measured by Intercultural Development Inventory [IDI]) and cultural distance of participants' home

country and host country. These are discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, but their findings are closely connected with the importance of critical reflection in transformative learning. Based on this study, Vande Berg et al. (2009) suggest an on-site mentor, who could help students to reflect both similarity and dissimilarity between their host culture and home culture.

Through his qualitative case study using a background questionnaire, oral interview, writing samples, focus groups, observation, and formal and informal interviews, Bacon (2002) examined the variables which make study abroad successful. In contrast to what is generally assumed, he found that language competence alone does not guarantee success. Rather, success came through difficult encounters with the host culture, involving new values and behavior that allowed the student to learn the rules of the culture and then perform in that culture. Students who study abroad in a host country which has different cultural values may experience more stress and have more difficult encounters, yet at the same time they may achieve more learning overall. The result of Bacon's (2002) study is supported by Vande Berg et al.'s (2009) results from the recent Georgetown Consortium Project.

Summary

The five theoretical approaches discussed in this section - intergroup contact, transformative learning, intercultural development, intercultural communications, and intercultural relations - provide the conceptual framework for this study. Constructive intergroup contacts during study abroad programs are relevant to transformative learning, such as reducing prejudice and stereotyping from the opportunity to interact with and learn from different people, cultures, and communication styles, which can only be

provided by well-designed quality study abroad program. The DMIS conceptualizes the intercultural development process of movement from ethnocentric to ethnorelative worldviews. Hall's (1956) concept of high- and low-context culture and Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) Dimension of Culture Scales provide an intercultural communication frame of reference for understanding how different cultures in Thailand (higher-context culture) and the Netherlands (lower-context culture) influenced study abroad participants' social contact and their transformational learning in this study. Paige (1993) incorporates many of these concepts into an intercultural relations framework and provides a model that can be used to explain how culture is being experienced in psychological terms and what that means for sojourner adjustment, culture learning, and intercultural development.

This is the first study to examine how Paige's (1993) cultural intensity factors are influenced by different cultures, particularly regarding high- and low-context communication styles. This study explores the differences in the cross-cultural intensity factors reported by participants (U.S.-American students from low-context cultural background) in the Southeast Asian (Thailand and Laos) study abroad program and those who participated in the European (Netherlands) program. By assessing the impact of two short-term case studies, this research meets the critical needs of identifying how to improve the quality of short-term study abroad programs and what the major components of successful short-term study abroad programs as perceived by participants are. The results of this study will provide valuable insights and recommendations which could be potentially applied to developing quality effective short-term study abroad curricula and programs. The next chapter presents the research design utilized in the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of two short-term study abroad programs, one in Europe (Netherlands) and the other in Asia (Thailand and Laos). The two programs were selected in order to analyze differences in the effect of participating in a study abroad program in a culture that is more similar to the student's home culture compared to one that is different. In this chapter the research design utilized in the study is presented.

Use of Mixed Methods

In social science research related to human behavior, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data often contributes to the depth and rigor of the research results (Bogdan & Bicklen, 2007, Creswell, 2009). Especially in the intercultural field, the optimal way to assess intercultural competence is through a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures (Deardorff, 2004; 2006). Both quantitative and qualitative methods of research have their own strengths and weaknesses; therefore, combining them allows the researcher to compensate for their weaknesses and draw on their strengths (Bryman, 2006). 'Mixed methods' (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), sometimes called "multi-methods (Brannen, 1992), multi-strategy (Bryman, 2004), or mixed methodology (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) research" (Crewswell & Plano Clark, 2008, p. 254), provide the overall methodological approach for this study. Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989, 2008) emphasized five justifications for combining quantitative and qualitative research: 1) triangulation highlights convergence, corroboration, and correspondence of results from different methods; 2) complementarity seeks elaboration,

enhancement, illustration, and clarification of the results from one method with the results from another; 3) development seeks to use the results from one method to help develop or inform the other method; 4) initiation seeks the discovery of paradox and contradiction, new perspectives of frameworks, the recasting of questions or results from one method with questions or results from the other method; and 5) expansion seeks to extend the breadth and range of enquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components. Building on Greene et al. (1989), Bryman (2006) developed a comprehensive list of sixteen reasons for integrating qualitative and quantitative research, including triangulation or greater validity, offset, completeness, explanation, unexpected results, credibility, context, illustration, utility or improving the usefulness of findings, confirm and discover, diversity of views, and enhancement of the research.

By integrating quantitative and qualitative methods, one can carry out a more comprehensive enquiry. Mixed methods "can add depth and further explanation to findings generated by one or the other method" (Bryman, 2008, p. 263). Bryman further explained that, by employing both approaches, a researcher is able to "enhance the integrity of their findings" (p.263). Context and Illustration are rationales applied in this research: "combination is rationalized in terms of qualitative research providing contextual understanding coupled with either generalizable, externally valid findings or broad relationships among variables uncovered through a survey" (Crewswell et al., 2008, p. 263) and "use of qualitative data to illustrate quantitative findings, often referred to as putting 'meat on the bones' of 'dry' quantitative findings" (Crewswell et al., 2008, p. 263).

Case Study Methodology

A comparative case study approach is utilized in this research. Whereas case studies can provide sound preliminary evidence in a natural and real-life context (Bacon, 2002), few case studies exist on study abroad, and comparative studies are rare in the study abroad literature. A case study involves the examination of the "particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (Patton, 2002, p. 297). The nature of case study supports the overall goal of this research to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences in the two study abroad sites. In addition, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) case study structure -"the problem, the context, the issues, and the lessons learned" (Creswell, 2007, p. 93) - supports the rationale of this research. Yin (2009) also stressed that the case study approach is particularly useful for answering why and how questions.

The two cases investigated for this study are the global seminar programs, *Understanding Southeast Asia* (in Thailand and Laos), and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam*. These global seminar programs are three-credit May/June session courses both led by University of Minnesota faculty. Prior to going abroad, students attend pre-departure orientations and are assigned readings and informed of program requirements. Once in country, students attend seminars during the mornings, while afternoons are devoted to field trips and/or independent research. Courses are often co-taught with professors and guest speakers from the host country. Both programs place a heavy emphasis on cultural immersion and numerous experiential field trips.

These two cases have been selected in this study for the following reasons. First, the two programs *Understanding Southeast Asia* and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam*

have enough similarities and differences to be utilized in a comparative case study. The two global seminars 1) have a similar time line (May/June three-week short-term program); 2) have a faculty-led format; 3) place a heavy focus on immersion; and 4) are non-language-based study abroad programs. At the same time, the two cases have distinct differences with regards to their host cultures. While the culture in the Netherlands is generally regarded as somewhat similar to U.S.-American participants' home culture, the culture in Thailand and Laos is generally regarded as more different (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede et al., 2010). The focus of the analysis was be based on: 1) the question of whether there are differences in impact on the development of intercultural sensitivity; and 2) participants' cross-cultural intensity factors (Paige, 1993) in the effect of participating in a study-abroad program in a culture that is similar to the student's home culture compared to a relatively different one.

Second, one of the objectives of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of two short-term study abroad programs and identify factors that render these two short-term study abroad programs effective in the perceptions of participants. The two selected case studies were suggested by the University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center as among the most well-designed short-term study abroad programs available at the university. While these two programs are popular, to date, there have been no empirical research studies looking at whether or not these programs are indeed achieving the intended outcomes with regards to students' intercultural competence and impact after return. Therefore, identifying components of the study abroad programs that students find valuable with regards to their intercultural learning and impact will help inform policy and practice to further improve such programs. The next section discusses the

research design and instrument, participants, detailed data-collection procedures, summary of data analysis, and the limitations of this study in regards to the methodology.

Research Design and Instruments

The mixed-methods research design (Creswell, 2009) in this study includes quantitative measures from 1) pre- and post-survey questionnaires; 2) pre- and post-sojourn assessments using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI); and 3) qualitative data obtained from interviews.

Pre- and Post-Survey Questionnaire

A survey questionnaire was utilized as one of the primary quantitative measures in this study because "it provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population" (Creswell, 2003, p. 153). While researchers often generalize or make claims about a population from a sample, the entire *population* of 46 students in two short-term study abroad programs participated and completed both the pre- and post-surveys in this research.

The pre- and post-trip self-report surveys were conducted before participants' departure in April/May 2008 and after participants completed their program in June 2008. The items in the survey drew upon previous major studies in the field, including *Maximizing Study Abroad* (Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2006), the Study Abroad for Global Engagement (SAGE) research project (Paige, Fry, Stallman, Josić, & Jon, 2009), the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) *Study Abroad and Its Transformative Power* study (Fry, Paige, Jon, Dillow, & Nam, 2009), research on study abroad program characteristics (Engle & Engle, 2004), and a study of cultural

intensity factors (Paige, 1993). The survey questions include basic demographics, reasons for choosing a short-term program, major experiences during the program, participants' attitudes toward international affairs before and after study abroad, impact of study abroad on participants' behaviors and decision making including educational plans and future career paths, and ten cultural intensity factors.

Paige (1993) presented a set of factors that can raise the level of psychological intensity for sojourners: cultural differences, ethnocentrism, language, cultural immersion, cultural isolation, prior intercultural experience, expectations, visibility and invisibility, status, and power and control. This dissertation is the first study to apply Paige's (1993) theoretical model of ten cultural stress factors to short-term study abroad participants. The questionnaire also includes fifteen items to measure the impact of the program on participants' personal and professional development (both in pre- and post-survey questionnaires with a coefficient α, a measure of reliability, of .78) in order to discover how their attitudes may change before and after the program (Nam & Fry, 2007). Both the survey and interview protocols were reviewed and examined by experts at the University of Minnesota to confirm their face validity.

This study was conducted with the approval of the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board (IRB[11]). All participants signed informed consent forms, and were free to withdraw from the research at any time. The survey contains one welcome page to secure consent, pages containing the entire survey questionnaire, and a thank you page with an invitation to a further interview and participants' preferred contact methods in case they agreed to participate in a follow-up interview. The survey includes both closed questions (Likert-scale and yes/no questions) and open-ended questions requesting

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[11] IRB Code Number: 0804E30223

additional comments at the end of each section. A pre-notice e-mail was sent out to

participants a week prior to the survey, and the reminder e-mail notice followed.

Pre- and Post-trip Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is used in this study to assess the

extent to which a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program can affect the intercultural

sensitivity of participants. IDI is a 50-item theory-based instrument that measures

intercultural sensitivity as conceptualized in Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of

Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). As discussed in Chapter 2, the DMIS conceptualizes

intercultural sensitivity as a developmental phenomenon that can be described in terms of

six distinctly different intercultural worldviews, three of which are ethnocentric (Denial,

Defense, and Minimization) and three of which are ethnorelative (Acceptance,

Adaptation, and Integration). The IDI generates scores for Denial, Defense,

Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation, in addition to an overall measure of

intercultural sensitivity, which is referred to as the Developmental Score (DS). The IDI

was selected in this study because as a widely used instrument in the intercultural field, it

has a strong theoretical foundation and proven validity and reliability (Hammer, Bennett,

& Wiseman, 2003) in measuring intercultural sensitivity.

The IDI should not be confused with the DMIS developmental model itself. The

IDI does not define the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity; instead, it is an empirical

measure of the constructs identified in the DMIS (Hammer, 2009). According to

Hammer's (2009) revised IDI version 3 manual, "there are some aspects of the DMIS

that the IDI measures, however, which differ from the earlier conceptualizations of

intercultural sensitivity as discussed by Bennett (1986, 1993)" (p. 26). For example, the

Denial and Defense comprise one factor that indicates a worldview that ranges from an emphasis on Denial to a focus on Defense. Similarly, Acceptance and Adaptation comprise a single factor that indicates a worldview ranging from more focus on Acceptance to more emphasis on Adaptation. Because the empirical results of IDI research support the theoretical constructs described in the DMIS, the factors of Denial/Defense and Acceptance/Adaptation support the major distinction between ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism as defined in the DMIS (Hammer, 2009). There is a strong correlation between the Denial and Defense (r= .83) and between Acceptance and Adaptation (r= .64). Reversal is positively correlated with Denial (.36) and with Defense (.38) and not significantly correlated with Acceptance (.01) or Adaptation (.12) (Hammer, 2009).

While Minimization is defined as an ethnocentric stage in the DMIS, it is measured as a separate factor by IDI as a "transition from the more ethnocentric to the more ethnorelative worldview" (Hammer, 2009, p. 26). Minimization is not significantly correlated with either the more Ethnocentric orientations (Denial, Defense, Reversal) or Ethnorelative orientations (Acceptance, Adaptation), suggesting Minimization exists as a transitional orientation. In addition, Hammer (2009) explained that Integration is not measurable with the IDI research methods employed so far. Table 3-1 below provides the description of each stage and the scores generated by the IDI instrument.

Table 3-1. *Description of Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) scales*

IDI Scale	Denial Defense (D/D) and Reversal (R)	D/D/R measures a worldview that simplifies and/or polarizes cultural difference. It ranges from disinterest in cultural difference and avoidance of interaction with cultural differences (denial) to a tendency to view the world in terms of "us" and "them", where "us" is superior (defense). R measures a worldview that reverses the "us" and "them" polarization, where "them" is superior. It is a "mirror image"
Score	55-84.9	

		of the denial/defense orientation.
IDI Scale	Minimization (M)	M measures a worldview that highlights cultural commonality and universal values through an emphasis on 1) similarity (either physically/psychologically or spiritually/philosophically)-a tendency to assume that people from other cultures are basically "like us" or 2) universalism- a tendency to apply one's own cultural values to other cultures.
Score	85-114.9	
IDI Scale	Acceptance and Adaptation (A/A)	A/A/ measures a worldview that can comprehend and accommodate complex cultural difference. It can range from a tendency to recognize patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures (acceptance) to a tendency to shift perspective and behavior according to cultural context (adaptation).
Score	115-145	

In-depth Interview

After conducting the pre- and post-survey and IDI, a follow-up in-depth interview was conducted as a qualitative measure in order to obtain rich contextual data from participants. In the mixed-methods design, qualitative data are used to supplement, validate, explain, illuminate, or reinterpret quantitative data gathered from the same subject or site (Bogdan & Bicklen, 2007). Interview data help explain possible gaps from the quantitative survey measures and provide contextual understanding that often has a limitation only explained by quantitative numbers (Patton, 2002).

Interviews were conducted with semi-structured questions that emphasized an open-ended approach, providing interviewees with freedom to reflect on their study abroad experience. The following key information was elicited by the interview protocol: 1) how their goals and expectations were met; 2) which specific characteristics of the study abroad program were most helpful; 3) one example (critical incident) or experience that best captured participants' study abroad experience; and 4) the overall impact of study abroad on participants' professional and personal development.

Participants

The participants in this research were traditional, college-aged students at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. To allow maximum variance of participants in the study, there was no restriction on participants' major or age. Therefore, the participants included students from diverse majors and age groups. All participants were undergraduate students. This section presents the summary of participant profile derived from the quantitative and qualitative data.

Summary of Participant Profiles: Quantitative

Each program, *Understanding Southeast Asia* and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam,* included 23 participants, and all 46 participants completed both pre- and post-surveys. Thus, the data analyzed in this study are actual population, not sample values (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973). While all 46 participants responded to the IDI pre- and post-test, only the final 39 sets of pre- and post-IDI data were utilized because there were seven sets of incomplete IDI post-test data.

Of the 46 participants, 39.2% were male and 60.9% were female (Table 3-2). Interestingly 52.2% of the *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants were male whereas the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program had only 26.1% male participants. The latter is consistent with the common gender pattern of female overrepresentation in existing study abroad programs (IIE, 2008a).

Table 3-2. *Respondents' Gender*

	Total Participants (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)
Male	39.1%	52.2%	26.1%
Female	60.9%	47.8%	73.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%

The average age of the participants from both programs was 21 years old (Table 3-3), with a range from 19 to 23. By college level, the sample included 17 sophomores, 15 juniors, and 13 seniors (Table 3-4).

Table 3-3. *Respondents' Average Age*

	Total Participants (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)
Mean	21	21	21
SD	.93	.92	.97
Min.	19	19	19
Max.	23	22	23

Table 3-4. *Respondents' School Year*

	Total Participants (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)
Sophomore	17 *(37.0%)*	10 *(43.5%)*	7 *(30.4%)*
Junior	15 *(32.6%)*	7 *(30.4%)*	8 *(34.8%)*
Senior	13 *(28.3%)*	6 *(26.1%)*	7 *(30.4%)*
Other	1 *(2.2%)*	0 *(0%)*	1 *(4.3%)*
Total	46	23	23

A total of 14 participants were persons of color (30.4%), and 32 were white (69.6%). While all participants from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program were white, more than half of the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program participants (60.9%, 14 out of 23) were persons of color. As for majors, 37 participants (80.4%) were arts majors and nine participants (19.6%) were science majors, reflecting the lack of science major participants in the current study abroad trend (IIE, 2008c). In the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program, 18 participants (78.3%) were majoring in arts, and 5 (21.7%) in science; and in the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program, 19 participants (82.6%) were majoring in arts, and 4 (17.4%) in science. Coincidently, the number of participants

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with previous experience was the same for both programs: 18 participants (78.3%) from

each program had experienced previous international travel and five participants (21.7%)

from each program had a previous experience of living abroad. Only one participant

from each program had a previous study abroad experience. The majority of program

participants (71.1%, 33 out of 46) spoke English as a native language.

Summary of Participant Profiles: Qualitative

This section presents the interview process and the summary of 12 interview

participants' profiles. When the post-survey was conducted in June 2008, each interested

participant was asked to provide their name and contact information for a follow-up face-

to-face interview after return to the home country. While 24 out of 46 participants agreed

to be interviewed, a total of 12 participants actually participated in an interview (five

participants from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program and seven from the

Understanding Southeast Asia program). Table 3-5 presents the details of interviewee

profiles.

Table 3-5. *Interviewee Profiles*

Case #	Ethnicity	Gender	Age	School Year	Major
S 1*	Caucasian-American	Male	20	Sophomore	Political Science / Philosophy (Minor: Leadership)
S 2	Caucasian-American	Female	20	Junior	Mechanical Engineering / Chinese (Minor: Russian)
S 3	Caucasian-American (German, British, and Irish ethnic background)	Male	22	Junior	Political Science/ Art History (Minor: Global Politics)
S 4	Hmong-American	Female	20	Sophomore	Child Psychology (Minor: Family Social Science)

S 5	Hmong-American	Male	22	5th year Senior	Kinesiology
S 6	Hmong-American	Female	20	Junior	Sociology (Minor: Political Science)
S 7	American (German, Polish, French, English, Japanese, Filipino ethnic background)	Male	22	Senior	Fine Arts/Photograph
N 1	Caucasian-American (Norwegian background)	Female	19	Sophomore	Neuroscience
N 2	Caucasian-American (Irish-Scotch ethnic background)	Female	22	4th year Junior	Music Education (Minor: Spanish)
N 3	Caucasian-American (Irish-Scotch ethnic background)	Female	21	Senior	Genetics, Microbiology
N 4	Caucasian-American	Female	20	Sophomore	Journalism (Minor: Leadership)
N 5	Caucasian-American (German, Polish, French, Austrian ethnic background)	Female	20	Sophomore	Retail Merchandising (Minor: Mass Communication)

* S: Interviewees from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program
 N: Interviewees from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program

Data Collection Procedures

Pre-survey and pre-IDI were delivered during the pre-departure orientation in

spring 2008. I visited the first pre-departure orientation of each program, met

participants to introduce myself, and explained the research project. This also provided

an opportunity to get to know each participant, and to build rapport and relationships.

For the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program, the pre-survey was conducted on April

25, 2008 during the second orientation session, and the pre-IDI was administered on May

2, 2008 during the third orientation session. The *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam*

program only had two orientation sessions; therefore both pre-survey and pre-IDI were

conducted on April 28, 2008 during the second orientation session.

Both post-survey and post-IDI were distributed by program faculty leaders of

each program on the last day of the class in June 2008 in the host country. The post-

survey also included a section where respondents were invited to participate in the

follow-up interview after their return. Those who chose to participate in the interview

were asked to provide their name and contact information.

To provide enough time for participants to digest and reflect on their various

experiences after returning from study abroad, interviews were conducted a few months

later after their return, during November 2008 and February 2009. Each interview lasted

an average of an hour and a half (ranging from 60 to 110 minutes), and all were recorded

with a digital recorder and with participants' permission. The data have been kept safely

on a password encrypted computer per IRB guidelines.

Data Analysis

This section is designed to examine how the research questions are answered

based on the data obtained. While it is useful to have a mix of both quantitative and

qualitative data, the two approaches are based on different assumptions. Therefore,

studies with mixed methods often utilize both descriptive statistics and qualitative

findings (Bogdan & Bicklen, 2007). The purpose of this study is to learn from the

findings from two particular short-term study abroad programs. Due to the small number

of total participants and the nature of mixed methods used in this study, the quantitative

analysis is used only for heuristic purposes and to generate insights and understanding,

not for statistical generalization (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973). The quantitative data analysis, including both survey and IDI, was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Interview data were transcribed, coded using designated themes, and analyzed for emergent themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Grbich, 2007; Patton, 2002). The following presents a summary of how each research question was analyzed in this study.

Summary of Data Analysis by Research Question

Research question one for this study was "what are the major program components that participants indicate are most valuable from their short-term study abroad experience?" This question was explored using both the quantitative post-survey questionnaire and the qualitative interview. Specifically, the quantitative survey question focused on the major program characteristics that participants perceived to have enhanced their learning (Please see Appendix C, Post-survey Question 8). Responses to this question were collected using a four-point scale; 1) none, 2) little, 3) some, and 4) a lot. By multiplying the scores by the number of respondents for each item and dividing by the total number of respondents, the mean scores for each category were generated (see Table 4-2 in Chapter 4). All 46 participants participated and responded to this question.

Following the qualitative data analysis procedures recommended by Bogdan & Biklen (2007), the qualitative data obtained from 12 in-depth interviews were analyzed based on 1) themes that were common in responses from total interviewees; and 2) themes that reflect the insightful experience or the depth of the program with supporting quotes. While the frequency was counted, this was not a primary criterion used in this

study to identify themes. Several steps were taken to derive emerging key themes from the interview data. First, both interview notes and transcripts were carefully reviewed, and each interviewee's responses were summarized. Then, several emerging key words and concepts that appeared in each interviewee response were highlighted.   From these words and concepts, several major themes were finally derived.   If an interviewee answered with multiple responses, each response was categorized independently. Therefore, the unit of each categorization was each response from each interviewee (Fry et al., 2009).

Research question 2-1 was "in what ways, if any, do participants differ in reports of their experiences in an Asian (Thailand and Laos) sojourn compared to those in a European (Netherlands) sojourn?" This question was answered by analyzing two post-survey questions (Please see Appendix C, Post-survey Questions 1 and 2). Question 1 focused on participants' overall experience in each program by asking "To what degree did you have an opportunity to do any of the following while studying abroad?" Responses for this question were collected using a four-point scale; 1) not at all, 2) very little, 3) to some degree, and 4) to a large degree. In order to observe participants' most significant experiences, only the responses which indicated "to a large degree" were selected for the analysis. As a result, the following scores were re-coded:

Not at all/Very little/To some degree   0

To a large degree   1

The results are presented based on the rank order of participants' responses. To examine if there is a statistically significant variation in ways participants differed in reports of their experiences in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program compared to

the *Ethnical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program, Fisher's Exact Test (Howell, 2007) was performed. Howell (2007) recommends using the Fisher's Exact Test for the analysis of 2 x 2 tables because it does not require the assumption that the test statistic is represented by a continuous Chi-Square distribution which is usually not met for 2 x 2 tables. As discussed earlier, the statistical analysis used here is not for statistical inference, but to generate insights (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973).

Question 2 looks at how individual participants spent their free time by asking "As best as you can recall, please divide 100% among the following choices describing how you spent your free time in the program (while not in class or completing other academic responsibilities)." The mean percentage of how participants spent their free time was calculated. While all 46 respondents participated, only 40 (22 from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program and 18 from the Ethical *Tolerance in Amsterdam* program) completed this question.

Research question 2-2 is: "what are the similarities and differences in the cross-cultural stress factors reported by participants in the Asian (Thailand and Laos) study abroad program and those who participated in the European (Netherlands) program?" This question was answered by analyzing two post- survey questions. Question 3 (Please see Appendix C, Post-survey) is: how similar in general participants felt the host culture was to the home culture. Descriptive quantitative data analysis was used to generate the mean scale of participants' responses on a scale of 1 'very similar' to 10 'very dissimilar.' Further, participants' responses were analyzed for Paige's (1993) ten cultural intensity factors. Question 7 in post-test asks about participants' cultural intensity experience utilizing Paige's (1993) ten cultural intensity factors. Further, a t-test between

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the two groups (*Understanding Southeast Asia* and *Ethnical Tolerance in Amsterdam*) was conducted to examine the different conditions between the two programs in addition to the descriptive quantitative data analysis comparing mean scale on a scale of 1 'least stressful' to 10 'most stressful.' All 46 participants completed this question. The qualitative interview data that provided the insightful depth of participants' experience with regard to this topic were also added. The interview data help explain findings of the quantitative survey analyses and provide contextual understanding uncovered through the survey (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2008).

Research question 3 was "what, if any, are the significant differences in IDI scores when comparing pre-sojourn and post-sojourn results for the participants? Do the results vary by country (Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands)? What accounts for any differences found? What conditions contribute to a possible increase in a participant's IDI score?"

The IDI software provides participants' Perceived Scores (PS) (how participants rate themselves) in addition to the Developmental Scores (DS) (how the IDI rates participants) (Hammer & Bennett, 2002; Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, & DeJaeghere the, 2003). In this study, the actual DS scores were used and analyzed due to the general tendency towards inflated PS scores (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Jackson, 2008). To analyze the differences in IDI shifts from pre-sojourn to post-sojourn, a DS change was calculated. In addition to the visual graphic figures (see Figure 4-3 to 4-6 in Chapter 4), the numeric figure of overall summary of participants' IDI score change between stages and within a stage from each program was also provided (see Table 4-8 in Chapter 4). In order to look at the differences by country (Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands), I

examined the comparison of each participant's pre-IDI score and post-IDI score for each program. In addition, the group mean and the percentage of IDI DS across the sample were reported to provide the overall picture.

While all 46 respondents participated and completed the IDI pre- and post-test, there were seven missing data sets in IDI post-test data. Therefore, the final 39 sets of pre- and post-IDI data (21 from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program and 18 from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program) were used. To explain the differences found in the results and the conditions that contribute to a possible increase in a participant's IDI score, qualitative interview data were utilized. The analysis of interview data provides contextual information that potentially reveals why individuals may or may not have shown significant changes in various sub-scales of their IDI scores.

The last research question was "what, if any, influence did short-term study abroad have on participants' professional and personal development?" Both quantitative surveys and qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted to answer this question. For the quantitative data, fifteen items about participants' attitudes toward future professional and personal goals were asked in the pre-survey (Please see Appendix B, Question 8: "How likely or unlikely are you to do the following in the future?") and the same questions were asked after participants' return from the three-week study abroad program (Please see Appendix C, post-survey Question 5). The influence of short-term study abroad experience was observed by asking whether they would like to 1) take (more) courses related to international affairs; 2) learn another language(s); 3) pursue a major related to international affairs; 4) pursue a career in the international field; 5) pursue graduate study in the U.S.; 6) pursue graduate study abroad; 7) work abroad in the future;

8) travel abroad; 9) study abroad; 10) make international friends; 11) date someone from a different culture; 12) marry someone from a different culture; 13) live in another country; 14) try international food; and 15) work with international colleagues. Responses for this question were collected using a four-point scale: 1) very unlikely, 2) unlikely, 3) likely, and 4) very likely.

To look at how study abroad experience influenced participants' responses, any positive changes from pre-test to post-test were coded as +1 for the influence score; and any negative changes from the pre-test to post-test were coded as -1for the influence score. In ordinal scale, "nothing is implied about the difference between points on the scale" (Howell, 2002, p. 7). Therefore, regardless of how many steps the participants moved from the pre-test to post-test, all the positive moves were coded as +1 and all the negative moves were coded as -1 in order to avoid any issues transferring the ordinal scale into the directional influence score (personal communication with Dr. Michael Rodriguez, October 19, 2009). For example, respondents who answered "1) very unlikely" in pre-test and "2) unlikely" in post-test versus respondents who answered "1) very unlikely" in pre-test and "4) very likely" in post-test were all coded as +1. Likewise, respondents who answered "4) very likely" in pre-test and "1) very unlikely" in post-test, for example, versus respondents who answered "4) very likely" in pre-test and "3) likely" in post-test were all coded as -1. Those whose answer was not changed from the pre-test to the post-test were coded as 0 for the influence score. These results are representative for these two groups. Because these findings are based on descriptive statistics, tests to see if the amount of change is statistically significant were not run because1) the data were for a complete population; 2) there were a small number of

participants; and 3) there was no control group to account for other confounding variables (Dwyer, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Yachimowicz, 1987; Hirschi & Selvin, 1973). A total of 45 participants (22 from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program and 23 from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program) responded to this question. Further, the in-depth qualitative interview data were analyzed to provide the insights of the participants. Based on the theme analyses that were common in responses from all 12 interviewees, four emerging key themes were analyzed and discussed.

In addition to the deductive approach based on the research questions discussed above, an inductive approach was also utilized for the qualitative data analysis. Patton (2002) introduces an analytic induction approach, the quest for new emerging themes after beginning with a theory-derived hypothesis. Analytic induction was used in this study to discuss any additional emergent themes presented in the rich qualitative data in addition to those addressed in the research questions. The next chapter presents the findings of this research based on the data analysis described above.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter consists of two parts: 1) data analysis for each research question and 2) additional findings. The first section presents the findings related to each research question and draws upon both the survey and the interview data. The second section discusses additional findings from the inductive qualitative interview analysis. The last part of the chapter presents the synthesized findings.

Before examining each research question, I would like to present the reasons for participants' selection of a short-term study abroad program among other program options. This provides valuable background and context for the data analysis of this chapter. As shown in Table 4-1 below, most participants selected the three-week program because the May-term schedule was appropriate for them. The second highest ranking reason given indicates that the program fit with participants' academic programs and majors.

Table 4-1. *Reasons in rank order for selecting a three-week short-term study abroad program*

Factors	Yes		No		Missing		Total N
	N	Valid %	N	Valid %	N	Valid %	
1. May-term time schedule was appropriate for me	44	100	0	0	2	0	46
2. Fit with my academic program/major	20	48.8	20	48.8	6	0	46
3. Financial constraints related to longer program	19	45.2	23	54.8	4	0	46
4. Did not want to leave home too long	18	41.9	24	55.8	4	0	46
5. Fears about threat/violence against North Americans, particularly post- 9/11	1	2.4	40	97.6	5	0	46

Findings by Research Question

This section presents the data analysis results according to each of the research questions which guide this study. The research questions were:

1. What are the major program components that participants indicate are most valuable from their short-term study abroad experience?

2-1: In what ways, if any, do participants differ in reports of their experiences in an Asian (Thailand and Laos) sojourn compared to those in a European (Netherlands) sojourn?

2-2: What are the similarities and differences in the cross-cultural stress factors reported by participants in the Asian (Thailand and Laos) study abroad program and those who participated in the European (Netherlands) program?

3: What, if any, are significant differences in the IDI scores when comparing pre-sojourn and post-sojourn results for the participants? Do the results vary by country (Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands)? What accounts for any differences found? What conditions contribute to a possible increase in participants' IDI scores?

4: What, if any, influence did short-term study abroad have on participants' professional and personal development?

This study follows the approach of Genzuk (2003), which strongly emphasizes the importance of using direct quotations to capture participants' views of their own experiences in their own words. In addition to the quantitative data from the survey analysis and IDI results, rich qualitative data with direct quotations from the participants are therefore incorporated.

Research Question 1: What are the major program components that participants indicate are most valuable from their short-term study abroad experience?

The purpose of the first research question is to learn about the major components that participants indicated as being most valuable from their short-term study abroad experience. This question was explored using both the quantitative post-survey questionnaire and the qualitative interviews. The quantitative survey question particularly focused on the major program characteristics that participants perceived to have enhanced their learning. Table 4-2 below shows the mean scores for each category from quantitative data analysis.

Table 4-2. *Participants' ratings of the degree to which program characteristics enhanced their learning (ranked by mean score)*

	Mean Score*		
	Total Participants (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)
1. Opportunity for cultural/experiential learning from field trips	3.6	3.9	3.3
2. Gaining knowledge of the target culture	3.2	3.3	3.1
3. On-site mentoring from faculty/program staff	3.1	3.3	2.8
4. Nature of course design	3.0	3.4	2.7
5. Nature of course assignments	3.0	3.2	2.7
6. Type of housing	2.8	2.9	2.7
7. Extent to which target language is used on-site	2.5	3.1	2.0
8. Gaining knowledge of the target language	2.4	2.9	2.0
9. Pre-departure orientations	2.2	2.4	1.9

 *Note: Score range from 1-4 (1: None; 2: Little; 3: Some; 4: A lot)

Participants from both programs indicated that the "opportunity for cultural/experiential learning from field trips" most enhanced their learning. Gaining knowledge of the target culture was demonstrated to be more important for participants than knowledge of the target language (the former rating second highest on the scale, compared to the latter, which was eighth). As discussed in the Georgetown Consortium study (Vande Berg et al., 2009), participant responses in this study also showed that the "on-site mentoring from faculty and program staff" is one of the key factors that enhance learning during study abroad (ranking third highest). For the *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants, the "nature of course design" (e.g., variety of experiences) was ranked second, more important than either the "amount of knowledge of target culture" or "on-site mentoring from faculty and program staff". Overall, the top two program characteristics that enhanced participants' learning during study abroad illustrate the importance of cultural learning and knowledge of the target culture.

The in-depth qualitative interview data are consistent with these quantitative findings. The qualitative data from 12 in-depth interviews revealed the following major factors that participants found most valuable about their three-week study abroad experience.

Enhancement of Intercultural Competence

The opportunity to enhance their intercultural competence was one of the major features that participants described as most valuable in the interviews. As emphasized by the above survey results (Table 4-2), the critical significance of cultural learning, much more than language, characterized the experience of studying abroad. As student S1 commented:

I wanted to be able to learn more how to interact with other cultures, that was my

main thing of being in a culture that's completely different from my own … and I

felt that was one of the goals I really achieved.

Participants stressed that they did not expect knowledge of the host culture to be more

important than knowledge of the host language. As participant S3 said: "I think the most

important thing that I have learned was the ability to interact with people there…

intercultural communication… it's more than the language . . . I felt it had more to do

with me dealing with the culture itself." Participant N5 commented: "If I would have

[understood] more about my culture and their culture, just how they're different, I think

that would have been a better experience for me." One journalism student realized the

importance of intercultural competence not only in general, but specifically in relation to

her major: "Understanding different cultures helps you become a better person and

definitely helps you become a better journalist . . .having an international experience as

an aspiring journalist was really helpful and beneficial for me."

With regard to the specific program characteristics, respondents indicated that

variety in the curriculum, and especially the learning opportunities provided through field

trips, were most helpful; in fact, this feature was ranked first in survey results (Table 4-2).

Variety and Depth of the Program

Opportunity for learning from field trips. Participants found that variety and

depth in the curriculum enhanced their learning. This includes various field trips to

different sites, having a number of guest speakers who are usually not accessible at the

home institution, experiencing a range of accommodation options during study abroad,

learning from in-depth debriefing and critical reflection, and having multiple

opportunities to interact with locals in different contexts and situations. As participant

N3 puts it, "I think the variety was the most important, most invaluable part of the

program. It wasn't just classroom; it was classroom and then going to different villages,

and different farms." In fact, field trips and the depth of the program curriculum were

described as among the most valuable aspects of study abroad by a majority of the

participants, who tended to speak at length concerning this issue:

> I liked this program because I was learning about the culture while I was in it
>
> which is so valuable … We took field trips as a class that I know I wouldn't have
>
> been able to do as a tourist or, probably, even as a person living there. When we
>
> went to the Red Light district, we got a tour from the woman who ran the
>
> Prostitute Information Centre. And we got to actually go inside a brothel! I
>
> wouldn't have got to do that as a person living there. I wouldn't have got to do it
>
> as a tourist... And that's just one example.

Another respondent elaborated on the experiential nature of the curriculum and how

deeply it impacted her:

> We learned about prostitution one day and we had a guest speaker who used to be
>
> a prostitute and then right after that, we got a tour of the Red Light District…so
>
> we got to see what we had just learned, and we definitely learned things that you
>
> wouldn't learn here about prostitution because we got to talk to people who used
>
> to be prostitutes. Because, before I went to Amsterdam, I was like, prostitution is
>
> bad, that's just awful, and then when I talked to these women, some of them were
>
> like, I wish I was still a prostitute and I'm like, what? What do you mean? How

can you say that? But they were explaining it and then it was also like you

respected them more.

It is clear from this and other comments that the field trip to the Red Light district

encouraged students to think about their own values, as well as those of other people, a

learning experience that may seldom occur in the classroom:

> When we got the tour, she was talking about how the doors for the window place,
> they only open from the inside, so no client can try to force their way in, so the
> women, the worker, has the control, and that was important for me to realize
> because I never thought of that. I just thought it was kind of anything goes, but
> it's not. They made it very clear that this was a business and the woman is the
> head of the business. She runs the business, she owns her body, and she says
> what's going on and how much and all that kind of stuff… if she runs it, she has
> control. So that became very clear to me from the prostitution information center.

> We got to go inside… and see a bedroom and we got to sit in the window chair,
> and actually, one of the girls sat in the chair, and while she was sitting in it, this
> guy walked by and he was trying to take a picture of her… I mean, not only we
> learned what it's like to have people stare at you through a window, half naked or
> not, but then we also learned how bad you look if you're saying, I'm a tourist, I
> don't know better, I can do whatever I want… I thought I had a good grasp of
> what my opinions about prostitution were, but I got more confused, which is kind
> of a good thing because there's no concrete right or wrong about anything pretty
> much. So, getting that experience was definitely eye opening.

Participants appreciated the opportunity to read and learn about the subject matter, and then to meet with people working in that subject or industry, visit the sties, and have an in-depth debriefing session, as well as writing a reflective paper to follow up. Their descriptions and comments made it clear that the quality and nature of the field trips available to study abroad students is very different from the ones that regular tourists experience. This crucial difference springs not only from the variety of places visited, but also from the in-depth discussions and critical reflections that were part of the program curriculum and that turned field trips into valuable learning experiences. In another example, the participant quoted below described a visit to a black neighborhood in Amsterdam:

> It's a very multicultural city… but black to them is different to what we think
> black is… because to them, people who are black are from Morocco or Turkey...
> There's a different understanding of what black is, so it's a very generic term,
> actually, which I didn't realize… because to me, in our culture a person who is
> black is African American and that's just it… It was pretty cool to see that part of
> Amsterdam because, again, if you were a tourist, you wouldn't even go to that
> area and learn about it.

Many participants shared memorable moments of excitement related to the impact of being able to visit historical sites and identify real places that they had previously learned about from books or in class:

> When you learn about something at home… it's totally different from when
> you're there because I was in the museum… and it kind of chilled me because
> when I was in the museum and reading about the Jews being deported, it said, the

Jews were lined up on such-and-such street, and then I remembered I was looking

at my map earlier to find the museum and I had walked on that street, and that

was just weird to me because if I was at home, I wouldn't know what street that

is, if I just read that in a book. I just walked down that street and 40 whatever

years ago, people were being deported to these camps… I was so freaked out

about that!

Similarly, another student described the impact of visiting the site of a historical event:

And one time we did go to this memorial site, it's another place where Jews were

held before. It was like a place for them to stay before they were deported, and

we were standing in that area and looking at all the names of just Dutch Jews that

died, just Dutch, and it was so many people, and they were just from there. That

was incredible… I mean, it was a long time ago, but really, it wasn't that long

ago, and just to be there. It's crazy.

Many interviewees discussed how the most important learning came from just "being

there" as an informed study abroad participant. For example:

Obviously the course work was very important… but I think I learned more just

from being there. I mean, I learned a lot from the classroom, I did, but I feel like

it wasn't quite as much as just being there, or maybe just the combination of being

there plus learning about it.

Various guest speakers and instructors from host country. Participants indicated

that the opportunity to learn not only from the home institution instructors but also from

the local instructors and guest speakers who bring different perspectives was valuable and

enhanced their learning. As participant N1 commented: "I really liked the guest

speakers. We had a lot of different guest speakers and they were all just fascinating. It

was really cool to hear from people talking about their own city." It was clear that both

the local instructors and the guest speakers captured the attention of students and

enriched their learning experience:

> Carl was there and then we had Leon, a Dutch professor, and a lot of times we
>
> had guest speakers… we had former prostitute as a guest speaker... and we had
>
> one talk to us about gay and lesbian culture, and then we had one talk about
>
> immigration culture. And we had a lot of other guest speakers, too… We did a lot
>
> of walking tours around the city and Leon and other guest speakers did a lot of
>
> them.

> Leon? He is a professor from over there and he taught about the urban studies
>
> and development in the city… he seemed like the most intelligent man there that I
>
> met… all of us really enjoyed him… his part was probably a third of the trip… he
>
> would introduce us to some other people who would take us on tours, like this one
>
> guy who took us on tours of lower income housing facility in the area and he
>
> introduced us to a lot of new scenery too, not just the tourist sites… he had a good
>
> influence on me.

Depth of curriculum. In-depth debriefing and opportunities for critical

reflection were also key factors that enhanced students' learning. In addition to

discussing their experiences, students wrote a mini-ethnography paper and/or reflection

journals to reflect their critical thinking and perspectives following the field trips.

Participants expressed considerable appreciation concerning the opportunity – which they

did not perceive to be readily available in their home institution - to learn about and openly discuss controversial issues. A few students from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program, for example, shared newfound perspectives about euthanasia*:*

> We actually watched a documentary, a Dutch one, about somebody getting euthanasia… it was really gut wrenching and sad, but I mean, I learned a lot, and after the course was over I wrote my paper about that because I thought that was interesting that the Dutch have active euthanasia, and in the United States we're okay with passive euthanasia, but we're not okay with active euthanasia… our culture was okay with taking somebody's feeding tube out but not putting them out of their misery.

> And, sometimes that's even worse, taking somebody's feeding tube out, because they can take a couple of days to starve to death and that's just agonizing. Whereas, in a lethal injection, you put it in and it's done. It's not a happy subject, but I mean, I thought it was a really important subject to learn about.

> We never talk, I mean, any of the classes I've taken [in the U.S.] never talk about euthanasia. I mean… nobody talks about active euthanasia so I learned about that, and what it means, and I developed an opinion about that now.

As mentioned earlier, it was also clear that students' engagement with another controversial issue, prostitution, resulted in some highly valued learning experiences. Here is participant N1's critical reflection:

When you tell somebody from America that we met prostitutes they're like, "Oh my God, what were they like?" like they're not real people… and it's just really interesting to realize that… whereas a lot of people think that it's morally wrong, they just see it as a job, something they need to do it to make money for their families. A lot of people judge sex workers, but it was really interesting to actually get to know them and talk to them… I don't think many kids would have expected that.

This respondent sums up the satisfaction expressed by so many about having the opportunity to learn things they might not have learned at home:

I really liked how he brought us around to all the different locations… how he structured it, so that we would be able to see not just one aspect of Thai life. I don't know what you'd call it, central Thai, like the normal Thai, the majority of the people, so we got to actually see some of the minority groups, too. I thought that was great.

I liked a lot of the subjects in the course, because so many of them are taboo in America, generally speaking, like prostitution, and marijuana. We were able to talk about them so openly with people who knew about them. Our guest speakers were amazing, and I think they've set up a really good program.

Critical Importance of On-site Mentoring from Faculty and Program Staff

The important role of the instructors and on-site mentoring were among the key themes emphasized by participants throughout the interviews. Having a good instructor and on-site mentor who can help students to reflect on both the similarities and

dissimilarities between their host culture and home culture, and provide a balance between support and challenge, would serve to maximize students' intercultural learning during study abroad (Vande Berg, 2008). Redden (2007a) stated that students who reported receiving more mentoring on site showed higher gains on their IDI scores. This feature was ranked third in this study's survey results (Table 4-2); majority of students stressed how important it was to have on-site instructors and mentors who were approachable and knowledgeable, who were caring, and could explain activities and various aspects of curriculum design:

> Having somebody who understood the culture… anytime we had a question, he had an answer for us, so even if we didn't quite understand 100 percent something, the faculty was always there to let us know, hey this is how this is done, why, and so they were able to tell us everything we needed. So that was probably the best thing about the program.

> The first day we got there I remember she sat down and told us socially what's expected of Americans over there because the Dutch have a lot of preconceived notions about Americans… she was very open, and gave us good advice. We could talk to her about personal issues if we wanted to. She took us everywhere; she was also a good person to talk to, if you needed to talk to anybody… so I know we had nice support over there.

Opportunity to Interact with Locals

Whether through the curriculum or via personal efforts, opportunities to interact with locals were indicated as among the most valuable factors that enhanced participants'

learning. An aspect of curriculum design that seemed important to students in connection

with this was their exposure to different types of accommodation. For example,

participant S2 commented:

> In terms of accommodations, it was really interesting because we stayed in
>
> apartments and we stayed in hotels and in the Santi Asokha village, we stayed on
>
> the floor with bare feet. So, I have experienced probably more different types of
>
> living accommodations over in Thailand than I've ever experienced here in the
>
> U.S. Their way of life can be quite different from ours, and it is nice to be able to
>
> experience that. If we had just stayed in the apartments the whole time, I don't
>
> think it would have been as exciting, or as useful, so actually I'm really glad that
>
> we got to go to the different places.

Some participants from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program had an opportunity to

live with Thai roommates during their stay in Khon Kaen. This seem to bring a positive

influence and led to further opportunities to interact more with locals, as indicated from

the following interview data:

> My roommate in Khon Kaen… she and her friends actually seemed really
>
> interested in the Thai language I was learning, so they would help me with that,
>
> and then I would help them with English. Yeah, I really liked my roommate.

The bicycle hotel where *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants stayed during the

program was located in a residential area in Amsterdam. Participants especially

appreciated that they were able to experience the Dutch residential neighborhood which

is very different from the tourist area. Participant N5 said, "I think what was really good

about this three-week program is that we weren't around foreigners all the time, so I think

that helped us learn a lot." Staying at the residential area also encouraged participants to understand how knowledge acquired in the classroom – about the local culture, for example - could actually be expanded through experience of the real life setting:

> We lived in a really small hotel… in this part called De Pijp. It was really cool being in De Pijp because we were immersed in the local culture… it was three and a half weeks, but it felt longer because we got to know some of the people there, we went to their businesses… I think just being in that part of the neighborhood instead of where we could have been in the more touristy part was really beneficial. I think that helped us understand the culture better.

> I was asking them about the things I was learning about the Dutch culture, so I would say, 'I learned this in class, is that true? How does that work?' And they would be really willing to talk to me about it. So, it was really nice, it's totally different learning about a culture at home… if you're there while you're learning about it, you could see what you're learning basically and I just think that's so cool.

Of course, language is another example of something learned in the classroom that could be experienced and applied through contact with local people: "I tried to use the Dutch language as much as I could… I went to the grocery store most of the time, instead of going out to eat. I think that really helped me immersing myself into the local culture."

In addition to accommodation arrangements, students mentioned the importance of having flexible or free time in the afternoon and evening to explore and meet locals: "We didn't always have to travel around with the group whenever we wanted to eat or go

shopping, so we could interact with the people in the neighborhood." Another participant commented: "The curriculum was good, I think the amount of time spent with the teacher and a ratio of just being able to experience the environment outside of the school was pretty good." Many of these opportunities to meet locals often came from the variety contained within the curriculum: "Part of it was classroom based, and then the other part of the learning was going to different communities and to me, the more variety, the better."

Some of the classes or assignments involved students in interactions with locals. Aside from the various field trips mentioned earlier, there were assignments that encouraged students to mingle with locals more independently, as exemplified by this comment from a student in the Amsterdam program:

> One assignment that we had… was a group project to see how they utilize their public space in these parks… so we decided to interview people, ask them what they do when they come to the park and stuff like that, so we mingled with people in that way.

It was remarkable how strongly interviewees valued the interactions they had and the contacts they made while studying abroad.

While students place much value on interacting with locals, the experience varied depending on each student's personality and readiness: "I didn't get totally outside of comfort zone; I was still kind of nervous to talk to people." Although it was only three weeks that participants stayed in host country, many students said that they still keep in touch with local students and other residents whom they met during the program:

We wanted to go play some basketball and we saw a guy just shooting some

hoops. We said 'Ssowadi-kap[hello in Thai], we're from America, and we're

wondering if we can play with you?' He spoke a little bit of English and it was

broken, and we spoke a little bit of Thai and it was broken, so there was a lot of

hand signaling and all that, but that was fun. I think that's part of integrating with

society. And so, we met them and more and more people started coming and then

we all had a game going and then we played for like three hours. I still keep in

touch with them over Facebook.

I got to meet some friends that were Dutch; and it's nice because they are all very,

very intelligent. They knew everything about our Presidential Election, more than

we did. They had their own opinions, they are very well informed. The people

and the culture of Amsterdam were really what made the experience because it

was very different from here and I realized there are different places than where I

grew up where I could be happy… I really like the people and the culture

basically.

Duration of the Program

With regard to the program duration, almost half of the participants (48%)

indicated that the three-weeks were about right for their study abroad (Table 4-3). While

longer programs may have the potential to bring more learning opportunities, overall

findings from this research show that what counts the most is *how* the program is

designed and conducted rather than simply *how long* the program is. A total of 7% of

participants said the duration of the program was not a significant factor for their

87

learning. The overall opinion of the participants on the duration of the study abroad

program is summarized in Table 4-3 below.

Table 4-3. *Participants' Perceptions of Duration of the Program*

	Valid % (N)
Three-weeks were about right	48% (21)
If the program were longer, I could have learned more	45% (20)
The duration of program was not a significant factor for my learning	7% (3)
Missing	0% (2)
Total	100% (46)

Importance of "How" rather than "How Long." Participants especially

emphasized that the structure and depth of the program were more important than its

duration: "I think the program length was right for what we were doing. I guess the

structure of the program is more important and the people you're around are pretty

important, too." With regard to duration, participants stressed the significance of quality

over quantity. Although many students acknowledged the potential advantages of the

longer-term program, they also stressed the significant value of the short-term program:

> I think if you do go for a longer time, you'll get a better understanding of another
>
> culture and you'll probably learn more, but I still think being there for three and a
>
> half weeks, I still learned a lot, especially since I was a student and not a tourist. I
>
> mean, the class sessions that we had and the tours that we took, and the
>
> independent things that I did, all contribute to all the things that I learned, and it
>
> was still a lot of things. So, I think short-term or long-term, you're going to learn
>
> something when you study abroad.

Yeah, it's quality over quantity, I mean, if you're only there for three and a half weeks, then you should take advantage of the amount of time that you have, and just do as much as you can while you're there. Take your opportunity that you've been given and roll with it and learn as much as you can, and that's what I did. I mean, I would have learned more if I was there longer, but I still think I learned plenty.

Research Question 2-1: In what ways, if any, do participants differ in reports of their experiences in an Asian (Thailand and Laos) sojourn compared to those in an European (Netherlands) sojourn?

This question was answered by analyzing two post- survey questions (Please see Appendix C, Post-survey Questions 1 and 2) on participants' overall experience in each program, and how individual participants spent their free time. Free time in this context is defined as "the time spent while not in class or completing other academic responsibilities." The overall curriculum of each program is designed in such a way that students spend most of the morning and early afternoon in the classroom while the rest of the afternoon and evening are available for field trips or free time. Considering students' easy access to internet technology and rapidly increasing social network sites, it was important to ask Question 2 in order to understand more deeply how participants actually spend their free time during study abroad.

Table 4-4 compares the nature of participants' experience in the two programs. To observe participants' most significant experiences, only the responses which indicated "to a large degree" were selected for the analysis.

Table 4-4. *Intercultural Experiences in the Netherlands and Thailand/Laos Programs*

	% respondents who selected "to a large degree"			Fisher's Exact Test[12] for the Netherlands and Thailand/Laos
	Total Participants (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
1. Had some experience with unique local cultural activities	62.2%	59%	65%	.28
2. Interact with local people	57.8%	73%	44%	.14
3. Practice different non-verbal communication/ behaviors in local culture	33.3%	50%	17.4%	.05*
4. Make (a) local friend(s)	18.2%	23%	14%	.35
5. Have in-depth contact with local people /community	17.8%	32%	4.3%	.04**
6. Speak and communicate in the local language	13.3%	23%	4.3%	.76

Note: The above rank order indicates the valid percentage of participants' answer of "4) to a large degree" among 1) not at all; 2) very little; 3) to some degree; 4) to a large degree.
*p-value < .10, **p-value < .05 (2-tailed).

A statistically significant difference was observed between two countries in the

responses to the items "Practice different non-verbal communication/behaviors in local

---

[12] Fisher's Exact Test was performed in order to assess if there is a statistically significant difference in ways participants differ in reports of their experiences in the Thai/Laos sojourn compared to the Netherlands sojourn. Whereas a Pearson Chi-Square analysis is generally used for tables larger than 2 x 2, Howell (2007) recommends using the Fisher's Exact Test for the analysis of 2 x 2 tables because it does not require the assumption that the test statistic is distributed as a continuous Chi-Square distribution which is usually not met for 2 x 2 tables. In most cases the conclusion will be the same for Fisher's Exact Test versus Person's Chi Square (Howell, 2007).

culture" (*p*< .10) and "Have in-depth contact with local people and community" (*p*< .05). As discussed in Chapter 3, I would like to note the statistical inference analysis in this study is for heuristic purposes and to generate insights, not for statistical inference or generalization to a larger sample (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973). All statistical results obtained are actual population, not sample values.

Table 4-5 below shows a mean percentage of how participants spent their free time. They were asked to show how they spent free time during study abroad by dividing 100% among the categories of spending time with people from the U.S., people from the host country, alone, people from a variety of countries, and on the internet. On average from the both programs, participants spent about half of their free time with people from the U.S. including both face-to-face and on the phone. This can be explained by the nature of the program offered by the University of Minnesota as a 3-credit global seminar, in which participants spend most of the curriculum with classmates from the home institution. *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants spent their second largest proportion of time (about 20% of their free time) with locals (both via face-to-face and phone) while the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants spent the second largest amount of time (18% of their free time) alone. In contrast, *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants spent only 8% of their free time alone. This phenomenon can be explained by the nature of the curriculum design in each program. While both programs emphasize extensive field trips and immersion opportunities with locals, the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program includes many more field trips to local communities that often allowed participants to stay overnight with locals.

For example, the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program includes field trips to Buriram and Surin, ancient Khmer rural communities and schools in lower Northeast Thailand, and students spend the night in Surin. During the field trip to Santi Asokha Buddhist community in Chaiyaphum, students also stay overnight in Chaiyaphum in a Buddhist community, staying in the homes of members of that community. In this setting, participants learn to do the various aspects of rice farming and sleep on hard wood floors just like the Thai monks traditionally do. When I asked participants to describe one example (critical incident) or experience that best captured their study abroad experience in the interview, most of the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program participants mentioned the overnight experience at the Buddhist community. The Thai/Lao program also includes service learning opportunities including teaching English at local schools, tree planting, and rice farming for the local community that provide more frequent and deep interaction opportunities with locals.

With rapidly increasing social network internet sites, significant time spent on the internet during study aboard is becoming a major concern. The results of this study showed that even during a three-week study abroad program, participants tend to spend about 13 percent of their free time alone and 14 percent on the internet.

Table 4-5 below summarizes how participants spent free time during their study abroad.

Table 4-5. *How participants spent free time in the Netherlands and Thailand/Laos Programs*

	Mean% of the free time spent*		
	Total Participants (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)
1. With people from the U.S. (including both face-to-face and phone)	52%	49%	55%
2. With people from the host country (via face-to-face and phone)	17.7%	20.3%	14.8%
3. Alone (not including time on the telephone or using the internet)	13.2%	8.2%	18%
4. With people from a variety of countries	10.3%	12.2%	7.8%
5. On the internet (e.g. entertainment, gathering non-academic information, e-mail or instant messaging; not including communication with people from the host country)	9.8%	9.1%	10.6%
6. With people from the host country (via internet (e.g., e-mail, instant messaging, etc.))	3.6%	1.5%	6.6%

*Note: Time allocation ranges from 1-100%

Research Question 2-2: What are the similarities and differences in the cross-cultural stress factors reported by participants in the Asian (Thailand and Laos) study abroad program and those who participated in the European (Netherlands) program?

To better understand how participants' experience differed depending on their study abroad location, I asked how similar or dissimilar participants felt the host culture was compared to their home culture on a scale of 1 'very similar' to 10 'very dissimilar.' As presented in Table 4-6 below, *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants felt that the host culture was somewhat more dissimilar to their home culture compared to the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants. Figures 4-1 and 4-2 illustrate more detailed responses from participants in each program.

Table 4-6. *Participants' Perceptions of Cultural Distance between Host Culture and Home Culture: The Netherlands and Thailand/Laos Programs*

	Total Participants (n=40)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=22)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=18)
Mean scale (Population values)	6.6	7.2	6

Note: scale range from 1 to 10, with 1 being 'very similar' and 10 being 'very dissimilar'

Figure 4-1. Cultural distance between host culture and home culture: *Understanding Southeast Asia*
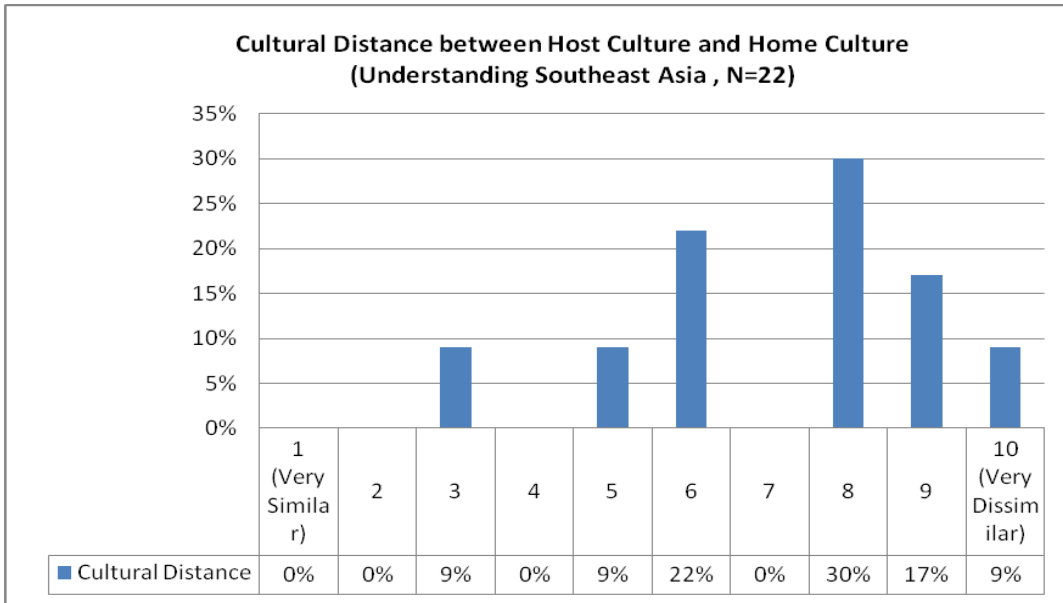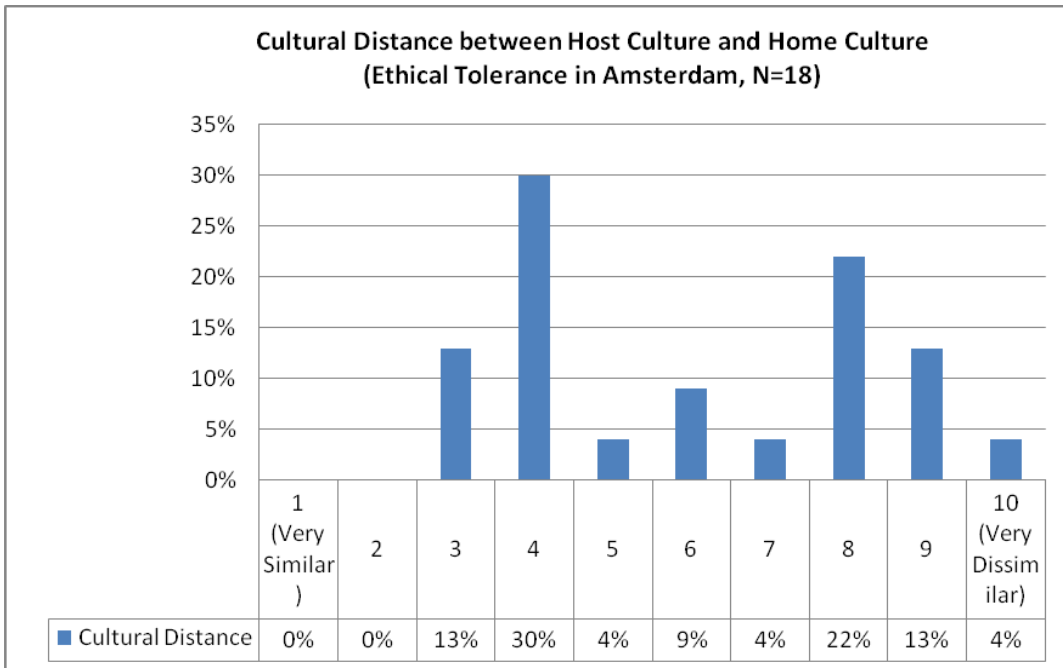

Figure 4-2. Cultural distance between host culture and home culture: *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam*

To investigate this further, I asked about participants' cultural intensity

experience utilizing Paige's (1993) ten Cross-Cultural Intensity Factors on a scale of 1

'least stressful' to 10 'most stressful.' As discussed in Chapter 3, Paige (1993) presented

a set of factors that raise the level of psychological intensity of intercultural experience,

predicting "most challenging, difficult, and stressful" (p. 4) feelings for sojourners during

study abroad. When comparing Question 3 (how similar in general did participants feel

the host culture was to the home culture) and Question 7 (to what degree did participants

experience stress related to each cultural intensity factor during the study abroad

program), sojourners who felt more cultural dissimilarities between home culture and

host culture tended to experience more cross-cultural intensity which, according to Paige

(1993), often causes more challenge and stress. As indicated in Table 4-6 above,

participants from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program who reported more cultural

differences between home culture and host culture in Question 3 also expressed a higher

intensity factor score overall in Question 7 compared to participants from the *Ethical*

Tolerance in Amsterdam program. A statistically significant difference was observed

between the two programs in their responses to the item "the level of stress you felt due

to the ethnocentrism of the people from host country" ($p< .01$). This can be explained by

the strong Thai ethnocentrism (personal communication with faculty program leader,

October 12, 2009). Specifically, this relates to the fact that the majority of

Understanding Southeast Asia participants were Hmong-Americans, whose physical

appearance was very similar to that of local Thais and Laos. The faculty program leader

described some incidents which Hmong-American participants had to face due to the

ethnocentric attitudes of some local Thais:

> When we stopped by local stores or gas stations during the program, Thai store
>
> owners used to ask me "where are your students from?" I answered "from the

U.S." They responded, "No, really." "They are from Minnesota; from the University of Minnesota." "No, no, where are they *really* from?" They would not believe that my Hmong-American students were Americans who were not familiar with local language and culture. Because the physical appearance of Hmong-American students is very similar to local Thais and Laos, the Hmong students were not treated as Americans. Students often had to face challenges in many situations because they were automatically assumed to speak the local language and to know the local customs and culture due simply to their physical appearance.

Survey and interview data suggest that "language" was one of the strong intensity factors that participants experienced during study abroad. As one respondent said: "Even though I did learn a little bit of Dutch while I was there, I was pretty nervous to use it because I didn't want to say it wrong." Survey data presented in Table 4-7 below, and specifically responses to "the level of stress you felt due to the lack of language skills" ($p< .01$), suggest that participants from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program indicate a statistically significant higher level of stress relating to language compared to participants from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program. In the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program significant time is devoted to learn the Thai language skills. Each student is given a Thai name and nickname. They must learn to write these in the Thai script. Upon arrival, students are provided the first year Thai writing textbook used by Thai children, and nearly all participants developed some minimal Thai speaking capability. As part of their language learning portfolio, participants had to demonstrate their ability to write key Thai cultural and political concepts in the Thai script. This was

quite empowering for many students and reflects the use of the Freire approach (1970)

for developing literacy. Despite this, participants in general seemed to feel more

psychological challenge related to learning a language that looked unfamiliar (Thai

language uses a non-Roman alphabet). This challenge is also reflected in Research

Question 4, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Further, when asked why they

selected Europe for a study abroad location, many interviewees from the Netherlands

program responded "because so many people speak English there." This reflects the

anxiety associated with unfamiliar language usage in the host country; U.S. students in

general seem to prefer going to places where they can still speak English. Table 4-7

below shows the overall mean scale of participants' Cultural Intensity Factors for each

category. As mentioned earlier, the statistical analysis here is only for heuristic purposes.

It indicates only population values to gain insights and understanding; it is not intended

for statistical inference, or generalization for a larger sample (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973).

Table 4-7. *Mean Scores for Cultural Intensity Factors in the Netherlands and*

Thailand/Laos Programs

Cultural Intensity Factors	Mean †			Comparison	T-test for the Netherlands and Thailand/Laos	
	Participants Total (n=46)	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=23)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)		t	Sig.
Cultural Differences The level of stress you felt due to the cultural difference between your own culture and the host culture	4.6	4.7	4.5	T > N‡	-.328	.745
Ethnocentrism: The level of stress you felt due to your initial ethnocentrism	4.1	4.5	3.7	T > N	-1.224	.228
Ethnocentrism: The level of stress you felt due to the ethnocentrism of people from the host country	3.2	4.1	2.3	T > N	-3.065	.004***
Language The level of stress you felt due to the lack of language skills	5.9	7.1	4.7	T > N	-3.017	.004***
Cultural Immersion The level of stress you felt due to your cultural immersion in the host country	4.2	4.2	4.2	T = N	.000	1.000
Cultural Isolation The level of stress you felt due to being isolated from your own culture	4.3	4.4	4.2	T > N	-.271	.788
Prior Intercultural Experience The level of stress you felt due to your lack of prior intercultural experience	3.7	4.1	3.3	T > N	-1.014	.316

Expectations The level of stress you felt based on your initial expectations toward the host culture (whether they were met or not)	3.9	4.4	3.5	T > N	-1.251	.218
Visibility The level of stress you felt from being visible (e.g., physically different from members of the host culture)	4	3.5	4.4	T < N	1.156	.254
Invisibility The level of stress you felt from being invisible (e.g., your identity, religion, or sexual orientation is invisible to host culture or concealed because it is not accepted in the host culture)	2.5	2.8	2.2	T > N	-1.040	.304
Status: The level of stress you felt from not getting the respect you feel you deserve	3.5	2.9	4	T < N	1.502	.141
Status: The level of stress you felt from feeling you are receiving unearned recognition	3	3.4	2.6	T > N	-1.230	.226
Power and Control The level of stress you felt from loss of power/control over events compared to what you possessed at home	3.8	3.7	4	T < N	.343	.733

†Note: scale range from 1 to 10, with 1 being 'least stressful' and 10 being 'most stressful'

‡T: Thailand/Laos, N: Netherlands

 *** P<.01 (2-tailed)

Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam participants indicated higher intensity factors compared to *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants for only three items: "The level of stress you felt from being visible," "The level of stress you felt from not getting the respect you feel you deserve," and "The level of stress you felt from loss of power/control over events compared to what you possessed at home." These responses are well supported by participants' qualitative interview data about the phenomenon of the *"ugly American"*: "I've always been aware because this wasn't my first time in Europe, but the whole ugly American thing, how bad we can come off sometimes, it makes me more aware of myself and how I come off to others."

> When I saw other American tourists, it made me cringe… every time I see other Americans in a big group, they are loud … Amsterdam is such an international city, there are a lot of different tourists there … you can see there's German tourists and Australian tourists and British, and then you see the Americans… that's pretty easy to tell, because they just stuck out so badly. Not really in a good way.

> Ugly American… I wish it had surprised me. But I hear these stories all the time. My roommate has dual citizenship with England, so she uses her British passport and even on their luggage they put Canadian luggage tags so that they don't look American at all and I just think that is so telling … I like to think that I'm not an ugly American, but in some ways there's no way you know until you're immersed in a culture where you know the cultural norms, so you know what makes Americans stand out.

"I kind of gained more responsibility that way, too, because I was looking out for other people [in our group]." Interestingly, this was discussed mostly by the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program participants, which perhaps indicates that there are many more U.S. tourists in Europe than in Southeast Asia. The interview data reveal that the more U.S. participants learn about the host culture and become immersed, the more they feel embarrassed when observing culturally inappropriate behaviors among other Americans. This explains why participants felt stress from being visible [as Americans], loss of power/control, and not getting the respect that they felt they deserved.

Qualitative interview data also suggest the first timers of study abroad programs often experience a significant amount of stress. Although first time study abroad was a somewhat stressful experience, interviewees emphasized that it was *not a bad* [italics added] stress. Further, interviewees who responded with a high intensity score on the "invisibility (The level of stress you felt from being invisible)" item shared that they were often stressed because they wanted to interact with locals but were not able to do so for many different reasons including shyness, language barriers, etc.:

> I was just nervous, because I was outside of my comfort zone . . . I mean, it was a good thing, but I was stressed for a while, just being there, because I had never been there before, been outside of home by myself, so that was pretty stressful. But it wasn't bad stress.

> Being invisible . . . I mean like I was kind of nervous about talking to locals and obviously I didn't talk to as many as I would like to, so I was kind of stressed out because I wanted to, but then I didn't . . .

Research Question 3: What, if any, are differences in the IDI scores when comparing pre-sojourn and post-sojourn results for the participants? Do the results vary by country (Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands)? What accounts for any differences found? What conditions contribute to a possible increase in participants' IDI scores?

After completing the short-term study abroad program, 56% of total participants' intercultural sensitivity, measured by IDI, had a positive gain. Among those 22 participants, 68% were female students. While no participants were in the ethnorelative stage in pre-test, a total of 10% of participants moved to Acceptance/Adaptation (A/A), the ethnorelative stage of the IDI developmental scale. The two Figures below present the overall change in participants' IDI Developmental Scores (DS) from pre-test (Figure 4-3) to post-test (Figure 4-4). The first graph in each Figure presents the overall pre-/post-IDI score for all participants; the second graph presents pre-/post-IDI score for *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants; and the third graph presents pre-/post-IDI score for *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants.

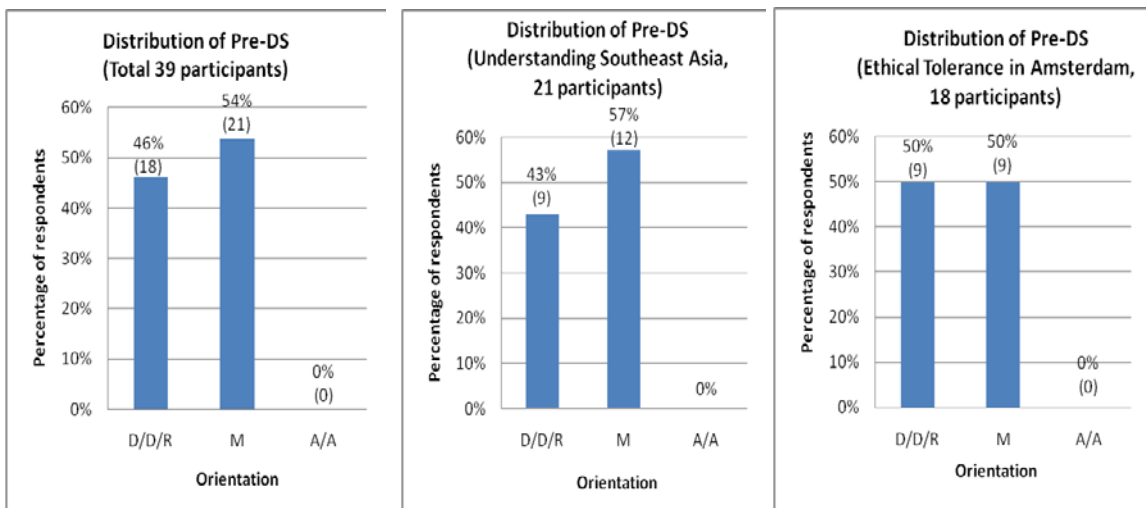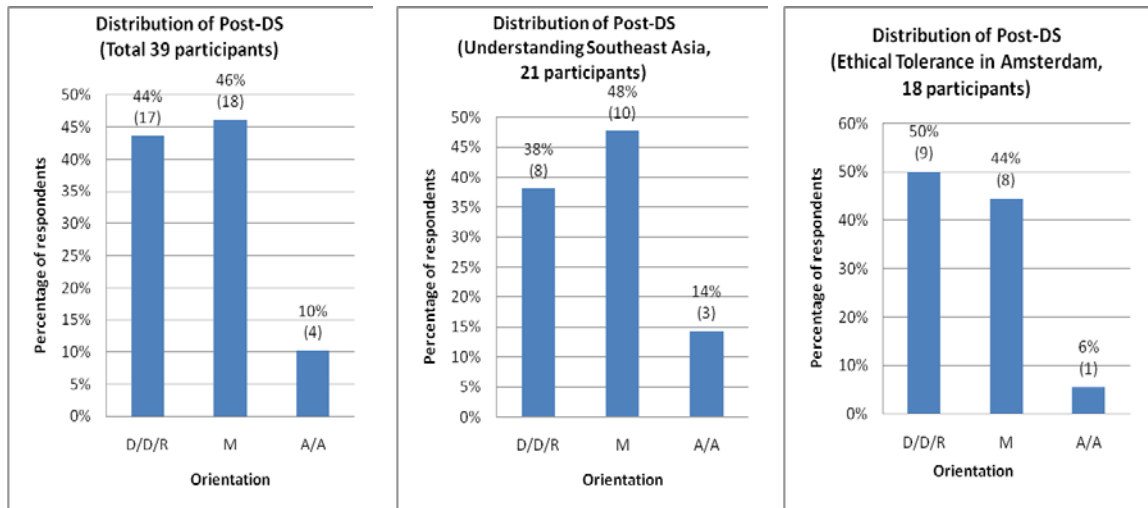*Figure 4-3.* IDI Pre-Test: Distribution of Developmental Scores

Figure 4-4.   IDI Post-Test: Distribution of Developmental Scores

In the pre-test (Figure 4-3), 46% of participants were in 'Defense/Denial/Reversal (D/D/R)' and 54% of participants were in 'Minimization (M).' No participants were in the state of 'Acceptance/Adaptation (A/A).' When comparing participants' pre-scores from the two programs, 43% of *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants' overall DS were in D/D/R and 57% were in the M. In the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program, half (9 out of 18) of the participants' overall DS were in D/D/R and the other half were in M.

In the post-test (Figure 4-4), 44% of total participants were in D/D/R and 46% of participants were in M. While no participants were in A/A in the pre-test, 10% of total participants moved to A/A after a three-week short-term study abroad program. Among those, three participants came from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program and one participant came from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program. While Figures 4-3 and 4-4 above present the comparison of overall *pre*-sojourn and *post*-sojourn results, Figures 4-5 and 4-6 below present the comparison of the two locations more closely.

Figure 4-5. IDI subscale change from Pre- to Post-Test: *Understanding Southeast Asia*
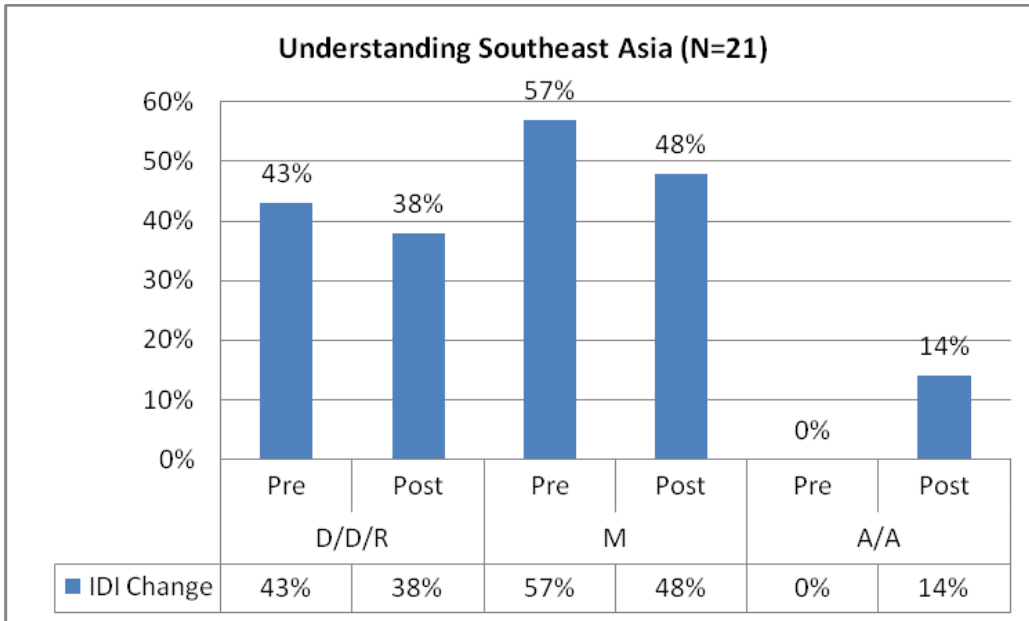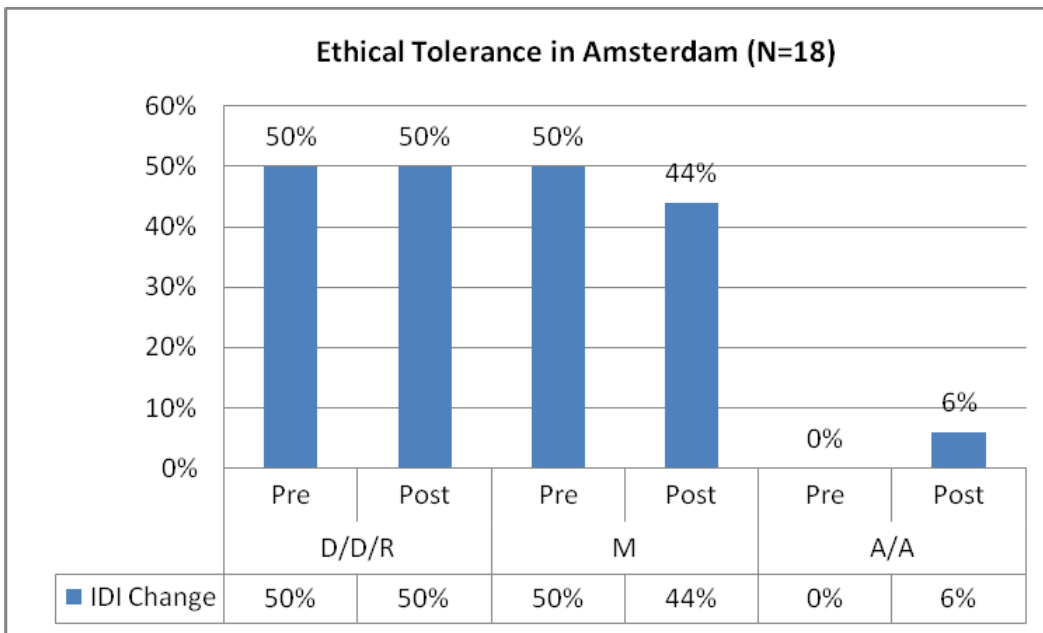

Figure 4-6. IDI subscale change from Pre- to Post-Test: *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam*

While Reversal (R) is regarded as a mirror image of the Denial and Defense orientation and is included under the D/D/R in the above graphs, the R is not indicated as a separate continuum when the IDI instrument generates a score because "the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) suggests that Reversal (the

reversing of polarities in a dichotomous worldview) is a form of the basic Defense

worldview" (Hammer, 2009, p. 26). Therefore, when the overall IDI score is discussed,

including Tables 4-8 and 4-9 below, the main categories are indicated as D/D, M, and

A/A.

Table 4-8 below presents the overall summary of participants' IDI score change

from each program. In the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program (n=21), 11

participants' IDI scores were positively changed with an average gain of 16 points.

Seven students' IDI scores moved positively between scales (from one scale to the next

scale): four students moved from D/D to M; and three students moved from M to AA.

Four students' IDI scores moved within the same scale from lower M to upper M. On the

other hand, 10 students' IDI scores were negatively changed with an average loss of 8

points. Three students regressed from M to D/D; two students regressed from upper M to

lower M; and five students regressed from upper D/D to lower D/D.

Table 4-8. *Participants' IDI score change between and within scales*

IDI Score Change		Pre- ⟶ Post-test	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=21)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=18)
+	+ to next scale	D/D ⟶ M	4	3
		M ⟶ A/A	3	1
		Subtotal	7	4
	+ within the same scale	D/D ⟶ D/D	0	4
		M ⟶ M	4	3
		Subtotal	4	7
		Total	**11**	**11**
−	- to next scale	A/A ⟶ D/D	0	0
		M ⟶ D/D	3	3
		Subtotal	3	3
	- within the same scale	D/D ⟶ D/D	5	2
		M ⟶ M	2	2
		Subtotal	7	4
		Total	**10**	**7**

In the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program (n=18), 11 students' IDI scores were positively changed with an average gain of 10.3 points. Four students' IDI scores moved positively between scales (from one scale to the next scale): three students' score moved from D/D to M; and one student's score moved from M to A/A. Seven students' IDI scores moved within the same scales: four students' IDI scores moved from lower D/D to upper D/D, and three students' IDI scores moved from lower M to upper M. Seven students' IDI scores were negatively changed with an average loss of 10.8 points. Three students regressed from M to D/D; two students regressed from upper M to lower M; and two students regressed from upper D/D to lower D/D.

Figure 4-7 below describes how participants' intercultural sensitivity, measured by IDI, has changed from an ethnocentric (D/D/R and M) to an ethnorelative (A/A) worldview. No participant in either program was in the ethnorelative stage in the pre-test. In the post-test, 14% of *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants had moved to the ethnorelative stage, as had 6% of *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants.

Figure 4-7. IDI change on Ethnorelative (Acceptance/Adaptation) scale from Pre- to Post-Test by each program
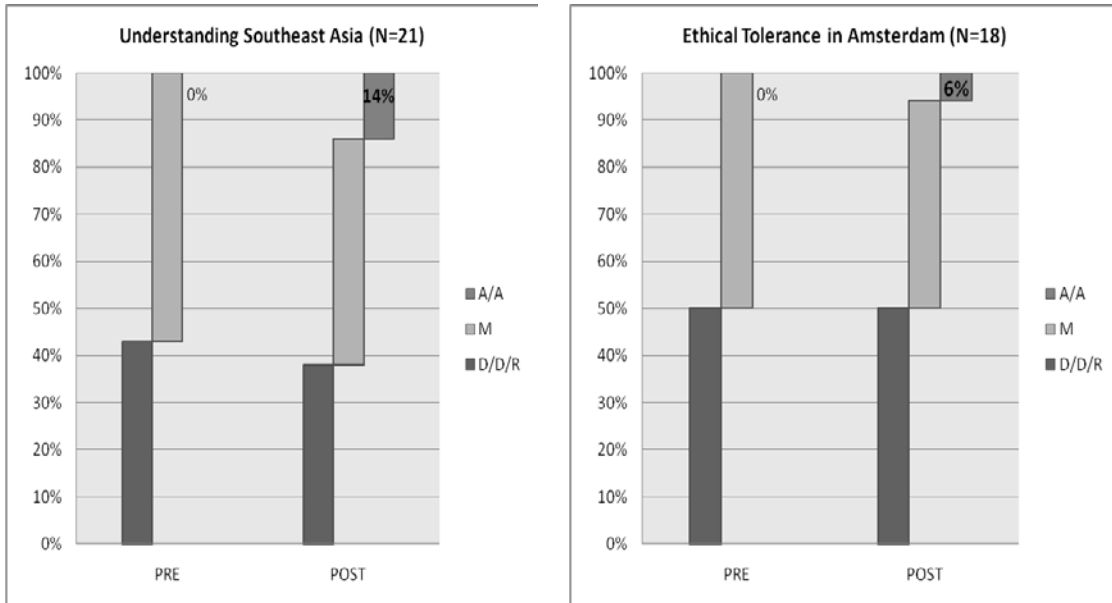

Table 4-9 below describes each participant's overall IDI Developmental Score (DS) change from pre- to post-test in detail.

Table 4-9. *Participants' IDI Developmental Score (DS) Change from Pre- to Post-Test*

Understanding Southeast Asia program (n=21)						Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam Program (n=18)					
Students	**Pre-DS**		**Post-DS**		**Change**	**Students**	**Pre-DS**		**Post-DS**		**Change**
S1 (M)	89.74	M	73.81	D/D	-	**N1 (F)***	**78.42**	**D/D**	**90.85**	**M**	+
S2 (M)	97.52	M	106.69	M	+	N2 (F)	87.01	M	75.64	D/D	-
S3 (M)	83.34	D/D	69.53	D/D	-	N3 (F)	95.67	M	92.03	M	-
S4 (F)*	**59.05**	**D/D**	**103.61**	**M**	+	**N4 (F)***	**107.81**	**M**	**115.49**	**A/A**	+
S5 (F)*	**92.32**	**M**	**115.94**	**A/A**	+	N5 (F)	87.40	M	Data Missing		N/A
S6 (M)	93.77	M	92.18	M	-	N6 (F)	91.72	M	82.58	D/D	-
S7 (F)*	**80.40**	**D/D**	**87.63**	**M**	+	**N7 (F)***	**76.85**	**D/D**	**110.41**	**M**	+
S8 (M)	85.91	M	95.95	M	+	N8 (M)	78.73	D/D	63.12	D/D	-
S9 (M)	94.54	M	101.37	M	+	N9 (F)	117.51	A/A	Data Missing		N/A
S10 (M)*	**80.02**	**D/D**	**94.07**	**M**	+	N10 (F)	79.03	D/D	79.30	D/D	+
S11 (F)	107.21	M	112.54	M	+	N11 (M)	96.83	M	Data Missing		N/A
S12 (M)	109.30	M	100.63	M	-	**N12 (F)***	**84.88**	**D/D**	**85.52**	**M**	+
S13 (F)*	**111.73**	**M**	**122.69**	**A/A**	+	N13 (F)	94.68	M	82.52	D/D	-
S14 (M)	75.81	D/D	73.29	D/D	-	N14 (M)	89.65	M	98.31	M	+
S15 (M)	81.56	D/D	73.36	D/D	-	N15 (F)	76.16	D/D	73.28	D/D	-
S16 (F)	64.57	D/D	63.18	D/D	-	N16 (F)	102.63	M	106.28	M	+
S17 (F)	78.22	D/D	72.50	D/D	-	N17 (M)	106.18	M	85.50	M	-
S18 (F)	97.18	M	Data Missing		N/A	N18 (M)	68.34	D/D	75.17	D/D	+
S19 (F)*	**84.34**	**D/D**	**102.83**	**M**	+	N19 (F)	79.25	D/D	83.86	D/D	+
S20 (M)	88.55	M	78.66	D/D	-	N20 (M)	103.24	M	Data Missing		N/A
S21 (F)	104.45	M	Data Missing		N/A	N21 (F)	71.68	D/D	82.11	D/D	+
S22 (M)*	**101.78**	**M**	**129.14**	**A/A**	+	N22 (F)	87.03	M	111.38	M	+
S23 (F)	97.28	M	81.52	D/D	-	N23 (F)	107.85	M	Data Missing		N/A
Group DS (Mean)	88.43	M	92.91	M	+ (average gain 4.5)	Group DS (Mean)	86.43	M	88.52	M	+ (average gain 2.1)

Note: Overall IDI score range: 55-145
                D/D/R (Denial/Defense/Reversal): 55-84.9
                M (Minimization): 85-114.9
                A/A (Adaptation/Acceptance): 115-145
                *Bolds are those whose IDI score increased to next stage from pre-test to post-test.
                M: Male, F: Female

While more students had positive gains in their IDI scores, it is also important to remember that some of the participants regressed after the three-week study abroad program as Table 4-9 illustrates above. Individual readiness seemed to play an important role in this process. For example, individual participants had different ways of spending their free time under the same program structure. Quite a number of interviewees whose IDI score moved positively emphasized the importance of openness and a positive attitude during the study abroad program:

It was the best experience of my life because first of all, I've never traveled outside of the country, and not only that, I was able and willing to try anything there: food, the activities within the school… I think some people are a little reserved and they didn't want to try out the different things. When I glanced over at them, it seemed like they were bored, but it was because they made it boring for themselves. You really have to make the best of what you have when it's on your plate. And I honestly felt that I did everything that I could to make it enjoyable for myself and for them, and for the Thai community. I really do think that being able to just understand a different community and to integrate within it, it's going to make you a better person, no matter what, if you make it a good situation.

I had heard all these things about Amsterdam, but I didn't want to think that it was going to be a certain way if it wasn't, so I waited until I experienced it and realized that I loved it. But, if I had gone there thinking 'I am probably going to hate it,' or 'I hate this policy,' then I probably wouldn't have had the same experience.

In contrast, some students whose IDI score change was not as significant had spent most of their free time alone in their room watching U.S. TV networks or reading U.S.-American novels brought from home:

> In my room… I had music that I would listen to. I watched a lot of American TV. They have an American network. I was reading a big book too, like a 1,000 page book; it was a book for pleasure, and I just was reading it my spare time, so I got really far in that book. And I would go to the store, get something, in case I needed a snack, that kind of thing… it was pretty much on my own or with my [American] roommate.

Summary

Whereas participants' overall IDI Developmental Score (DS) stayed in the minimization stage after the study abroad for both programs, 56% of total participants showed enhanced intercultural sensitivity, measured by the IDI DS, after completing a short-term study abroad program. When looking at the gender difference, 68% of participants whose intercultural sensitivity had a positive gain were female students. When comparing the two programs, students in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program who experienced a higher degree of cultural distance between home and host country showed more gains on their IDI scores. Overall, *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants' DS increased an average of 4.5 points between the pre- and post-tests; and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants' DS increased an average of 2.1 points between pre- and post-tests. Both showed minor changes occurring within the minimization stage; these changes reflect actual *population* values. When comparing the overall score of 22 students' positive change and 17 students' negative change, the

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average of positive move was higher with +13 points compared to the negative move of -9 points. Considering this is a result from only a three-week study abroad program, these positive gains are noteworthy.

Research Question 4: What, if any, influence did short-term study abroad have on participants' professional and personal development?

Both quantitative surveys and qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted in order to look at the impact of the three-week study abroad program on participants' professional and personal development. I will present the survey data analysis first and follow with in-depth interview analysis data in this section.

Quantitative Data Analysis

For the quantitative data, the impact of the short-term study abroad experience was observed by asking before and after the study abroad experience whether participants would like to 1) take (more) courses related to international affairs; 2) learn another language(s); 3) pursue a major related to international affairs; 4) pursue a career in the international field; 5) pursue graduate study in the U.S.; 6) pursue graduate study abroad; 7) work abroad in the future; 8) travel abroad; 9) study abroad; 10) make international friends; 11) date someone from a different culture; 12) marry someone from a different culture; 13) live in another country; 14) try international food; and 15) work with international colleagues.   Table 4-10 below presents the overall range of how much participants' answers were changed with all fifteen categories between pre- and post-test.

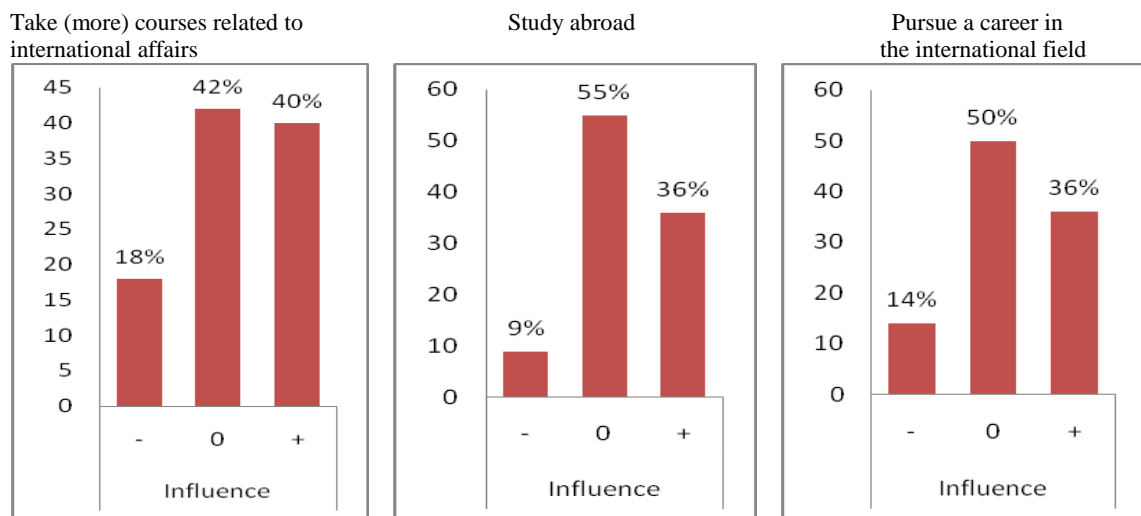Table 4-10. *Change in Participants' Professional and Personal Goals between Pre- and Post-Test*

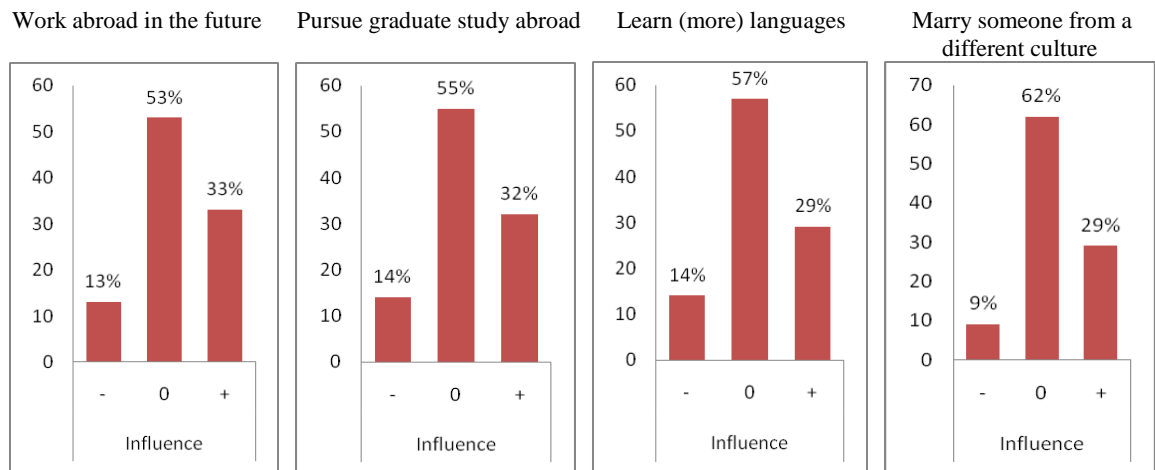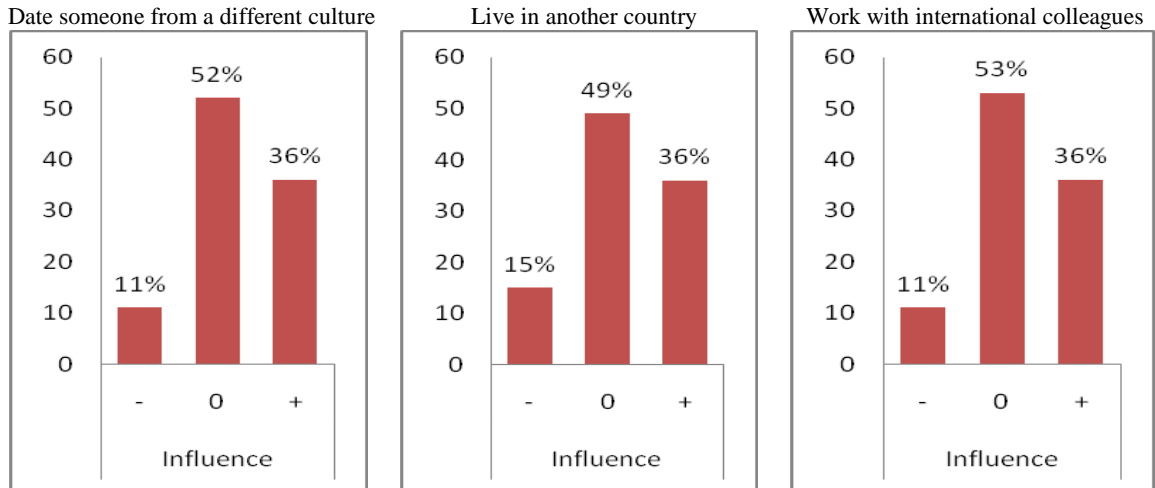|	Influence Score Valid %								
	Total Participants (n=45)			Understanding Southeast Asia (n=22)			Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)		
	-	**0**	**+**	**-**	**0**	**+**	**-**	**0**	**+**
1. Take (more) courses related to international affairs	18%	42%	40%	18%	55%	27%	17%	30%	52%
2. Learn another language(s)	14%	57%	29%	18%	64%	18%	9%	50%	41%
3. Pursue a major related to international affairs	31%	47%	22%	41%	45%	14%	22%	48%	30%
4. Pursue a career in the international field	14%	50%	36%	14%	53%	33%	13%	48%	39%
5. Pursue graduate study in the U.S.	27%	57%	16%	46%	36%	18%	9%	77%	14%
6. Pursue graduate study abroad	14%	55%	32%	9%	68%	23%	18%	41%	41%
7. Work abroad in the future	13%	53%	33%	9%	50%	41%	17%	57%	26%
8. Travel abroad	9%	84%	7%	18%	77%	5%	0%	91%	9%
9. Study abroad	9%	55%	36%	9%	64%	27%	9%	48%	46%
10. Make international friends	20%	60%	20%	13%	64%	23%	26%	57%	17%
11. Date someone from a different culture	11%	52%	36%	19%	38%	43%	4%	65%	31%
12. Marry someone from a different culture	9%	62%	29%	15%	60%	25%	4%	64%	32%
13. Live in another country	15%	49%	36%	27%	32%	41%	4%	65%	31%
14. Try international food	7%	86%	7%	4.5%	91%	4.5%	9%	83%	9%
15. Work with international colleagues	11%	53%	36%	13%	64%	23%	9%	43%	48%
Mean change	15%	57%	28%	18%	57%	24%	11%	58%	31%

Note: -: Negative change
        0: No change
        +: Positive change

Figure 4-8 below presents the top ten categories in which participants' answers

increased 29% or more from pre-test to post-test. Since the participant population

consists of college students, perhaps it is not surprising that the strongest influence of

study abroad on participants was on their future plans for academic courses. A total of 40% of particpants answered that they would like to take more courses related to international affairs after completing a three-week study abroad program. Second, 36% of total participants answered that they would be more likely to 1) pursue a career in the international field; 2) study abroad; 3) date someone from a different culture; 4) live in another country; and 5) work with international colleagues. Third, 33% of total participants responded that they would be more likely to work abroad in the future. With regard to plans for graduate study, a total of 32% answered they would be more likely to pursue graduate study abroad, compared to 16% who responded that they would be more likely to pursue graduate study in the U.S. These results are representative for these two groups.

Figure 4-8. Overall Change in Participants' Professional and Personal Goals between Pre- and Post-Test (n=45)

Date someone from a different culture	Live in another country	Work with international colleagues
52% (0), 36% (+), 11% (−)	49% (0), 36% (+), 15% (−)	53% (0), 36% (+), 11% (−)

Work abroad in the future	Pursue graduate study abroad	Learn (more) languages	Marry someone from a different culture
53% (0), 33% (+), 13% (−)	55% (0), 32% (+), 14% (−)	57% (0), 29% (+), 14% (−)	62% (0), 29% (+), 9% (−)

While 36% of total participants answered that they would be more likely to date someone from a different culture, 29% responded they would be more likely to marry someone from a different culture. When comparing participants' answers from the two programs, the top three items of positive change from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program include; 1) take (more) courses related to international affairs (52%); 2) work with international colleagues (48%); and 3) study abroad (46%). On the other hand, the top three items of positive change from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program include; 1) date someone from a different culture (43%); 2) work abroad in the

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future (41%); and 3) live in another country (41%). Table 4-11 and 4-12 below present

the top ten categories that showed an increase from pre-test to post-test for each program.

Table 4-11. *Top Ten Changes in Participants' Professional and Personal Goals between Pre- and Post-Test: Understanding Southeast Asia* Program *(n=22)*

Top 10 gains for Thailand/Laos Program Participants	
Date someone from a different culture	43%
Work abroad in the future	41%
Live in another country	41%
Pursue a career in the international field	33%
Study abroad	27%
Take (more) courses related to international affairs	27%
Marry someone from a different culture	25%
Make international friends	23%
Work with international colleagues	23%
Pursue graduate study abroad	23%

Table 4-12. *Top Ten Changes in Participants' Professional and Personal Goals between Pre- and Post-Test: Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* Program *(n=23)*

Top 10 gains for the Netherlands Program Participants	
Take (more) courses related to international affairs	52%
Work with international colleagues	48%
Study abroad	46%
Pursue graduate study abroad	41%
Learn other language(s)	41%
Pursue a career in the international field	39%
Marry someone from a different culture	32%
Live in another country	31%
Date someone from a different culture	31%
Pursue a major related to international affairs	30%

A total of 82% of the participants responded that the three-week study abroad experience had caused their answers to differ between the pre-test and the post-test. More participants from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program (95%) answered that the study abroad experience influenced their answers compared to participants from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program (73%). Table 4-13 below shows participants' responses from each program.

Table 4-13. *Perception of the Influence of Study Abroad Experience*

	Understanding Southeast Asia (n=22)	Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam (n=23)
Study abroad experience influenced my answers	73%	95%

Overall, there are more participants with positive changes (28%) than negative changes (15%) in their answers about professional and personal goals after a short-term study abroad program. When comparing the two programs, the average positive change of the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants is higher (31%) than the average positive change of the *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants (24%). It is interesting to observe that more than half of the total participants (57%) did not change their answers about professional and personal goals after a three-week study abroad program. When comparing the two programs, the Netherlands program participants showed more variation both in positive change (average 31%) and negative change (average 11%) compared to the Thailand/Laos program participants (average positive change of 24% and average negative change of 18%). Moreover, 95% of the Netherlands program participants said that their answers from pre-test to post-test were influenced by study abroad experience compared to 73% of the Thailand/Laos program participants.

As discussed earlier in this chapter under Research Question 2-2, U.S. students seem to feel more challenge when they face an exotic-looking language which uses non-Roman letters. Regardless of the significant time and support given for Thai language learning both before and during the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program, participants seemed to feel more challenged by the Thai language than participants in the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program did by Dutch. After the study abroad program, 41% of *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants responded that they be more likely to learn another language(s). However, only 18% of *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants answered that they would be more likely to learn another language(s) and yet the same number of participants (18%) answered they would be less likely to learn another language(s), reflecting the significant psychological challenges that *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants faced with Thai language during their study abroad experience. With regard to graduate study plans, many participants responded that they would be less likely to pursue graduate study in the U.S. and more likely to pursue graduate study abroad (see Table 4-10).

These findings suggest the critical importance of leveraging the program quality because study abroad experience could help to enhance participants' attitudes toward international affairs and intercultural development whereas it also could reinforce negative stereotypes and result in some participants regressing in intercultural development. "Less likely to pursue a major related to international affairs" and "less likely to make international friends" represented one of the major categories in which participants showed negative change in their answers after return. This reflects the reality that study abroad experiences can in some cases also exert a negative influence on

participants' interests in and attitudes toward international and intercultural issues. For example, while "take (more) courses related to international affairs" was most positively ranked among the Netherlands program participants (52%), it was also ranked negatively by 17% of the participants.

Qualitative Data Analysis

In addition to the quantitative data presented above, the in-depth interviews enabled a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives on and insights into what stood out the most from their study abroad experience, and how and why study abroad had an impact on them. The following section describes the major impacts of the three-week study abroad program on participants' professional and personal development.

Career development and educational aspirations. Study abroad returnees mentioned that they strongly felt the value of international experience, and that therefore they would seek further study abroad opportunities and/or international career development. Since returning from this three-week study abroad program in Summer 2008, one participant has already gone back to the host country to teach English; another student went on a second study abroad program to Jordan in Spring semester 2009; and a third participant also went to Jordan for a visit. Some concrete examples of impact in this area follow:

> It may be too early to tell, but after going to Thailand, I do want to go back. I'm sure later on in my career, I'll try to have a job that is more international.
> Because of the study abroad experience, I would keep continuing to travel in the future.

If I work for a magazine in the future, I think it would be pretty cool to go abroad

to find stories, interesting stories… that would be awesome. I thought it was cool

before but I think I might be able to be more comfortable doing that now. It's a

process; becoming more comfortable.

I wanted to go back to Thailand to teach the Hmong kids in a village west of

Khon Kaen, in Phetchabun Province. They said they needed English teachers, and

I wanted to go there and teach for a year or six months.

Quite a number of interviewees stressed that study abroad experience helped them to

decide their majors after return. For example, the program instructor during study abroad

influenced the following participant to decide to major in education:

When we were over there we had a lot of people who were mentoring us and

helping us through everything… I realized this is probably something I would

want to do with younger kids… I also realized after studying abroad that it is not

all about how much money you make when you are older; it's about whether you

are happy or not, and I'd like to work somewhere, like Amsterdam or maybe

somewhere outside the United States, teaching English or something too. So when

I came back, I realized I really do want to teach, so I changed to an Early

Childhood Education major.

I realized I am a very open person and I like helping people; so that would be

something I would be interested in… I like working with little kids… it made me

realize that it would be something that would make me happy on a day to day

basis working rather than an office job, because that is not for me. I realized I

want to be out in the field working with people.

As indicated in the quantitative data analysis above (Table 4-10), study abroad

experience also influenced participants' decision making about courses they would like to

take after return:

I really liked the housing and city urban development aspect [of the study abroad

program]. I was actually just thinking about that now because one of the classes I

am taking this semester is called, "The Changing Form of City," and in my first

class the professor had mentioned Amsterdam as an amazing city that has been

built and condensed, and has a lot of history to it. And I already knew a lot, so

that was really nice… I never really thought I would be interested in something

like that… so yes, it definitely influenced the classes I was going to take, too.

Many of the participants also mentioned their increased interest in developing more

language skills to become a global citizen. Participant N2 said:

They have a better global consciousness than a lot of Americans. I think language

is a really important tool in global affairs, and as Americans a lot of us either take

it for granted, or just ignore it, or expect others to assimilate to us. That's part of

the reason I'm a Spanish minor… I mean, it's just one more things about our

culture that we're not willing to give up is our monolingualism.

Global engagement; perspectives and worldview change; self-awareness. One of

the greatest impacts that participants described in interviews was how much their

perspectives and worldviews changed. In particular, many participants mentioned they

now have more critical perspectives toward the media and news coverage: "When you

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see it from the movies compared to staying in Bangkok… I thought it was really different."

> I think we need to keep an open mind about everybody around the world… Every time I travel outside of the U.S., it teaches me not to be so centered on what's going on in the U.S., and I noticed that when I watch the news in other countries, maybe half the news is about what's going on in that country, and the other half is what's going on in the other country; but then, when I watch the news here, it's so much about the U.S. and celebrities… What we do in the U.S. affects what happens in other countries, and vice versa… I think we need to know that we're not the only country that needs to sustain itself.

Other students realized that previous to study abroad, they had been making assumptions or participating in stereotypical thinking, but found that the reality was often very different. Here is one comment, for instance, expressing surprise concerning European multiculturalism:

> I learned about Moroccans and Turkish people and Surinamese people, and I mean, we always think of the United States as being the multicultural pond because of all the different people that are here, but we're not the only ones… There's this perception, if you go to Europe, it's all white people, like they're all the same, but they're not. I mean, there's plenty of immigrants and other people that live there. There are many different people there just like there are many different people here.

Frequently, participants' realizations about the culture of the host country went hand in hand with reflections about home:

The whole Dutch culture that I was immersed in… it is definitely very very

different than Minneapolis. Even though Minneapolis is a fairly liberal city, the

Dutch have an open mindedness about them that I really like… they don't seem as

confined by social norms as we do here.

Netherlands is just so far ahead of us in so many ways. For one thing, their drug

policy is more lenient. Prostitution was legal at the turn of the century. They've

come farther than we have so far. I mean, we're a young country but still they

have much more progressive views, I think, in general.

Some comments reflected a more general growth of awareness concerning cultural

diversity:

I don't really think that any culture is better than any other. I mean, everyone just

has a different way of doing things, and some people are more comfortable within

their own cultures than others, or sometimes when people study abroad, they

might find out that they like the other way better than where they are from.

Other participants spoke of a tendency to reflect on their own values:

I really learned that you can't judge something till you know it, like even with the

sex workers… once you speak with them you are like, 'They are not bad people at

all, they are really nice, I can see myself really liking this person,' and so this is

what they feel they are good at, what they want to do and it is socially accepted in

their culture and who am I to say, 'No, you can't do that,' or, 'You're a bad

person?'

Many interviewees talked about the unexpected growth of self awareness; they had not anticipated how much they would learn about themselves during study abroad: "Something I didn't really expect to learn was more about myself... I learned my boundaries."

In addition to self-awareness at the personal level, several interviewees also described how the study abroad experience gave them an opportunity to be more aware about various aspects of U.S. culture, social system, and life style. For example, a few participants said "I felt a lot safer walking outside in Amsterdam compared to here."

Further, one of the themes which emerged frequently throughout interviews was U.S.-American consumerism and some participants described an attitude change toward the environment, for example, "They're so careful with trash and being green, and it really helps me realize that there are so many ways that American people are so wasteful, and we can be more respectful with nature." Another student described not only a profound attitude change, but also new perspectives on her area of study:

> I'm an engineering student, and what I'm really interested in is energy. I thought that the solution to everything is just to have better forms of renewable energy that don't pollute the environment … but after being in Thailand, I realized it's not just our energy consumption, it's our way of life too that needs to change. You get that in the Santi Asokha community where the water was really limited. They get their rain water, and so the only amount of water they have are in these really big clay jugs that are outside of their houses, and when you take a shower, you have to use a bucket of water and pour it on yourself, and I was just realizing, when I take a shower in the U.S., I don't even want to know how much water I

use, or how much energy did it take to heat up that water. I know that from the study abroad, that there are plenty of other ways to live, besides the way we do now in the U.S. So, as I think about energy alternatives, I shall also be thinking about better ways of using the energy.

Positive attitude toward international experience and intercultural interaction.

After returning from study abroad, most interviewees mentioned realizing the crucial value of having an international experience and how they wanted to encourage other students to study abroad. Participant N4 from the Netherlands program participated in an internship program after her return in order to encourage other students to study abroad:

It's a 'Global ambassador in Amsterdam' program. I do classroom visits and I tell people that they should study abroad… I just think it is such a beneficial experience… especially if you're a student, you're going to be looked at totally differently than if you're a tourist, and you'll get more opportunities than you would as a tourist… I just wanted to influence other people, like I was influenced.

I was one of those people that didn't think I would ever study abroad because I didn't think I could afford it, and then I ended up going and I was really glad that I went… so I wanted to try to convince them that they really should go, because it's worth it. I mean even if it is expensive, it's worth it to go.

In addition to the classroom visit to encourage other students to study abroad, this student sought out further international experiences in her home institution including interaction with international students and community:

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My other thing that I did was I went to 'Welcoming you to the U party'… it was

welcoming international students to the University. I got to interact with

international students coming here. So, that was really cool because I was an

international student going over there, and then I was able to reverse the

process… I got to talk to all these different people, and then see how they view

America, or what they thought about being in Minnesota.

The same student commented, "I probably wouldn't have done that if I hadn't studied

abroad, because I didn't have a lot of international experience, and I'm pretty shy."

Personality development: confidence, independence, and intercultural

communication skills. A majority of participants mentioned that their study abroad

experience stimulated personality changes, especially the development of confidence and

independence. Participant S6 commented, "Even though it was a little scary at first being

in another country and going off on your own, I am really glad that I went because I feel

more independent." Participant S4 said, "It was very scary, but that really showed me that

I can really figure things out on my own." Participant S3 explained how rewarding it was

that, "Not being with someone from my own culture, my own group, my own language, I

could be in another place without my own culture, without knowing the place, and still

feel confident with what I'm doing." The experience of being away from home clearly

had a major impact on participants; the enforced opportunity to exercise independence

leading to increased maturity:

I had to take care of myself and my school work… and I did not have somebody

there to help me. And being the youngest in the family everyone tries to help you,

so it was good to be on my own. It was definitely an eye opening experience.

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It had a lot of influence on me, and even with my relationships, emotionally and

psychologically it really helped me being on my own… I feel like I matured a lot

more … after Amsterdam, I was really dedicated to my school work, and realized

that I should focus on school more, so that was actually good.

Participant N2 who was extremely shy before going study abroad mentioned how much

her personality has changed after return. As a music education major, she expressed her

desire to teach abroad:

I applied for global student teaching for next spring; I didn't get in because my

interview skills are just horrible… If I had studied abroad last year, it would have

helped a lot … I'm sure this global student teaching would be the same as study

abroad and will allow you to think on a global scale and adapt different teaching

styles…

Many participants discussed how they had to step outside of their comfort zones in many

circumstances during study abroad and meet new people who often had very different

perspectives:

I'm a pretty shy person, and I don't make new friends that easily; it takes me a

long time, but I feel like I kind of was able to step outside of my comfort zone,

and get to know people a little more. I've been able to approach other people

better; being able to talk to strangers and being more adventurous.

Well, one of my goals was independence. I've been outside the country before,

but usually I've been with my mom and I only went to Mexico, so this was my

first time really venturing fully outside of my comfort zone. So one of my goals

was just to do things I wouldn't, normally I'd be too nervous to do, like talking to

strangers, or going on a bus by myself in some strange city.

Before this trip, I had only traveled with my grandmother once to Europe; that

experience was very limited because I talked to everyone in English, so I didn't

feel like I had had a full international experience… Now that I'm going to Jordan,

compared to when I was going to Thailand for my first study abroad, I feel much

more confident about what I'm doing. I'm more prepared, and I don't feel like

I'm going to have to rely as much on other people.

I was personally impressed by how much the above participant has changed since his first

three-week study abroad. He was a very shy student before the study abroad; yet when I

met him afterwards, he was full of excitement, confidence, and independence. I was

surprised by the way he prepared for his second study abroad, which was very different

from the first one.

Intercultural communication skills were also highlighted. After spending three

weeks in a place where an unfamiliar language is spoken in a different cultural, social,

and value system, the majority of participants came back with better understanding and

respect when interacting with people from different language and cultural backgrounds.

As participant S4 mentioned, "I really do think I have broadened my horizons by

understanding different cultures." Participant S3 elaborated in more detail:

I think the independence and the confidence and the intercultural communication

were probably the biggest things for me from the program. When I came back, I

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have more patience when I talk to someone… I think I had a lot less patience

before. I noticed I was talking more slowly… if it was a Spanish person talking,

like at a store, I would ask them to repeat politely, instead of, 'What?'

Many other interviewees also discussed their changed attitude toward intercultural

interaction after return and said they understand what it is like living in a foreign country

and now have a different view when facing people in that situation. Participant N4, who

volunteered to work with incoming international students after her return shared about

her changed perspectives and attitude:

Well, I definitely understood what they might be nervous about, if they didn't

know the language… I knew what it was like to be a foreigner in a different

country… it's a different place and they're from different backgrounds, but the

fact that you're new and nobody knows you… I could relate to that, so I think that

was really beneficial. It made me less nervous to interact with the new students.

Along with the overall increase of participants' IDI scores, many interviewees

expressed their concern about trying to be more interculturally sensitive when talking

with people from different backgrounds:

It can be nerve wracking to talk to someone new, especially when you don't know

where they're from because then you're like should I ask them where they're

from, if someone has an accent, should you be, oh where are you from? Or is that

rude?

. . . in the American culture, we really try to be politically correct… but I think

asking questions is okay because it kind of shows that you're admitting that you

don't know, and asking questions I think is an appropriate way to find out… then

you would learn more about a culture, rather than just thinking you know, based

on the media or on the stereotypes.

Additional Findings from Inductive Qualitative Interview Analysis

The above section presented findings based on research questions using a

deductive approach. In this section, I present additional findings from the inductive

qualitative interview analysis that highlights points of view articulated by the

interviewees. The major themes that emerged from the inductive analysis are presented

below.

Need for More Choices: Lack of Fit with Participants' Academic Program or Major

What stood out the most from participants' suggestions was the lack of choice for

study abroad programs. Most of the interviewees mentioned that when they are looking

for a study abroad opportunity, the first thing they look for is whether there is a program

that fits with their major; and whether the study abroad program can earn credit toward

their graduation credit. However, participants expressed their frustration about the

limited selection and lack of the fit with majors. Participant N5 from *Ethical Tolerance*

in Amsterdam said, "I was trying to pick something that kind of had to do with my major,

and nothing really fit… but ethical tolerance I thought was important, anyways, because

it's not specific enough." Participant S7 from *Understanding Southeast Asia* program

also mentioned:

Because I was an art major, I had to have a certain amount of art classes taken

each year, and the only place I could go to study art would have been Italy, and

Italy's incredibly cliché for Americans studying abroad. I don't want to go Italy, I

want to go to Asia, but there was no way to study art in Asia, they had no

program.

<center>*Being a Student versus a Tourist*</center>

Another of the issues participants emphasized throughout the interviews

concerned the benefits of visiting the host country as a student with a study abroad

program compared to visiting the same country as an individual tourist. Interviewees

mentioned the difference in perceptions of U.S.-American tourists versus students, and

how interactions with locals were positively impacted when they were introduced as

students rather than Americans: "Probably just the fact that I was studying abroad and not

being a tourist was the most valuable."   Participant N3 describes the phenomenon:

> . . . if you tell them you're an American, then they're just kind of like, 'okay,' but
>
> if you say, 'I'm a student from the United States,' then they're like, 'oh, that's
>
> wonderful.' They get more excited if you're a student than just a tourist, because
>
> then they're like, 'oh, so you really are interested in our culture,' and then they
>
> want to know what we're studying… At the time that I went, Hillary and Obama
>
> were like the big rivalry going on, so they were asking us who we were going to
>
> vote for. But it is kind of cool to have them ask me like; who are you going to
>
> vote for? Why do you want to vote for them, what's going on in the election right
>
> now, so, I thought that was pretty cool.

> If you're a student and you're studying… I think they respect you more if you're
>
> there for that reason rather than to have a good time and take advantage of things
>
> that you can't do at home, so I think that's why they're more interested… when

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we told them that we were studying ethical tolerance, they were like, 'oh yeah, this is the right place to be' and they were more willing to talk to you if you were a student, rather than just a tourist.

Significance of Short-Term Study Abroad: Participants' Opinion on Short-Term Study Abroad

While the majority of existing study abroad literature argues that the longer the duration of the study abroad experience, the more the benefits for participants (Fantini, 1995; Erwin & Coleman, 1998; Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Vande Berg et al., 2004), the interview data from this study revealed a clear rationale for why and how short-term study abroad benefits participants. Participants in this study chose short-term programs because otherwise they might have been unable to participate due to lack of time and/or financial resources, for example, "I really wish that I could have stayed longer. But because of my work, the three-week exchange thing was kind of all I could do." In other words, the availability of short-term study abroad enabled them to study abroad if they were unable to go for a long-term program. Financial constraints were also among the main reasons participants often favored the short-term programs: "I thought I would never study abroad because I thought it would be too expensive... I didn't know there was an option to go for a short amount of time." This suggests that one significant benefit of short-term programs is their accessibility to students who would otherwise be unlikely to participate in study abroad.

Another major reason that participants favored the short-term program was because it allowed them to graduate on time: "I didn't want to interrupt my academic

schedule." Short-term programs, mainly in summer or January/May term, often do not interrupt other academic plans, whereas spending a semester or longer abroad could adversely affect the timing of degree completion. This was an unexpected finding yet one of the most-mentioned themes among program participants:

> This is my last semester. It would have been great to do a semester abroad but it wouldn't have been practical. So I was really happy that I was able to find a May term class. And I got back in time to take another summer class afterward that I needed for my major. So it was just the perfect little slot of time for me to study abroad.

> I really appreciate that there was a study abroad program that fit my schedule; I can't stress that enough… I would have loved to study abroad for a semester or a year, but it just didn't fit my degree program.

In addition to the advantage of accessibility, interview data suggest that short-term programs also include some features that may be less common in long-term study abroad experiences. Participant S6, for example, shared that the intense schedule of the short-term program, which always required students to be "on the go," made her prioritize experiences over appearance. She reported that this resulted in some "vanity shifts" for herself.

Another important feature unique to short-term study abroad is that it relieves concerns of students (and their families) who have never traveled abroad before while still providing an international experience. For some students who went to study abroad for the first time, even three weeks seemed a long time away from home: "If the program

were cut off a week earlier, for me personally I wouldn't have minded. I was getting a

little homesick." A few interviewees mentioned that they would like to study abroad

again, but not in a longer-term program, because they simply do not enjoy being away

from home. For such students, short-term study abroad is clearly an important

opportunity.

Interviews also revealed that in addition to minimizing the anxieties of first-

timers, short-term study abroad provides an effective introduction or starting place for

students' international experience. Many first-timers throughout the interviews shared

that they are now ready to study abroad for longer periods:

> Three weeks was good, probably like emotionally because there was just enough
>
> time to be on my own and be away from everyone close to me, but at the end of it,
>
> I was like, 'I'm ready to stay, I want to stay longer, maybe I should have done a
>
> full semester abroad…' So that led me to think, maybe I do want to study abroad
>
> somewhere for a full semester… I think for my first time ever studying abroad it
>
> was good to have three and a half weeks but now I would want to do something
>
> longer.

Best Experience: Everybody Should Study Abroad

One of the most common themes which emerged throughout the interviews was

that it was the best experience they ever had, and that they wished everybody could have

a study abroad experience. As participant S6 said: "I definitely learned a lot over three

weeks…and it made a big difference for me; just seeing the different ways that people

live. I hope that anybody can do it." Others were even more emphatic:

It was the best experience of the 23 years of my life. It was a great opportunity to be able to travel outside of the country and really incorporate my living standard into something totally different… I didn't know that there were so many different cultures in Thailand.

How many times are you going to get that opportunity as a student to go on study abroad?... I learned a lot, and I think it kind of molded me into a better person because I got out of my comfort zone a lot, and there's no better time to do that than when you're a student….

I want to go again because I want to take advantage of me being a student. I don't plan on going to graduate school and I've only got a year left, so I just want to study abroad again before I graduate, hopefully.

Selection of a Host Country as a Heritage Seeker

Interview data revealed that students are interested in visiting their roots, and that therefore they tend to select a study abroad location associated with their heritage. For example, more than half of the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program participants were Hmong-American. Many interviewees from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program also shared their desire to visit the places their ancestors came from:

I want to go to Germany because I have some ancestors from there, so it would be cool to see where we came from, like physically, or landscape wise. And I want to go to Norway because we have some relatives or some ancestors from there too.

We were one of the refugees that had to cross the Mekong river into Thailand so

yeah, that whole story… just seeing that river and then my parents always

described it to me… I mean, being that I'm from Southeast Asia… seeing where

our culture really came from… I think I got a lot more out of it.

. . . because a lot of the first people that come to America were from Europe… It's

just so interesting to see kind of where our culture came from. Even though it

was a long, long time ago and not everybody is European in America anymore,

but it's still kind of cool to see where we came from.

Expression of Regrets

There are several themes that were mentioned throughout the interviews relating

to feelings of regret. Many interviewees shared they wished they had spent more time

interacting with locals, for example, "I wish I would have talked to more Dutch people."

Shyness was a barrier for some:

What I regret is more on a personal level, because there are just some aspects of

my personality I couldn't get over in three weeks, to be comfortable enough to do

that… I didn't meet new people. I just didn't get to talk with really anyone… If

anyone is going abroad, I would strongly suggest to just get out there and meet

people.

There were cases when such shyness resulted in students missing out on experiences or

activities they might otherwise have taken advantage of: "I wanted to go the zoo and I

didn't go… I had nobody to go with, and I was so paranoid about going by myself… But

I still wish I would have gone." The majority of interviewees mentioned that what they

would do differently if they went to study abroad again was to find more opportunities to interact with locals, and for several, this realization stayed with them and influenced their next steps. For example, participant S3 who was preparing for his second study abroad said:

> I would like to spend more time interacting with people in the host country… so talking to Jordanian people and finding Jordanian friends right away [is my plan]… to interact a bit more with someone who's from the culture there, become their friend…

The above interviewee was very shy and timid prior to his first study abroad program. When I met him after return, he was already preparing for his second study abroad. In contrast to his first study abroad preparation, he was now very enthusiastic and proactively planning to make local friends and immerse himself in the host country and culture. The transformation suggests that the short-term study abroad program can serve as a useful introduction to international experience, and illustrates the personal development that can result from even a three-week program.

Summary

This research was designed to investigate the effectiveness and impact of two short-term study abroad programs for U.S. students in two different locations (northern Europe and mainland Southeast Asia) that are respectively more and less similar to their home country culture. In this chapter, I have presented data description and data analysis based on each research question. Findings suggest that short-term study abroad programs even as short as three weeks have a positive impact on participants' professional and personal development, including career development, educational aspirations, global

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engagement, perspectives and worldview change, self-awareness, and motivation related to international affairs and intercultural development. Other benefits are that students who otherwise may not have had the time, financial resources, or inclination to participate in study abroad programs are able to participate and to gain a "foot in the door" in terms of international experience. In addition, short-term study abroad participants graduate without the delays that might occur as a result of longer programs.

Survey and interview data reveal that constructive field trips and on-site mentoring are critical factors that enhance participants' learning during study abroad. Participants indicate that gaining knowledge of the target culture is more important to them than gaining knowledge of the target language. The in-depth debriefing after field trips and opportunity of critical reflection throughout the study abroad program was indicated as one of the most important program characteristics that enhance participants' learning.

With regard to their intercultural development as measured by IDI, 56% of total participants showed positive progress in their intercultural sensitivity, between pre IDI scores and post IDI scores. 68% of participants whose intercultural sensitivity showed a positive gain were female students. Participants who experienced a higher degree of cultural distance between home and host country (Thailand/Laos) showed larger gains on their IDI scores. Overall, *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants' DS increased an average of 4.5 points between the pre- and post-tests; and *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants' DS increased an average of 2.1 points between pre- and post-tests. Both showed minor changes occurring primarily within the Minimization stage. The average gains in intercultural development measured by the IDI in students from the

Understanding Southeast Asia program are actually larger than the average gains from other three-week and longer-term program participants examined in the Georgetown Consortium study (Vande Berg et. al., 2009, examine data gathered from 61 study abroad programs). Although quantitative measures of intercultural sensitivity development measured by IDI show relatively minor gains on average, the wide range of quantitative data from 46 participants, combined with interview data, suggest that factors, such as individual readiness, activities in the host country location, and the degree of difference between home and host country cultures all have an impact on intercultural development.

These findings have important implications for the design and implementation of short-term programs, as well as study abroad theories, policy and practice in the field. The next chapter focuses on implications of this study for theory, policy, and practice. The limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future research are also discussed.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The previous chapter provided the detailed data analysis related to the research questions investigating the impact of the three-week short-term study abroad. This final chapter provides a summary of major findings and implications of the study. The chapter consists of the following sections: 1) synthesis of significant quantitative and qualitative findings, 2) implications for theory, policy, and practice, 3) limitations of the study, 4) recommendations for future research, and 5) conclusions.

Synthesis of Significant Findings

The objective of this study is to analyze two short-term study abroad programs in order to assess the major program components that participants found the most valuable, and to investigate the possible impact of their short-term study abroad experiences. There have been negative perceptions and concerns about the minimal impact of short-term programs on students' development of intercultural competencies, and short-term programs may even be viewed by critics as a kind of glorified cultural tourism. However, findings from this study suggest that a three-week short-term study abroad program can have a positive impact on participants' intercultural sensitivity, as well as professional and personal development. Enhancement of intercultural competence, curricular variety including constructive field trips and critical reflection, support from instructors and on-site mentors, and the opportunity to interact with locals were key factors that participants found to be important to their study abroad experience. Both quantitative and qualitative results revealed significant impacts on participants' professional and personal development, including career development, educational

aspirations, self-awareness, worldview change, development of critical thinking skills, global engagement, and interest in international affairs.

Participants especially favored the short-term program format because it 1) provides international study opportunities to those who might otherwise have been unable to participate in traditional long-term programs due to lack of financial resources and/or time; 2) enables them to graduate on time; and 3) serves as the first international experience for people who have never been abroad before, and may not yet be ready to participate in a long-term program.

With regard to participants' intercultural development, a total of 56% (22 out of 39) of participants showed enhanced intercultural sensitivity, measured by IDI, after completing their three-week short-term study abroad program. While no participants were in the ethnorelative stage in the pre-test, 10% of participants moved to Acceptance/Adaptation (A/A), the ethnorelative stage of the IDI developmental scale in the post-test. When looking at gender differences, 68% of participants whose intercultural sensitivity showed a positive gain were female students. When comparing the two programs, students in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program, who experienced a higher degree of cultural distance between home and host country, showed more gains on their IDI scores.

Overall, the IDI Developmental Score (DS) of participants in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program increased an average of 4.5 points after the three-week short-term study abroad experience; and participants' DS from *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program increased an average of 2.1 points. When comparing the overall

score of 22 students' positive change and 17 students' negative change, the average positive gain was greater (+13 points) than the average negative movement (-9 points).

These results are particularly notable because the average gain from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program in this study is greater than the average gain from other three-week and longer-term programs in at least one other major study (Vande Berg et al., 2009). According to the Georgetown Consortium project findings gathered from 61 study abroad programs, study abroad participants gained an average of 2.6 points after 1-3 week programs; regressed by an average of 1.3 points after 4-7 week programs; gained an average 1.2 points after 8-12 weeks programs; gained an average 4.0 points after 13-18 week programs; gained an average 0.5 points after 19-25 week programs; and gained an average 0.8 points after 26 week-1 academic year programs (Vande Berg et al., 2009).

One possible explanation for the difference in IDI results from these two programs could be the difference in opportunities to go on field trips and to interact with locals. Interaction with locals was mentioned as one of the most valuable aspects of study abroad by the majority of participants in this study. The *Understanding Southeast Asia* program included a wider range of field trips; accordingly, students were able to have more frequent and extensive contact with locals. Interestingly, students on the semester long Khon Kaen CIEE program do not have a field trip to Laos or Cambodia. The extensive field trips in *Understanding Southeast Asia* include staying in a traditional Buddhist community, learning the various tasks involved in rice farming and tree planting, participating in a traditional Lao *baci* ceremony with faculty and students of the National University of Laos, visiting Khmer rural communities and schools in the lower region of

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Northeast Thailand, and teaching at a local elementary school. Qualitative interview data from the participants whose IDI DS had a positive gain revealed that these immersion experiences were among the most valuable for them during their study abroad.

There were similarities and differences between the findings from IDI quantitative data and qualitative interview data. Both IDI and interview data supported the idea that individual participant readiness was an important factor. The degree of intercultural sensitivity development and positive impact seem to be closely related with individual participant readiness and open attitudes. Interview data revealed some participants were not ready to immerse themselves into a new and challenging environment. For example, individual participants had different ways of spending their free time under the same program structure. While participants whose IDI score had a positive gain often emphasized the importance of open-mindedness and a positive attitude toward different activities during the study abroad program, some participants whose IDI score had a negative move shared openly that they were not interested in engaging with locals. For example, one such participant mentioned that she had spent most of her free time watching a U.S. TV network, reading English language novels from home, hanging out with her U.S. roommate, or chatting on-line with friends at home via the internet. A few interviewees also mentioned being too shy to interact with locals although they really wanted to make local friends. When participants are not yet ready to be exposed to an unfamiliar and/or challenging cultural environment, their IDI score tends to regress. The results of post-IDI scores in this study showed first-time abroad participants who were in the Defense or lower Minimization stages in their pre-test often regressed in their post-test. J. Bennett (2008) offers a possible explanation of this result:

Unfacilitated intercultural interaction without preparation and debriefing often

fails to foster intercultural competence, decrease stereotypes, or engender

learning. In the context of study abroad, this preparation does not stand alone, but

is part of a systematically constructed sequence of pre-departure preparation, in-

country facilitation of critical incidents, and cognitive, affective, and behavioral

reintegration upon return (J. Bennett, 2008, p. 15).

While the data from participant interviews indicate a significant positive impact, the

change of IDI pre- and post-scores was relatively minor compared with the interview

results. The overall IDI pre- and post-DS scores for participants from both programs

showed a positive change after the three-week study abroad program. However, many of

the students stayed within the Minimization stage and the change was not statistically

significant.

Another interpretation as to why there was little change in participants'

intercultural sensitivity as measured by IDI pre- and post-test could be related to selection

bias. As discussed in Chapter 2, contact involves both cognition and affect. As Pettigrew

(1998) stated, "Prior attitudes and experiences influence whether people seek or avoid

intergroup contact, and what the effects of the contact will be… High intergroup anxiety,

usually deriving from no prior experience with the outgroup also can impede both contact

and its positive effects" (p. 78). Those who participate in global seminars are self-

selected and may already have relatively high pre-IDI scores even before study abroad

because "the prejudiced avoid intergroup contact" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 72).

Yachimowicz (1987) explained that the finding of little change in international

understanding among study abroad students in his study was because study abroad

students are self-selected and already hold a large interest in international affairs. Participants' overall developmental IDI pre-test scores in this study were in the middle of the Minimization category. This means participants already held a worldview that is considered to be transitional from a more ethnocentric orientation to a more culturally sensitive ethnorelative worldview (Hammer & Bennett, 2002). Hammer (2005) found that the greatest intercultural gains occurred among those who had the most to gain, those in Denial and Defense.

<div align="center">Implications for Theory, Policy, and Practice</div>

<div align="center">*Theoretical Implications*</div>

Based on the data analysis and findings, this section explores the various theoretical implications of the study. The first section describes how the research informs key theories reviewed in Chapter 2 using a deductive approach. The second section, post-analysis of literature review, presents the theory that came out of the data analysis, using an inductive approach.

Intergroup Contact Hypothesis

The overall findings of this study are consistent with Allport's intergroup contact hypothesis. First, even though participants in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program indicated that they felt more cultural dissimilarities between home and host cultures, their overall intercultural sensitivity, measured by IDI, showed more gains compared to the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program participants. As suggested by the intergroup contact hypothesis, "shared interracial experiences with a common objective led to mutual understanding" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005, p.263). *Understanding Southeast Asia*

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program participants had more opportunity to have frequent contact and in-depth interactions with locals because its curriculum consists of more extensive field trips to various local communities and service learning opportunities – including tree planting; transplanting, thrashing, and pounding rice; and teaching English at the local schools – which provided participants more of an immersion experience with locals. It is important to note Pettigrew's (1988) notion of *constructive contact* [italics added], which goes beyond initial acquaintanceship. This leads to my emphasis on the importance of *how* study abroad program should be facilitated rather than simply for how long and/or with how many students.

The key aspects of the two global seminars' curricula in this study include in-depth contact with locals in various immersion settings. In the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program participants stay in a residential area, and constructive field trips include visits to ethnically diverse city neighborhoods, predominantly Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese in Amsterdam, while the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program visited a rural community in Thailand. Although many current study abroad programs include a number of field trips to historical sites, it is important to critically examine whether they are superficial cultural tourism or could lead to more extensive contact with locals.

Allport's (1954) four key scope conditions for optimal contact - 1) the situation must allow equal group status within the situation; 2) common goals; 3) intergroup cooperation; and 4) authority support - are well supported by participants' interview data and the overall findings of this study. Allport's (1954) second scope condition of "common goals" seems to fit well with participants' emphasis on the importance of

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playing sports with locals for enhancing optimal intercultural contact. Participants from both programs shared their experiences of being able to make friends more easily and quickly when playing sports together, and mentioned that sports seem to be a good way to initiate intercultural contact. Even though she does not like sports that much in general and did not actually play the game, one female interviewee from the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program responded that participating in a soccer event with locals was the best time she had during study abroad: "We were all wearing the same orange t-shirts and shouting 'Go, Holland!'" showing the importance of the *common goal*. For a participant in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program, having a Thai roommate and playing basketball together fulfilled Allport's (1954) first scope condition: "the situation must allow equal group status within the situation" (p. 14). Various service learning projects from the curriculum satisfy the "intergroup cooperation" which is his third condition (p.15).

Finally, the "authority support" (p. 15) from the faculty leaders and on-site mentors from the two programs are emphasized by participants as one of the most critical factors to enhance their learning during study abroad. While Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analytic findings indicated that these conditions are not essential for prejudice reduction, contact under these conditions typically leads to even greater reduction in prejudice. Incorporating these major elements including extensive field trips, in-depth contact and frequent interaction with locals, and support from the faculty leaders and on-site mentors are major success factors for study abroad programs, as closer examination from Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) demonstrated: "these conditions are best conceptualized as an interrelated bundle rather than independent factors" (p. 752).

Further, Pettigrew also emphasized the importance of having sympathy rather than knowledge in order to enhance an optimal intercultural contact (personal communication, August 18, 2009). This also supports the importance of facilitation of a quality study abroad program. Whereas knowledge can be obtained from books and other resources without intergroup contact, sympathy can often be developed as a result of constructive contact with outgroup members, which is one of the main goals of the study abroad program.

Transformational Learning Theory

As Taylor (1998) stressed, "a world view shift" (p. 7) is at the heart of Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation. The transformative impact of study abroad through worldview shift is clearly described in participants' rich qualitative data discussed in Chapter 4. The impact of study abroad as a result of the transformative learning found in this study includes self-awareness, worldview changes, critical thinking skills, different perspectives and related behavior changes, global engagement, changes in life styles*,* educational aspirations, and motivation toward open-mindedness. In addition, transformative learning also influences participants' career and educational choices, such as pursuing internationally-oriented careers or changes in academic majors after return.

It is important to remember that transformative learning after study abroad happened not because of the simple intercultural contact, but because of the critical reflection and active learning that occurred in addition to the contact itself. Many study abroad participants may enthuse about how fun and the exciting the experiences were after returning. Not everyone who studies abroad, however, experiences successful transformative learning. The structure of the curriculum from the two programs was

infused with various interrelated academic and practical debriefings, readings, in-depth discussions, and writing assignments requiring critical reflection.

High- and Low-Context Culture, Cultural Dimensions, and Cultural Intensity Factors

Based on the different cultural foundations of Thailand/Laos and the Netherlands, Hall's (1956, 1976) concept of high- and low-context culture and Hofstede and Hofstede' (2005) Dimension of Culture Scales have been discussed in Chapter 2. Further, this study also investigated how study abroad participants' cultural intensity factors (Paige, 1993) are demonstrated when sojourns are in these two different cultural environments.

Although there are situational and individual differences, higher context culture is often observed in Thailand/Laos while lower context culture is often observed in the Netherlands, similar to the U.S. The overall Dimension of Culture Scales from Hofstede (see Table 2-1) also indicated that the cultural similarity between the U.S. and the Netherlands is closer compared to the cultural similarity between the U.S. and Thailand/Laos. When comparing the U.S., the Netherlands, and Thailand/Laos, the U.S. and the Netherlands showed closer cultural dimensions in four out of five categories from Hofstede's (2005) Dimension of Culture Scales. Participants' criticism of U.S. consumerist culture reflects the significant Short-Term Orientation index score (29, Table 2-1) of the U.S. from Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) cultural dimension.

As discussed in Chapter 4, *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants encountered more cultural dissimilarity between home culture and host culture compared to the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* participants (see Table 4-6, Figure 4-1). Accordingly, participants who reported more cultural differences between home culture and host culture also demonstrated higher cultural intensity both in the overall and

subcategory scores (see Table 4-7). While *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants demonstrated higher cultural intensity factor scores in most of the subcategories, participants from both programs responded with the same intensity score for the Cultural Immersion category, "The level of stress you felt due to your cultural immersion in the host country" (Paige, 1993, p. 4). This indicates that no matter how similar or dissimilar the host culture is in terms of its high- versus low-context and/or different cultural dimensions, study abroad sojourners tend to feel high cultural intensity when immersed in a host culture during study abroad.

Intercultural Development: The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Intercultural sensitivity is developmental and constantly changing (Bennett, 1993). As Hammer et al. (2003) noted, while the DMIS indicates the continuum of intercultural developmental process, individuals can and do have elements of more than one developmental stage simultaneously. Accordingly, the interview data reveal that participants' ethnocentric and ethnorelative worldviews often seemed to co-exist during the developmental process. For example, participant N5 expressed her appreciation and positive attitude toward Dutch sports culture in her interview:

> . . . we went to go watch the game … everyone's in orange, everyone's drinking beer, but having a good time, nobody's getting too crazy, and you couldn't move anywhere, but everyone was just happy and there weren't really any riots or anything. Around here, like people will get into fights, if they get drunk at a bar, and one team wins and the other doesn't … they'll get into fights. You didn't really see that much there ... so that was amazing…

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At the same time, however, she also includes the unconscious ethnocentric view in the same interview:

> . . . they're so into it; they're more into it than I've ever seen actual football fans here, or any baseball or basketball. It's amazing, that is their sports, because they don't really have any other sports over there.

Although the data from participant interviews often indicate a significant positive impact, the change of IDI pre- and post-scores was relatively minor compared with the interview results. With regard to this difference between qualitative and quantitative results, Hammer (2009) observed that the traditional qualitative interview protocol asks participants about the overall study abroad experience and captures their transformational experience, not necessarily their intercultural sensitivity developmental experience (personal communication, March 29, 2009). Traditional qualitative interviews capture study abroad participants' sensory memory which is particularly powerful, and the study abroad experience is often viewed as transformational. However, Hammer (2009) argued that the IDI is not measuring the same phenomena; it is an assessment of the person's capacity to understand cultural difference and to shift mental and behavioral frameworks dependent on cultural context.

Having an enjoyable, stimulating, and impactful study abroad experience, therefore, does not necessarily mean that a participant's intercultural sensitivity level is increased. It is important to note that study abroad participants could even have a monocultural rather than an intercultural experience, i.e., a 'U.S.-American' experience in the host country, but not the experience of a host culture person. Students can be

knowledgeable about the host country and enjoy the study abroad experience, but still be unsuccessful in developing their intercultural competence.

Post-Analysis of Literature Review: Challenge/Support Hypothesis

While it was not examined initially in the Chapter 2 Literature Review section, findings from this study suggest that Nevitt Sanford's "Challenge/Support" hypothesis (Sanford, 1966) plays an important role in participants' learning during study abroad. Sanford (1966) stated that students learn most effectively in environments which provide learners with a balance between challenge and support for their learning. While both programs provided a substantial amount of on-site support, the *Understanding Southeast Asia* Program was perceived by the students to be more challenging in terms of intensity factors and cultural dissimilarity. Vande Berg et al. (2009) from the recent Georgetown Consortium study also stressed, "If confronted with too great a challenge, students retreat from learning. They become bored if they receive too much support while experiencing too little challenge (p. 22)". It appears that the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program found that balance.

As suggested by Sanford's (1966) challenge/support hypothesis, larger gains in the intercultural sensitivity score measured by the IDI were observed in the participants who felt more cultural dissimilarity between home culture and host culture; the participants from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program demonstrated greater intercultural sensitivity gains than the participants in the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program. In addition to the difference in the overall mean change scores, two more participants' IDI scores moved to the ethnorelative stage (A/A) in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program. The finding that students who felt more challenged gained more

is also consistent with Vande Berg et al.'s (2009) Georgetown consortium study presenting a positive correlation between study abroad participants' IDI score changes and the perceived cultural similarity/dissimilarity of participants' host and home countries. Study abroad participants who felt their culture was "'somewhat dissimilar' to 'dissimilar'" from the host culture had statistically significant IDI score changes whereas participants who felt their culture was either "'very similar', 'similar', or 'very dissimilar'" from the host culture did not show a statistically significant change in their IDI score. As suggested by Paige (1993), this might be explained by the degree of cultural distance or cultural difference between the host and home countries, which was greater for the students in *Understanding Southeast Asia* program.

Sanford's (1966) challenge/support theory is also supported by findings from this study related to the degree of interaction with locals during study abroad. A key aspect of the two programs examined in this study was that they combined intensive immersion experiences with faculty support and opportunities for debriefing and critical reflection. According to Vande Berg et al. (2009), learning is correlated with the amount of time students spent with people in the learning environment abroad. In the Georgetown Consortium project, study abroad participants who spent 26-50% of their free time with host nationals made the most progress in their intercultural learning, as measured by the IDI. However, the IDI scores of participants who reported spending between 51 to 100% of their time with host nationals actually decreased. This reflects the important balance of challenge and support during study abroad. Participants who spent much time with other U.S. participants were "interculturally under-challenged and became slightly more ethnocentric while abroad" (Vande Berg et al., 2009, p. 24) whereas those who spent too

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much time with locals were "interculturally overwhelmed and also can become more ethnocentric while abroad" (Vande Berg et al., 2009, p. 24). The Thai/Lao and Amsterdam programs appeared to be successful in striking this balance for some participants, but not for all. This phenomenon highlights important implications for policy and practice of study abroad program design and faculty leader training. The next section will discuss the major implications of the study for policy and practice.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The reason why short-term study abroad is investigated in this study is primarily to inform policy and practice related to the rapid increase in short-term study abroad programs in higher education institutions. As a researcher, my philosophy emphasizes the practical implications of academic research. While national study abroad enrollment trends have been moving toward significantly increasing numbers of students in shorter-term programs, the majority of literature in the field has emphasized longer-term programs. In this section, I discuss how my research informs policy and practice, primarily focusing on short-term study abroad. I will also offer a few suggestions based on the results of this study.

Significance of Short-Term Study Abroad

Unlike the critiques of short-term study abroad in much of the previous literature (Fantini, 1995; Erwin & Coleman, 1998; Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Vande Berg et al., 2004), the results of this study present significant impacts and benefits of short-term study abroad. The rich data obtained from this study provide greater understanding of participants' perspectives and insights on what stood out

the most from their study abroad experience, and how and why study abroad had an impact on them. It was clear from participants' interviews that even a three-week short-term study abroad experience had a significant impact on their professional and personal development.

Among the most significant benefits of short-term study abroad were enabling participants to actually attend the program. While a longer-term program would allow fuller immersion in the host country, it often limits the opportunity to those who have ample time and resources. Data from this study showed that participants chose short-term programs because otherwise they might have been unable to participate due to the lack of financial resources and/or time. Therefore, short-term programs tend to encourage and invite more underrepresented students to consider study abroad (Dessoff, 2006). In particular, the May term and January term were favored by participants because they could study abroad without interrupting their regular academic schedule. Similarly, participants favored a short-term program because it allowed them to graduate on time. One interviewee even mentioned that while a semester or longer abroad often affects time to degree completion, the interviewee was able to graduate even earlier than her cohort because of credits earned from short-term study abroad programs during May and Summer terms.

While more and more stakeholders in higher education agree on the importance of study abroad in an increasingly globalized society, many students are afraid to leave home; and parents often hesitate when their children desire to study abroad, especially in non-traditional destinations including Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere. The results of this study reflect these concerns; short-term study abroad programs were favored by

the first-timers. Students who were hesitant to travel abroad and families with concerns about such travel were nonetheless willing to select a short-term study program. Often the first short-term study abroad experience provides students an opportunity to 'get their feet wet,' and leads them to explore more extensive intercultural study or work abroad afterwards. Further, participants' positive evaluation of the short-term program was commonly related to the overall curriculum and depth of the program rather than the duration of the program. A few interviewees noted that they could take part in several short-term programs during their undergraduate time with the same resources and time commitment they would invest in one longer-term program.

Short-term study abroad is playing an increasingly important role in international education. The quality and effective facilitation of the short-term study abroad is even more important because it often plays a role for novice participants. An effective short-term program could open the door and guide these students to eventually become international experts in the future.

Program Quality over Quantity

With the rapidly increasing emphasis on internationalization of higher education, more and more educational institutions tend to competitively advertise how many study abroad programs they have developed and how many students they have sent abroad. At the same time, the word "intercultural competence" is becoming a more popular cliché among international educators who are hoping that returnees from study abroad programs have gained the intercultural competency to become global citizens. I would like to raise a question: Should the number of study abroad programs and participants be our primary

criterion to measure successful international education? We also need to ask why and how study abroad participants gain intercultural competence.

Whereas study abroad is often considered a major way to fulfill an international education mission to enhance students' intercultural competence, study abroad is not a magic wand that automatically confers intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is not a souvenir that participants bring back as a result of study abroad participation. Since transformative learning does not occur without appropriate intervention and facilitation, it is absolutely necessary to focus on the quality (rather than quantity) of the study abroad experience. It is important to remember that "cultural contact does not always lead to a significant reduction of stereotypes" (J. Bennett, 2008, p. 15). Indeed, inappropriate cultural contact may only reinforce negative stereotypes. More and more educational institutions are competitively expanding the number of study abroad programs they offer, and announcing how many students they have sent to study abroad. With the aggressively increasing number of study abroad programs with major federal funding, however, the quality of these programs seems to be questionable. More and more participants are often left to "sink or swim" by themselves. "It's Not All about the Numbers" (Lederman, 2007); the debate regarding quantity versus quality should be given serious consideration in order to enhance the transformative power of the study abroad.

One way to improve the quality of a study abroad program of any duration can be developing constructive field trips. A study abroad program full of field trips that are popular does not necessarily mean it is a good program. Fun field trips to various historical sites and popular locations without critical reflection and in-depth debriefing

may deserve the critical label of cultural tourism; participants spend most of their time with students from the same institutions and enjoy a memorable sojourn in the host country, but without necessarily experiencing transformative learning. Field trips do not have to be to famous historical sites in order to be impactful. For example, the field trip to a Black neighborhood during the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program and extensive visits to rural communities in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program do not bring students to locations that are popular among tourists. Instead, field trips need to be thoughtfully planned, taking into account the potential impact on students' experience. More important, the opportunity for in-depth debriefing and critical reflection following the field trips is what makes them valuable and renders experience into transformative learning.

Because short-term study abroad often plays the role of introducing international experience to first-timers, the quality of the program needs even more attention. A negative experience from the first short-term program may reinforce negative stereotypes and curtail participants' interests in the international field for good. The data from survey and in-depth interviews in this research revealed a number of major factors that participants found most valuable from their three-week short-term study abroad experience. Identifying specific characteristics of the study abroad programs that students find valuable will help inform policy and practice to improve further the content and structure of such programs.

Training Needs for Program Leaders

The issue of improving program quality raises the important question of how to train the rapidly growing number of study abroad program leaders. The critical

importance of the program instructor and on-site mentors should be taken into consideration. In addition to the participants' survey results and the interview data from this research, Vande Berg et al. (2009) found that students who had the opportunity to work on their intercultural learning with a mentor—someone who was able to help them make sense of the new and different environment in which they were living and learning—made greater gains than students who had not received intercultural mentoring during their time abroad. Despite the increasing quantity of study abroad programs nationwide, however, current study abroad programs rarely provide training for faculty as study abroad leaders.

Often instructors who speak the host country language, who are a native of the host country, or who teach subjects related to the host country tend to be nominated as leaders for study abroad programs. While speaking a language and/or familiarity with the host country is a benefit as a program instructor, appropriate training should still be provided for them. The critical role of the program leaders and on-site mentors are widely acknowledged in the field, but little support is available to them and training opportunities are sparse.

A training budget should be allocated as part of study abroad program policy. Program instructors come from different backgrounds with regards to their academic discipline and personal experiences. Instructors from science and engineering backgrounds, for example, are not necessarily familiar with theories and applications in the field of intercultural development and international education. It is important to provide program instructors with the appropriate knowledge and training to be able to help students develop greater intercultural sensitivity and to help students understand the

critical incidents participants encounter in order to maximize transformative learning for participants. Effective training tools and classroom exercise materials need to be incorporated and provided to program instructors; the Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation (DIE) exercise (Bennett, M., Bennett, J., & Stillings, 1977) or the recently developed Description, Analysis, and Evaluation (DAE) exercise (Nam & Condon, 2009; Nam, Condon & Gandert, 2008) are good examples of useful tools. Such tools enable program leaders to more effectively facilitate various critical incidents students encounter and turn them into a "teachable moment" (Savicki, 2008, p. 87).

Time Spent on the Internet during Study Abroad

The influence of growing on-line social network sites, such as Facebook and Twitter on study abroad participants is becoming a rising issue in the field. While study abroad participants are *physically* [italics added] abroad, there is an increasing concern that participants may spend significant amount of time on the internet communicating with people in virtual space at home and elsewhere instead of interacting directly with locals while they are abroad. In terms of economic thinking, there is a serious associated opportunity cost related to such behavior.

The results of this study showed that participants spent about 13 percent of their free time "alone" and 14 percent "on the internet" during a three-week study abroad program (see Table 4-5). *Study Abroad and Its Transformative Power* by Fry et al. (2009), which includes the research from 684 individuals from six U.S. institutions and 53 in-depth interviews, also reported that participants spent about 10% of their leisure time alone and 7% on the internet. In addition, this pattern seems unaffected by whether or not participants lived with a host family (Fry et al., 2009).

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This is an important issue to explore because the increasing percentage of time spent on the internet could reflect study abroad participants' loneliness and the challenge of making friends with locals during study abroad. When spending time alone on the internet, participants do not necessarily have to get outside of their comfort zone. I suggest strongly encouraging study abroad participants to spend more time interacting with locals rather than spending time alone on the internet. At the same time, it is also important to acknowledge that the majority of current study abroad participants are part of the on-line generation. If this is an unavoidable phenomenon with the current study abroad generation, its positive aspects can be utilized. For example, being able to keep in close contact via the internet, or using Skype for a free phone call to family at home during study abroad is an appealing convenience, especially for first-comers who are hesitant to go abroad at all. Further, the detailed data from this study provide interesting findings. Among the 14 percent of the time spent on the internet, about four percent of that time was spent communicating with people from the host country. This finding suggests the possibility of utilizing internet social network sites as a way to enhance more frequent and sustainable communication with locals. Internet and e-mail make it easy to keep in touch with new local friends during and after study abroad, which can be one way to employ Allport's (1954) constructive contact theory that stressed sustainable interaction beyond the initial acquaintanceship.

With regards to program design and participants' time spent on the internet, the findings from this study present considerable perspectives. As discussed earlier, the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program includes more extensive field trips and service learning opportunities compared to the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program. As a

result, the data from this study demonstrate that *Understanding Southeast Asia* participants spent less time alone or on the internet (8.2% alone and 10.6% on the internet) compared to the *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* program participants (18% alone and 17.2% on the internet, see Table 4-5). Constructive program design which provides various opportunities to interact with locals could create situations that eventually lead program participants to spend more time interacting with locals rather than spending their free time alone. As the findings from this study suggest, mindful and well-prepared design of a study abroad program can prevent students from indulging in spending too much time on the internet communicating with familiar friends and family at home rather than immersing themselves in the host culture.

Suggestions from Participants

The data from participants in this study provide a few other key policy suggestions. One of the strongest suggestions that emerged throughout the interviews was the lack of current study abroad programs that fit with participants' academic program or major. Most of the interviewees said when they consider study abroad, they first search for an abroad program that fulfills academic major requirements. However, many interviewees mentioned they often could not find a program that would fit their academic major in regards to the subject or credit requirement. One of the strong suggestions from the students, therefore, includes increasing the number of study abroad choices in terms of duration, topic, location, and format.

Overall, the most common theme that emerged from the interviews was that study abroad was the best experience participants ever had, and they wish all students could study abroad. More and more educational institutions are trying to include study abroad

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programs as part of their curricular requirements. The Carlson School of Business (University of Minnesota), as discussed earlier in this study is one good example incorporating study abroad as part of the requirement both for undergraduates (from 2008) and the full-time MBA curriculum (from 2009). For institutions that are considering such a policy, I propose a few suggestions based on the findings from this study. Educational institutions need to find a way to support students to meet this requirement. It is important to continue to implement short-term and affordable programs with a variety of options both in terms of housing and academics. To increase funding and ease financial aid restrictions for study abroad is a necessary step, especially for the underrepresented population.

The findings from this study also indicate that peers and past participants are critical to influencing the students' decisions to study abroad. As discussed in Chapter 4, making use of peer advisors from past study abroad programs is an effective way to encourage students to participate. While the two programs examined in this study present excellent examples of the on-site curriculum, students mentioned that the pre-departure orientation was not very effective. A re-entry program should also be incorporated (La Brack, 1991, 1993).

Collaboration with various academic units and institutions is essential so that study abroad participants do not struggle with different policies and guidelines among different academic units and advising offices with regard to the application of credits toward graduation and meeting academic requirements. Allowing the transfer of credits between host and home institutions would also encourage more students to study abroad. In parallel with these suggestions, both short-term and long-term impacts of the study

abroad programs need to be examined carefully and rigorously. The recently published

Study Abroad for Global Engagement (SAGE) retrospective tracer study (Paige et al.,

2009) is a good example of how to examine the long-term impact of study abroad.

<center>Limitations</center>

Limitations of this study include a small participant population, absence of a

control group, the nature of self-reported data, selection bias, and the influence of

heritage seeking in the study abroad experience. While quantitative measures were

utilized as part of the mixed-methods design, the goal was not to generalize from the

population values of two case-study analyses, but instead to examine for heuristic

purposes key success factors perceived by participants (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973).

Although the survey and IDI were conducted with the complete population of all students

who participated in two three-week global seminar programs, the overall number of 46

study participants is small.

The lack of a control group is one of the major limitations of this study. Just as in

general research with human subjects, there are underlying mediating factors, such as

SES, gender, major, role of faculty, and personal background (e.g., third-culture kid and

heritage seekers) for which it is difficult to control. Therefore, the change of participants'

perceptions or IDI scores may possibly derive from other variables besides the results of

the study abroad experience. As is the case with most surveys measuring the impact of

higher education on individuals, it is difficult to identify a control group that is truly

comparable with the group being studied because there are too many confounding

variables (Dwyer, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Yachimowicz, 1987). The recent

Georgetown Consortium Study (Vende Berg et al., 2009) provided supporting results

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with regard to the comparison with control groups: "study abroad participants made significantly greater gains, from the Pre-IDI to the Post-IDI, than control students at Georgetown University, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and Dickinson College" (p. 27).

Whereas different methods were triangulated to enhance the validity and credibility of this research, the methods used, such as survey, IDI, and interview all depend on self-reported data. Self-reports of experiences are often limited and lead to methodological challenges in sojourner studies of expectations (Rogers & Ward, 1993). Limitations of the study also include the possibility of selection bias. For example, one interpretation as to why there was little change in participants' intercultural sensitivity measured by IDI pre- and post-test could be related to selection bias. Those who participate in global seminars are self-selected. Participants may already have a strong interest in international affairs and relatively higher intercultural competency compared to their peer groups. In addition, it is important to recognize that those who volunteered for interviews after return may be those who likely had a positive experience. In fact, seven out of 12 interviewees were those who had a positive gain in their IDI scores. Since there were only 12 interviews it is difficult to generalize about the whole student participant population based on the interview findings. Finally, more than half of the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program participants were students of color, many of whom were heritage seekers (13 out of 23), whereas participants in *Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam* were all white students and included only one heritage seeker. Despite the significant number of heritage seekers in the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program, this

study does not include a rigorous investigation of the psychological influence of heritage seeking on the impact of study abroad.

Recommendations for Future Research

For future study, I suggest conducting research with larger numbers of participants to examine the impact of short-term study abroad programs. While everyone in the two programs participated in the study (n=46), there is weakness associated with the small number of participants. Comparison with a control group in future studies would provide stronger support for the impact of study abroad on participants. Further, I suggest incorporating additional research methods in addition to participants' self-reported data in order to make the research findings more compelling and rigorous in future research. The possible impact of the psychological influence of heritage seeking study abroad participants on their intercultural sensitivity development also needs to be considered in future studies.

Finally, little systematic longitudinal research has been undertaken that examines the enduring effects of short-term study abroad programs. In addition, tracer studies are surprisingly rare in the field of study abroad. In this regard, the recent Georgetown Consortium study (Vande Berg, et al., 2009) is a good example to initiate important longitudinal research in the field. According to the results of Georgetown Consortium study (Vande Berg, et al., 2009), the intercultural development that had occurred was being sustained, at least during the first five months after sojourners' return. The recent research, *Study Abroad and Its Transformative Power* (Fry et al., 2009), is an example of a rigorous approach using retrospective tracer study methodology by including students from programs at three different points in time: those having recently graduated, those

having graduated five years ago, and those having graduated 10 years ago. Rigorous research on short-term programs deserves special consideration. Studies that measure both the immediate and long-term impacts of short-term study abroad programs are essential in future research to improve our understanding of the effectiveness of these programs.

Conclusion

The current national study abroad enrollment trends reflect the importance of short-term study abroad programs, with rapidly increasing numbers of participants and programs. Short-term programs are offered as legitimate educational experiences for U.S. college and university students who are unable or unlikely to participate in semester or academic year programs abroad (IIE, 2009). While there is a plethora of literature on study abroad, most of the research has investigated long-term programs, whereas the majority of students are currently participating in short-term programs. More recent literature is beginning to address the ways to maximize short-term study abroad experience. However, less attention has been given to the perceptions of the study abroad participants regarding what they feel the most valuable experiences were and which had the most impact on them.

Utilizing a mixed methods approach including quantitative measures from pre- and post-survey questionnaires, pre- and post-sojourn assessments using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and qualitative data obtained from interviews, this study examines the major program components that participants found the most valuable and investigates the possible impact of their short-term study abroad experiences. The unit of the research is two short-term study abroad programs for U.S. students in two different

locations (Southeast Asia and Europe) that are more and less similar to their home country culture. Whereas case studies can provide sound preliminary evidence in a natural and real-life context (Bacon, 2002), few case studies exist on study abroad, and comparative studies are rare in the literature. The theoretical interdisciplinary framework used includes social contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998), transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1991), the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1993), theory related to various cultural dimensions (Hall, 1956, 1976; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede et al., 2010), and Cultural Intensity Factors (Paige, 1993).

While there have been negative perceptions and concerns about the minimal impact of short-term programs, findings of this study suggest that a three-week short-term study abroad program can have a significant positive impact on participants' intercultural sensitivity, as well as professional and personal development. Data revealed significant impacts on their professional and personal development, including career development, educational aspirations, self-awareness, perspective and worldview change, critical thinking skills, global engagement, and motivation toward international affairs. Other benefits are that students who otherwise may not have had the time, financial resources, or inclination to participate in study abroad programs are able to participate and to gain a "foot in the door" in terms of international experience. In addition, findings from this study revealed that short-term study abroad participants graduate without the delays that might occur as a result of longer programs. Enhancement of intercultural competence, variety in the curriculum including various field trips, the roles of instructors and on-site mentors, and the opportunity to interact with locals were major components

that participants found valuable and important in their study abroad experience. Although quantitative measures of intercultural sensitivity development measured by IDI show relatively minor gains on average, participants' IDI score changes between pre- and post-tests from the *Understanding Southeast Asia* program were greater than the changes from participants who attended other three-week and even longer-term programs in at least one other major study (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Further, the findings from this study suggest that factors, such as individual readiness, activities in the host country location, and the degree of difference between home and host country cultures all have an impact on intercultural development.

These findings have important implications for the design and implementation of short-term programs, as well as study abroad theories, policy, and practice in the field. The success of study abroad should not be measured solely by the number of students sent abroad. Participating in study abroad is not a shortcut to gain intercultural competence. Along with increasing numbers of study abroad programs, increasing numbers of study abroad participants are left to learn on their own, often resulting in a "sink or swim" situation. Only when the program is done right can real impact occur with participants, for example, enhancing their intercultural skills. Students learn effectively only if the program is structured properly before, during, and after their experiences abroad (Vande Berg, 2008). Interviewees in this study cited the variety of experiences during their programs, interactions with instructors and on-site mentors, and opportunities to interact with locals as being key factors in creating a positive learning experience. Students' pre- and post-IDI scores showed considerable variation, both positive and negative. Students who study abroad are having an experience that can

influence intercultural sensitivity, and it is important to design programs in such a way as to increase the chances that the experience will be a positive one.

The findings from this study also reinforce the importance of critical reflection in transformational learning. Constructive intergroup contacts were applied during both of the study abroad programs examined in this study to foster transformational learning through reducing prejudice and stereotyping. The opportunity to interact with and learn from different people, cultures, and communication styles can only be provided by well-designed programs and appropriate supervision under competent program leaders and on-site mentors. Further, the important balance of challenge and support (Sanford, 1966) during study abroad is one of the key findings from this study. Data revealed that participants' learning and intercultural competence increase when there is enough challenge from the program design and appropriate support from the program leader and on-site mentors. This critical importance of balance between challenge and support was also noted in the Georgetown Consortium study (Vande Berg et al., 2009). The results of this study have particularly noteworthy policy implications for developing training for program leaders and on-site mentors. Developing affordable study abroad programs with a variety of academic options, increasing financial aid, and collaborating with academic units and institutions across the globe are also suggested as policy implications.

The results of this study provide strong empirical support for the benefits of short-term study abroad. Short-term study abroad can make a difference. Program participants mentioned that they were able to have an international education experience because the short-term program made it feasible for them to study abroad. Almost every participant in this study noted that study abroad was the *best experience* of their lives to date. With

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the dramatic increase of short-term study abroad programs nationwide, it is imperative to enhance program quality through creative, innovative, and systematic curricular designs that foster transformative and intercultural learning.

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Consent Form for Survey Questionnaire

CONSENT FORM

**Intercultural Development in the Short-Term Study Abroad Context:
A Comparative Case Study Analysis of Global Seminars in Asia (Thailand and Laos) and in Europe (Netherlands)**

You are cordially invited to participate in a research study to assess the effects of short-term study abroad programs. You were invited as a possible participant because you are registered for a 3-week global seminar study abroad program. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Kyoung-Ah Nam, a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative International Development Education from the University of Minnesota.

Background Information
The objective of this comparative case study is to investigate the effectiveness of two short-term study-abroad programs, one in Europe (Netherlands) and the other in Asia (Thailand and Laos). The two programs are selected in order to analyze if there is significant differences in the effect of participating in a study-abroad program in a culture which is similar to the participant's home culture compared to a different one.
This project is intended to learn about participants' short-term study abroad experiences and the impact that they have had on their personal and professional lives and development. Through this investigation, I plan to identify factors which make for an effective short-term study abroad program perceived by participants. The results will 1) identify major components of successful study-abroad program; 2) provide valuable insights and recommendations; and 3) impact policies and practices in study-abroad programs.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do fill out the following survey questionnaire and Intercultural Development Inventory.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the survey as the survey is completely anonymous and confidential. The results will not be used in anyway related to

your status as student. However, at any point a respondent can decide not to continue completing the survey.

There are expected benefits for you for participating in the survey. Completing this survey should be quite interesting**.** It provides you an opportunity 1) to reflect study abroad experience; 2) to realize the benefits of study abroad experience; and 3) to be more aware of your internationality or being a global citizen.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researcher will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with your University or Faculty. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:
 The researcher conducting this study is Kyoung-Ah Nam. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at University of Minnesota (330 Wulling Hall, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0221), phone at 612-226-1067, or e-mail at namxx016@umn.edu. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix B

<u>Pre-Survey questionnaire</u>

"Thailand or Laos" is changed to "Netherlands" for the "Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam" participants

1. Do you have any previous international travel experience?   ○ Yes   ○ No
    If yes, please describe the location, length of stay (how many months total), and reason for travel.

    _____

1.1. Have you visited Thailand or Laos before?   ○ Yes   ○ No

2. Do you have any previous experience living in another culture?   ○ Yes   ○ No
    If yes, how much experience have you had living in another culture (how many months total)?

    _____

3. Do you have any previous study abroad experience?   ○ Yes   ○ No
    If yes, please describe the location, length of stay (how many months total), and reason for study abroad.

    _____

4. Why have you chosen to study abroad now?

5. Why have you selected Southeast Asia for your study abroad location?

6. Did you select this specific 3-week short-term program compared to other longer programs because of the following reasons?
   o Financial constraints (could not afford the longer-term study abroad programs): ○ Yes   ○ No
   o Did not want to leave home too long: ○ Yes   ○ No
   o May session time schedule was appropriate for me: ○ Yes   ○ No
   o Fears about threat of violence against North Americans, particularly in a post-9/11: ○ Yes   ○ No
   o Lack of fit with my current academic program or major: ○ Yes   ○ No

6-1. Are there any other reasons to select this 3-week short-term program compared to other longer

   programs? Please specify.

   _____

7. What are your expectations and goals for this short-term study abroad experience?

   _____

8. How likely or unlikely are you to do the following in the future?

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very likely
1) Take (more) courses related to international affairs	○	○	○	○
2) Learn (more) languages	○	○	○	○
3) Pursue a major related to international affairs	○	○	○	○
4) Pursue a career in the international field	○	○	○	○
5) Pursue graduate study in the U.S.	○	○	○	○
6) Pursue graduate study abroad	○	○	○	○
7) Work abroad in the future	○	○	○	○
8) Travel abroad	○	○	○	○
9) Study abroad	○	○	○	○
10) Make international friends	○	○	○	○
11) Date someone from a different culture	○	○	○	○
12) Marry someone from a different culture	○	○	○	○
13) Live in another country	○	○	○	○
14) Try international food	○	○	○	○
15) Work with international colleagues	○	○	○	○

9. What is your gender?   ○   Male   ○   Female

10. How old are you?   _____

11. What is your ethnic background? (Korean-American, Jewish-German, etc.) _____

12. What is your school year (e.g., senior, second year MA student, etc.)   _____

13. What is your major? _____   What is your minor?   _____

14. Where did you primarily live during your formative years to age 18?

_____

15. What is your native language/mother tongue?   _____

16. In addition to your mother tongue, what other languages do you speak fluently?

_____

17. What languages have you studied, and for how long?

_____

Appendix C

Post-Survey questionnaire

"Thai/Lao is changed to "Dutch" for the "Ethical Tolerance in Amsterdam" participants

1. To what degree did you have an opportunity to do any of the following while studying abroad?

	Not at all	Very little	To some degree	To a large degree
1) Interact with local people	○	○	○	○
2) Speak and communicate in the local language	○	○	○	○
3) Make (a) local friend(s)	○	○	○	○
4) Practice different non-verbal communication behaviors in local culture	○	○	○	○
5) Have in-depth contact with local people /community	○	○	○	○
6) Had some experience with unique local cultural activities	○	○	○	○

2. As best as you can recall, please divide 100% among the following choices describing how you spent your free time on the program (Please only consider the time you spent while not in class or completing other academic responsibilities)

With people from the U.S. (including both face-to-face and phone)	
With people from the host country	
1) via face-to-face and phone	

2) via internet (e.g., e-mail, instant messaging, etc.)	
With people from a variety of countries	
Alone (not including time on the telephone or using the internet)	
On the internet. e.g. entertainment, gathering non-academic information, e-mail or instant messaging (not including communication with people from the host country)	

The above category should not add up to more than 100%	**Total**	**100%**

3. How similar did you feel your host culture was to your home culture?
   (Rate this on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very similar and 10 being very dissimilar)

Very Similar   Very Dissimilar

   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

4. What do you think is the most important thing you have learned during study abroad?

5. How likely or unlikely are you to do the following in the future?

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very likely
1) Take (more) courses related to international affairs	○	○	○	○
2) Learn another language(s)	○	○	○	○
3) Pursue a major related to international affairs	○	○	○	○

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4) Pursue a career in the international field	○	○	○	○
5) Pursue graduate study in the U.S.	○	○	○	○
6) Pursue graduate study abroad	○	○	○	○
7) Work abroad in the future	○	○	○	○
8) Travel abroad	○	○	○	○
9) Study abroad	○	○	○	○
10) Make international friends	○	○	○	○
11) Date someone from a different culture	○	○	○	○
12) Marry someone from a different culture	○	○	○	○
13) Live in another country	○	○	○	○
14) Try international food	○	○	○	○
15) Work with international colleagues	○	○	○	○

6-1. Did your study abroad experience influence any of your answers above?

○ Yes ○ No

6-2. If yes, to what degree did your study abroad experience influence your answers?

	None	Little	Some	A lot
1) Take (more) courses related to international affairs	○	○	○	○
2) Learn (more) languages	○	○	○	○
3) Pursue a major related to international affairs	○	○	○	○
4) Pursue a career in the international field	○	○	○	○
5) Pursue graduate study in the U.S.	○	○	○	○
6) Pursue graduate study abroad	○	○	○	○
7) Work abroad in the future	○	○	○	○
8) Travel abroad	○	○	○	○

9) Study abroad	○	○	○	○
10) Make international friends	○	○	○	○
11) Date someone from a different culture	○	○	○	○
12) Marry someone from a different culture	○	○	○	○
13) Live in another country	○	○	○	○
14) Try international food	○	○	○	○
15) Work with international colleagues	○	○	○	○

7. To what degree did you experience stress related to the following during your study abroad program?

<u>Least Stressful</u>   <u>Most Stressful</u>

1) **Cultural Differences**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
The level of stress you felt due to the cultural difference
between your own culture and the host culture

2) **Ethnocentrism**
(1) The level of stress you felt due to your   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
     initial ethnocentrism
(2) The level of stress you felt due to the   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
     ethnocentrism of Thai/Lao people

3) **Language**
The level of stress you felt due to the   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
lack of language skills

4) **Cultural Immersion**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
The level of stress you felt due to your
cultural immersion in the host country

5) **Cultural Isolation**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
The level of stress you felt due to
being isolated from your own culture

6) Prior Intercultural Experience   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

The level of stress you felt due to your lack
of prior intercultural experience

7) Expectations   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

The level of stress you felt based on
your initial expectations toward the host culture
(whether they were met or not.)

8) Visibility / Invisibility

The level of stress you felt from

(1) Being visible (e.g., physically different from   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
members of the host culture)

(2) Being invisible (e.g., your identity, religion, or   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
sexual orientation is invisible to host culture
or concealed because it is not accepted in the host culture)

9) Status

The level of stress you felt from

(1) Not getting the respect you feel you deserve OR,   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

(2) Feeling you are receiving unearned recognition   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

10) Power and Control

The level of stress you felt from loss of power/control   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
over events compared to what you possessed at home

8. What characteristics of program design significantly enhanced your learning?

	None	Little	Some	A lot
1) Duration of program	○	○	○	○

* Please check only one box below

☐   If the program were longer, I could have learned more
☐   Three-weeks were about right
☐   The duration of program was not a significant factor for my learning

2) Amount of knowledge of target language	○	○	○	○
3) Amount of knowledge of target culture	○	○	○	○
4) Extent to which target language is used on site	○	○	○	○
5) Nature of course design	○	○	○	○
6) Nature of course assignment				
7) Type of housing	○	○	○	○
(e.g., having a local Thai roommate)				
8) Opportunity of cultural/experiential learning from field trips	○	○	○	○
9) On-site mentoring from faculty/program staff	○	○	○	○
10) Previous experience living in another culture	○	○	○	○
11) Previous study abroad experience	○	○	○	○
12) Pre-departure orientations	○	○	○	○

9. **What were the strengths and weakness of the pre-departure orientation program?**

10. **In what ways was pre-departure orientation helpful or not helpful? If yes, in what ways was it helpful?**

11. **What suggestions do you have to improve your study abroad learning experience?**

12. What would be more helpful if you study abroad again in the future?
   a. More in-depth pre-departure training
   b. More knowledge of the language of the host country
   c. More knowledge of the culture of the host country
   d. Home stay with host country nationals
   e. Other (please specify):

Appendix D

Consent Form for Interview

CONSENT FORM

**Intercultural Development in the Short-Term Study Abroad Context:
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Laos) and in Europe (Netherlands)**

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This project is intended to learn about participants' short-term study abroad experiences and the impact that they have had on their personal and professional lives and development. Through this investigation, I plan to identify factors which make for an effective short-term study abroad program perceived by participants. The results will 1) identify major components of successful study-abroad program; 2) provide valuable insights and recommendations; and 3) impact policies and practices in study-abroad programs.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be invited to be interviewed regarding your experience as a study abroad participant. This semi-structured interview may take 60-90 minutes.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the interview as the interview is completely anonymous and confidential. The results will not be used in

anyway related to your status as student. However, at any point a respondent can decide not to continue completing the interview.

There are expected benefits for you for participating in the interview. Completing this interview should be quite interesting**.** It provides you an opportunity 1) to reflect study abroad experience; 2) to realize the benefits of study abroad experience; and 3) to be more aware of your internationality or being a global citizen.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researcher will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with your University or Faculty. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is Kyoung-Ah Nam. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at University of Minnesota (330 Wulling Hall, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0221), phone at 612-226-1067, or e-mail at namxx016@umn.edu. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix E

Basic Interview Protocol

(I would like to indicate that the following interview questions are semi-structured, and formed only as a guideline. They may be modified or a certain questions can be emphasized over others depending on each participant's unique experience and context in the real interview setting).

1. Participants' expectations and goals before and after the short-term study abroad:
   - How well did your short-term study abroad experience meet your goals and expectations?
   - Could you give me one example (critical incident, phenomenological approach) or experience that best captures your study abroad experience?
   - Could you describe an experience abroad that you feel has had an important impact on you and your life after return? (Please be specific)
   - How would you characterize your program? What were the specific characteristics of your study abroad program?
   - What do you think made your study abroad experience most memorable? (e.g., field trip, cultural event attended, faculty, because I've struggled so much, etc.)
   - What do you think is the most important thing you have learned during study abroad?
   - What was the most rewarding experience you had during your short-term study abroad?
   - What was the most challenging experience you had during your short-term study abroad?

2. Any influence on participants' career plan from short-term study abroad experience?
   - What are your future career plans and has your short-term study abroad affect your decision?
   - What are your current educational plans and has your short-term study abroad affect your decision?
   - How has the short-term study abroad experience affected your future educational plan (graduate school, choice of major, another study abroad or work abroad plan, etc.), if it has?
   - What impact, if any, has your short-term study abroad experience has on what you are currently doing (recycling, using public transportation, shopping habits, etc)?

3. Any influence on participants' personal life from short-term study abroad experience?
   - Are there any direct influences on you from your study abroad experience? (e.g., your decision to choosing course work next semester, your worldview changed, you have learned and realized more about your own culture, etc.)

- What aspect of your life do you think may have the most impact from your short-term study abroad experience?
- What is your perception of how the short-term study abroad affected on you? Do you think the study abroad experience affect your personality, philosophy of life, or worldview in any way?
- Are there any changes in your life as a result of short-term study abroad?

4. How to improve:
   - What could have been better?
   - Do you plan to go on another study abroad (or work abroad) program in the future?
   - If you go study abroad again, what would you like to do differently?

5. Closing
   - Are there other thoughts or suggestions that you would like to share to help us better understand your experience with short-term study abroad?
   - Are there other thoughts that you would like to share which were not covered in this interview?