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Understanding the Relationship Between Teacher and Organizational Intercultural Competency in International Schools: A Mixed Methods Study

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The University of San Francisco

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER AND
ORGANIZATIONAL INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY IN INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

A Dissertation Presented
to
The Faculty of the School of Education
Department of Leadership Studies

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Sally E. Hirsch
San Francisco, California
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ABSTRACT

The number of international schools and their student populations are increasing around the world. These schools are culturally diverse educational spaces, providing opportunities for cultural understanding but also cultural conflicts. Teachers working in international schools need to be able to provide culturally relevant and responsive curriculum as well as be able to communicate effectively and appropriately with students, other teachers, administrators and parents. Research shows that students do best academically when taught by teachers who are interculturally competent yet there is a gap in current research on how this skill is developed in international teachers, and identified by school leaders. School leaders of international schools seek to employ teachers who have a high level of intercultural competency, however, teachers rarely undergo formal training to develop this competency. This mixed methods inquiry enabled a comparison between data from teachers and school leaders to understand how the skill of intercultural competency was identified and developed in the international school environment.

Four international schools participated in the study from South East Asia, East Africa, Western Europe and South America. The teachers involved in the study reported that early intercultural experiences had an impact on their choice to live and work in another culture. School leaders identified intercultural competency as a necessary skill when interviewing candidates for teaching positions and all school leaders used similar questions during the teacher recruitment process to evaluate this skill in candidates. The qualitative data from both teachers and school leaders indicated that within schools, cultural differences between expatriate teachers and locally employed staff had caused

some friction with school leaders reflecting that this is an area to be addressed within their schools. Further research in international schools should focus on assessing the effectiveness of cultural induction programs for expatriate and local staff, as well as planning ongoing professional development in intercultural competency for school leaders, teachers and support staff.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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My interest for this topic came through my years of experiencing international education while living in Switzerland. On the surface, international schools looked like most other schools I had attended or worked in; there were students, teachers, desks, chairs, whiteboards, timetables, morning assemblies, lunch lines and after school sports. But as soon as I began working there, it quickly became clear that the cultural dynamics of the school were very different to any that I had experienced. Planning curriculum became a challenge in order to make it relevant for all students. Parent-teacher meetings varied dramatically depending on whether a Japanese family sat down to meet with me or it was an English family discussing their child's learning. I made a lot of cultural gaffes and struggled to understand different perspectives, but I was always able to lean on more experienced teachers for their wisdom, guidance, advice, sympathy and humor. I sincerely and gratefully thank all the school leaders, teachers and students I have worked with as part of this research, and during my time in Switzerland. There is not a day that goes by that I don't recall a memory of living, teaching and learning in international schools.

My time as a student at USF has been challenging, enriching and enjoyable. I was welcomed and guided by my reader, Dr Chris Thomas, who prompted me to think more clearly and deeply about making the most of my courses and research. As one of my readers, Dr Thomas has provided valuable advice on how to ensure my research is relevant and useful to school leaders. Dr Ben Baab provided significant support through research methods and statistical analysis. His calm, supportive demeanor was greatly appreciated! Dr Patricia Mitchell was a constant cheerleader for all graduate students.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
SIGNATURE PAGE	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
Background and Need for the Study.....	2
Purpose of the Study	4
Research Questions.....	4
Theoretical Framework.....	5
Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions	5
Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence	7
Delimitations and Limitations of the Study	10
Limitations	10
Delimitations	11
Significance of Study.....	11
Definition of Terms	13
Summary	14
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	16
Overview.....	16
Cultural Dimensions	17
Cultural Dimensions of Organizations.....	18
Critiques of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions	19
Conclusion	20
Defining Intercultural Competency	21
Use of Terms in Literature.....	23
Models Depicting Intercultural Competency.....	24
Conclusion	25
Defining International Schools	26
International Education and International Schools	26
History.....	27
Types of School	28
Students in International Schools.....	30
International Schools Today	30

Leadership Within International Schools	31
Defining Terms	32
Preparation and Recruitment of School Leaders	32
Accountability and Measuring Leadership Achievement	34
Values	36
Intercultural Competency and Leadership in International Schools	37
Conclusion	38
International Teachers.....	39
Why Work Internationally?	40
Skills Needed to Teach in an International School	41
Demands Outside of the Classroom.....	42
Preparation to Teach in International Schools	43
Intercultural Competency Training Experiences of Teachers	44
Pre-Service Teachers	44
Experienced Teachers and Diversity Training Within Schools	47
Research Challenges Involving International Schools and International Teachers.....	47
Intercultural Competency and Student Academic Achievement.....	49
Impact of Family.....	50
Impact of Curriculum, Culture and Student Academic Achievement	51
Impact of Intercultural Competency of Teachers	52
Impact of School and Peer Culture	53
Conclusion	54
Supporting Teacher Intercultural Competency and Student Academic Achievement .	55
Intercultural Competency and Pre-Service Teachers.....	55
Supporting Intercultural Competency Amongst Experienced Teachers.....	56
Supporting Intercultural Competency Amongst School Leaders	57
Supporting Intercultural Competency Within Curriculum	57
Conclusion	58
Summary	59
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	62
Research Design	62
Research Setting	64
Population	65
Instrumentation	66
Reliability and Validity.....	68
Quantitative Data – Assessment of Intercultural Competency (AIC).....	68
Qualitative Data – Interview Questions	70
Data Collection	71
Timing of Data Collection	72
Data Analysis.....	72
Evaluation of Data Collection Tools	75
Evaluation of the Teacher Survey Tool	75
Benefits	75
Limitations	76
Evaluation of Interview Protocol	77

Benefits	77
Limitations	78
Researcher's Profile	79
CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS	83
Introduction	83
School Setting	84
South America	84
East Africa	86
South East Asia	87
Western Europe	89
Comparing Cultural Dimensions at Each School Location	91
School A - Peru	92
School B - Tanzania	96
School C - Thailand	98
School D - The Netherlands	100
Teacher Experiences	102
Completion of Survey	103
Teacher Self-Assessment of Intercultural Competency	103
Knowledge	104
Attitudes	108
Skills	110
Awareness	112
Motivation to Assimilate	114
Summary	117
Being Prepared to Teach in Culturally Diverse Classrooms	119
Teachers' Intercultural Experiences Before Working in International Schools	119
Identifying Teachers who have a High Level of Intercultural Competency	122
Selecting Candidates that 'Fit'	123
Intercultural Competency and Professional Development	125
Understanding the Relationship between Intercultural Competency Teacher and Organizational Processes of a School	127
Conclusion	129
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	131
Summary of the Study	131
Key Findings and Implications	134
Traits Required to Teach Internationally and the Concept of Intercultural Competency	134
Implications	135
Current Cultural Integration Programs	136
Implications	138
Leading a Culturally Diverse Staff in an International School	138
Implications	140
Recommendations	140
Practice	143

Recommendations for Teachers.....	143
Recommendations for School Leaders	143
Policy	145
Hiring Policies	146
Professional Development Policies.....	147
Organizational Policies	147
Research.....	149
Pre-service Teacher Training	149
School Leaders.....	150
Schools	150
Conclusion	151
REFERENCES	154
APPENDIX A PERMISSION FROM DR ALVINO FANTINI TO USE AMENDED AIC IN CURRENT STUDY	164
APPENDIX B INFORMATION SHEET TO SCHOOLS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY	165
APPENDIX C WELCOME LETTER TO TEACHERS WITH SURVEY LINK.....	167
APPENDIX D SURVEY WELCOME LETTER TO SCHOOL LEADERS WITH REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW TIMES.....	168
APPENDIX E USF IRB APPROVAL	170

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Alignment Between Research Questions and Data Collection.....	74
Table 2: Descriptions of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions	92
Table 3: Teacher responses to survey questions on knowledge of intercultural competency	105
Table 4: Teacher responses to survey questions on attitudes and intercultural competency	108
Table 5: Teacher Responses that Relate to Skills Required for Intercultural Competency	111
Table 6: Responses Related to Awareness as an Intercultural Competency	112
Table 7: Teacher Motivation Towards Host Culture	117

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Deardorff’s Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009)	8
Figure 2: Deardorff’s Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009)	9
Figure 3: Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for Peru, United Kingdom and the United States.	94
Figure 4: Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for Tanzania, United Kingdom and the United States.	96
Figure 5: Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for Thailand, United Kingdom and the United States.	99
Figure 6: Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for the Netherlands, United Kingdom and the United States.	101
Figure 7: A simplified version of Deardorff’s process model.	107
Figure 8: Teacher responses on level of interest and motivation to learning about their host country over three different time periods.....	116
Figure 10: Differences in cultural diversity training experienced by teachers during their teacher training.....	120
Figure 11: A visual overview of the study results, findings and recommendations.	142

CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

International schools are complex and dynamic organizations. They are a melting pot of nationalities, providing multiple opportunities for teachers and administrators to learn about different cultures. However, there are also challenges within these communities; they can be rife with cultural misunderstandings and miscommunications, with occasions where faculty or staff can feel alienated or ostracized. Roskell (2013) documents both the positive emotions and culture shock that teachers new to an international school may experience. When teachers move to a new country to work in an international school, they encounter double culture shock of both the host country and of the work environment (Roskell, 2013).

Guerra (2012) makes the point that “culture underlies every policy, practice and procedure in the school and influences every thought, interaction, and behavior of the individuals working within an organization” (p. 44). When considering the context of international schools, the influence of culture becomes even more dominant. Students in international schools experience cultural diversity amongst their peers, teachers, coaches and support staff. Teachers have to work in culturally diverse classrooms, as well as interact with colleagues, students, and parents from different cultural backgrounds. However, when it comes to cultural diversity amongst school leaders, there is a distinct difference in comparison to teachers and students. Paul Poore (2005) in his article on school culture indicates “all we have to do is look at the leaders of international education to see that our schools themselves are culturally loaded” (p. 352). He shares his observations that international schools tend to have Western origins, that the majority of

school leaders are white, and that native English-speaking educators form the majority of the teaching staff.

Although Poore (2005) indicated that school leaders tend to be predominantly white and from a Western culture, Walker and Riordan (2010) observed that schools are increasingly comprised of teachers and faculty from culturally diverse backgrounds. Research by Shaklee and Merz (2012) indicated that school leaders are aware of the need to support teachers working in culturally diverse environments but are uncertain how to evaluate the skill of intercultural competency amongst teachers, or how to best support the development of this skill through targeted professional development.

International schools are a prime example of an education environment with not only culturally diverse staff, but also a culturally diverse student and parent body. Given that students have higher academic achievement when taught by interculturally competent teachers, how do international school leaders use organizational structures to develop and support intercultural competency amongst teaching and administrative staff?

Background and Need for the Study

In today's increasingly diverse workforce, intercultural competency is a highly valued skill. In international schools, which can consist of more than 30 different nationalities, intercultural competency of teachers, administrators and the school organization structures can have a significant impact on student academic achievement (Callins, 2006; Oller, Vila, & Zufiaurre, 2012; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2011; Sleeter, 2012; Snowball, 2009). Deardorff (2009) defines intercultural competency as a set of attitudes, skills and values that influence a person's behavior and communication to effectively achieve one's goals in a culturally diverse environment. Developing

intercultural competency skills is a life-long process that can be supported through stages such as increasing cultural self-awareness, developing adaptability of behaviors and learning to advocate in situations where there is cultural discrimination (Deardorff, 2009).

Existing studies in the field of international schools focus on the need for international schools and school leaders to be interculturally competent but there is minimal research that documents how this takes place. Qualitative studies such as the one by Cain (2010) focused on one single international school or a program within that school. Another qualitative study by Fisher (2011) explored the use of Hofstede's cultural dimensions to develop cultural awareness workshops at a school in Turkey. Quantitative studies, such as the research by Deveney (2007) provide some insight into cultural training for teachers but there is still a gap in the research when exploring the experiences of international school teachers.

A literature review by Dolby and Rahman (2008) identified five main areas of research in international education, with international schools being one of these areas. The authors note that in comparison to other topics on international education, there is a relatively small volume of literature on international schools. Within the research area of international schools, Dolby and Rahman identified three research trajectories; the definition of international education and international schooling, the experiences of third culture kids, and the impact of changing contexts on international education. The authors indicate that "it is this third area of research that provides the most opportunity for growth and development and for connections with other aspects of research in international education" (p. 690).

In summary, there is a small amount of literature related to intercultural competency and teachers but an absence of studies that investigate the experiences of teachers in international schools in relation to intercultural competency. There appears to be very little research on the ways that teachers and schools can assess their intercultural competency, both personally and at an organizational level, although there are assessment tools available for evaluation of intercultural competency. This study addressed the need for more research related to teachers working in international schools, the development of intercultural competency amongst these teachers, and the connection between intercultural competency and school policies related to hiring and professional development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed method study was to explore the organizational processes of international schools, specifically hiring and professional development, and compare these processes to the intercultural competencies of the teachers working there in order to understand how these factors interact.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study: What intercultural exposure do teachers have before working in international schools? How do international teachers define and evaluate their own intercultural competency? How do school hiring processes seek to identify intercultural competency amongst new recruits? How is professional development planned in respect to improving teacher intercultural competency? What is the relationship between intercultural competency of teachers and that of the organizational processes of the school in which they work?

Theoretical Framework

This study is rooted in the theoretical framework of Gert Jan Hofstede and Darla K. Deardorff. The choice of two different conceptual frameworks is related to the analysis of both organizations and individuals as part of this study. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions framework is applicable to large groups such as organizations or nations, whereas Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competency is applicable to individuals.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede uses six dimensions in which to analyze cultural difference amongst groups ("Dimensions - Geert Hofstede," n.d.; Hofstede, 1980)¹. These six dimensions, Individualism/Collectivism, Power Distance, Masculinity/Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance and Long-Term/Short-Term Orientation, and Indulgence provide a framework through which cultures can be compared. These six dimensions are:

Power distance: How a society deals with inequalities amongst its members. High power distance scores means that people within a culture are comfortable with differences and hierarchy. Low power distance scores indicate that people of this nation try to equalize power distribution amongst its citizens, or seek explanation for why there are power inequalities.

Individualism versus collectivism: Individualism means that people are willing to take responsibility to look after themselves. They expect to have autonomy over their own decisions and accept the consequences of their decisions. Collectivism means that the group is responsible for all members in terms of nurture, safety and care.

¹ Hofstede originally identified four cultural dimensions in the 1980s. He added a fifth dimension in 2001 and a sixth dimension in 2010.

Masculinity versus femininity: Masculinity represents heroism, assertiveness and material gain. Femininity represents cooperation, nurture and modesty.

Uncertainty avoidance: This dimension refers to how comfortable members of society are with uncertainty. Strong scores in *uncertainty avoidance* usually indicates a society with rigid rules, and beliefs that demonstrate intolerance of differences or diversity.

Long term orientation versus short term orientation: This dimension describes whether a group prefers to maintain tradition and practice. A culture with high scores in long term orientation can indicate a group that is suspicious of change. Short term orientation is often indicative of a society that is more pragmatic and prepared to adapt or change based on circumstance rather than history.

Indulgence versus restraint: This is the most recently developed of Hofstede's cultural dimensions. An indulgent society has emphasis on fun and enjoyment of life compared to maintaining strict norms. A nation scoring high on restraint is indicative of a more reserved and conservative society ("Dimensions - Geert Hofstede," n.d.).

Hofstede's dimensions provide generalizations of populations rather than a focus on an individual but the dimensions are effective in identifying possible causes for cultural conflict when considering the culture of a school, that of the host country and the culture of the dominant nationalities within the school. As Hofstede explains, "understanding these [six] cultural dimensions leads to a greater awareness of acceptable behaviors and thus adoption of such behaviors in different moral circles" (Deardorff, 2009, p.95).

Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence

Darla Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence provides a more detailed set of descriptors for understanding different levels of intercultural competency in individuals (Deardorff, 2009). Deardorff's model emphasizes the broad categories of attitudes, behaviors, skills, and knowledge and comprehension that form the building blocks for increasing intercultural competency.

The development of the Process Model of Intercultural Competence, a causal path model, arose from several studies, including quantitative research as well qualitative research in the form of a grounded theory approach. Deardorff made use of the Delphi technique; a process of collaborative consensus where communication between a group of experts which anonymous in order to avoid biases or preconceptions. In total, 23 scholars with expertise in the field of intercultural competency participated in the discussion in order to generate consensus on defining traits and processes that describe intercultural competency (Deardorff, 2006). The study indicates that 21 of the scholars are from the United States and the remaining scholars come from Canada and the United Kingdom. This statistic is indicative of the Western bias that currently exists in the field of intercultural competence research. In addition to the Delphi process, Deardorff surveyed students and teachers in higher education institutions to understand how intercultural competence was developed and assessed.

As a result of Deardorff's research, the Process Model for Intercultural Competence was developed. The model has been depicted in two forms, one as a pyramid and the other as a cyclical representation (Deardorff, 2006). The pyramid model indicates that there are certain building blocks needed before an individual can increase

their level of intercultural competence. The cyclical version of the model indicates that developing intercultural competence is an ongoing process of inputs and outputs related to skills, behavior, knowledge and attitudes (see Figure 1 and 2).

Figure 1. Deardorff's Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009)

Figure 2. Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009)

Both forms of the model emphasize that there is an internal and external process to increasing intercultural competence. Internal changes are related to behaviors, skills, attitudes and knowledge which result in external outcomes such as appropriate and effective communication and behavior (Deardorff, 2006, 2009).

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Limitations

There are several limitations to the study. Firstly, although international schools tend to have a diverse number of nationalities amongst the staff, faculty and students, the composition of nationalities is unique to each school. For example in one school, the majority of support staff maybe from the host country but in another school nearby, the support staff may come from a variety of nationalities. This means that the results from this study will reflect what is found at one school site and may limit the generalizations that can be made for other international school sites.

Secondly, the quantitative part of the study will collect data on teachers' training background and compare it to their level of cultural competency. Teachers who have received teacher training in the same country may have very different experiences due to the wide variety of teacher training programs. So, it may be possible to draw some conclusions as to the effectiveness of teacher training programs by country but it may not be possible to specifically identify teacher training programs that effectively support the development of intercultural competency.

Thirdly, the development of policies and resources for teacher professional development within a school site is influenced by many factors such as school budget, local government requirements, curriculum requirements and cultural factors. Responses from the qualitative portion of the study may reflect the constraints particular to a single school site, and may not be applicable to other international schools.

Delimitations

In order to manage the size of the study, several delimitations have been put in place. Schools selected for the study will use the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. A foundational tenet of the IB is international mindedness. For schools to teach using the IB curriculums, they need to support the development of international mindedness amongst students. In order to do this effectively, teachers should have a high level of intercultural competency.

Secondly, schools involved in the study were drawn from international schools in South East Asia, East Africa, Western Europe and South America. This is because these regions are where the author has contacts with teachers, principals and school directors, and school leadership expressed a willingness to be involved in the study.

Finally, it is important that the teachers in the study were working outside of their home culture. Data was collected on teacher experience working outside of their home culture and so it was important that this factor was taken into account when selecting teachers and schools for the study.

Significance of Study

This study aims to explore the organizational process of international schools, specifically hiring and professional development, and compare them to the intercultural competences of the teachers working there in order to understand how these factors interact. The results of this study have the potential to influence practice, policy and research at several different levels.

At a practice level, teacher participants in the study had the opportunity to reflect on their skills, knowledge, behaviors and attitudes related to intercultural competency as

they complete the study's survey. This raised a teacher's awareness of the skill of intercultural competency and may have prompted further teacher inquiry or professional development of this skill. Additionally, the teacher survey instrument can be used by individuals and schools to provide information about the level of intercultural competency amongst staff. In turn, this feedback can help identify areas of growth through professional development planning for both individual teachers and schools.

At a policy level, the results of this study may provide reframing or development of school policies related to recruitment of teachers, as well as guide school policies to support communication between culturally diverse students, staff, teachers and parents. On a broader scale, the results of this study have the potential to guide policies for human resources companies that specifically focus on recruitment of teachers and school leaders for international schools.

At a research level, this study has the potential to indicate directions for further research, particularly in the field of cultural diversity training for pre-service teachers. It could also provide guidance for further research on preparing school leaders to work in international schools.

Outside of the school environment, increasing globalization means that employees are working with people from around the world, both in face to face environments and online. Research to understand the influence of intercultural competency will be applicable in these settings as companies design human resource policies and workplace training to ensure the effectiveness of culturally diverse teams of employees.

Definition of Terms

The following terms used in this study are specific to the areas of international education and research on culture, leadership and organization structures.

Assignment failure – International teachers who break their employment contracts after a short period of time, often due to challenges when relocating to a new school and country (Hayden, 2006)

Binational school – A school from one nationality or culture which is located in another country, designed to teach only one national curriculum. For example, the Japanese School in London which only utilizes Japanese curriculum to allow students to continue Japanese national education in a different country (Terwilliger, 1972).

Culture shock – The experience of living and working in a different culture without adequate preparation. People experiencing culture shock may have feelings of stress, anxiety, anger and confusion (Hayden, 2006).

Ethnocentric – Judging other people and cultures by comparing them to one's own set of cultural standards (Deane, 1991; Deardorff, 2009)

Ethnorelative – Considered the opposite of *ethnocentric*. The ability to adapt or modify one's behavior according to cultural context. Feeling comfortable with cultural differences (Deane, 1991; Deardorff, 2009).

Intercultural competence – The ability of an individual or organization to effectively and appropriately communicate and achieve goals in a culturally diverse environment (Deardorff, 2009; Matveev & Merz, 2014).

International schools – Schools responsible for the education of K-12 students, utilizing an internationally focused curriculum such as the International Baccalaureate,

culturally diverse staff, faculty and students (more than 20 different nationalities), usually an English language medium school (ECIS, 2012; Nagrath, 2011).

International teachers – Teachers who have relocated to a country different to their own nationality to work in an international school (Hayden, 2006).

School leaders – Directors, principals, deans or curriculum coordinators within an international school. People in these positions may only teach part time but are responsible for professional development, administration and leadership of staff and faculty (Harper & Hayden, 2008; Shaklee & Merz, 2012a). All school leaders interviewed for this study were also responsible for hiring teachers and staff.

Third Culture Kids (TCK) – Children who have grown up in a country or countries different to the nationality of their parents (“TCKid Research Bridge,” n.d.).

YOGA – This acronym stands for Your Objectives, Guidelines, and Assessment. It refers to a form of self-assessment survey developed by Dr Alvino Fantini (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006).

Summary

Chapter I of this study identified the research problem experienced by international schools; the need for international teachers to be interculturally competent, and the lack of research guiding international school leaders on how to support the development of intercultural competence amongst their teachers and school policies. The theoretical framework of Hofstede’s Six Cultural Dimensions will provide a framework for analysis of qualitative data from school leader interviews. Deardorff’s Process Model of Intercultural Competency will be used to analyze quantitative data collected from

teacher surveys. In addition, the significance of the study was outlined as well as the limitations and delimitations of the planned research.

Chapter II will encompass a review of literature related to the major areas of research used in this study, including a more detailed analysis of the terms and concepts used, an historical background to international schools and a review of literature indicating the relationship between teacher intercultural competency and student academic achievement.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

The review of literature for this study is divided into three broad categories; concepts, context, and the intersectionality between concepts and context. Within the category of concepts, there are two major areas which warrant further research for the purposes of this study; the concept of culture and the concept of intercultural competency. Defining and explaining culture as well as cultural differences is done through literature related to Gert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions. Defining, measuring and modeling intercultural competency is explored through a review of literature from researchers such as Cushner, Fantini and Termizi, and Matveev and Merz.

The second section of the literature review is primarily related to context of this study, namely the specific context of international K-12 schools, and the students, teachers and school leaders who are a part of the international school community. There are approximately 3.5 million students around the world currently enrolled in international schools for K-12 education (ICEF Monitor, 2014). Students in these schools come from a wide variety of diverse nationalities and cultures, and are taught by teachers who also come from diverse backgrounds. Literature reviewed in this section provides insight into the preparation programs for international teachers, the challenges that they face working in international schools, and the needs of school leaders.

The third section of the literature review looks specifically at the intersectionality between culture and the context of student academic achievement. The review of literature examines some of the different cultural influences students experiences, as well as research related to supporting intercultural competency amongst teachers.

In summary, this review of literature seeks to understand in more detail the emergence of research around intercultural competency, its application to international schools and teachers, and the impact that interculturally competent teachers can have on student academic achievement.

Cultural Dimensions

Gert Hofstede defined culture as the collective mental programming experienced by a group of people. “Culture is to human collectivity what personality is to an individual” (Hofstede, 1980, p.24). Aspects of culture include, but are not limited to, the language we speak, the way we eat, our relationships to other people and our concept of personal space. Cultural values are learned early in life, and are considered ‘nonrational’ although people with an ethnocentric view of the world will consider their own cultural values to be rational (Hofstede, 1980). In the 1970s, the concept of culture was viewed as a single variable when discussing differences between nations or ethnicities (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Hofstede’s study of IBM employees in 72 countries was one of the first attempts to dissect the concept of culture into different dimensions. From the results of the study, Hofstede described four cultural dimensions that could be used to analyze the differences between nations. These dimensions were meant to be viewed at a collective, national level with the understanding that there would naturally be variances when examining the culture of individuals within nations (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011).

Further cultural research in the 1980s and 1990s lead to the revision of Hofstede’s original cultural dimensions, and today, Hofstede now uses six cultural dimensions when analyzing differences and similarities between nationalities.

Cultural Dimensions of Organizations

Hofstede identifies organizations as sub-cultures within the culture of a nation. As a group of people, organizations are influenced by the same dimensions as a larger group of people such as a nation state. Culture of an organization can have significant influence on three main areas of social interaction:

1. Influence and distribution of power within an organization
2. Values of the dominant coalition. The dominant coalition within an organization tend to influence the rewarding of promotions or awards. A dominant coalition will also seek out individuals whose ideals match with the dominant coalition which could also influence employee hiring.
3. Values of the non-elite majority. The non-elite majority are like the worker bees of a colony. Hofstede explains that the culture of an organization will influence how the non-elite majority are motivated to fulfill their job requirements. (Hofstede, 1980).

Within an organization, the discussing of cultural differences can have opposing effects. It can result in the development of a mutual understanding between different groups, or it can result in making people upset or uncomfortable. Hofstede observed that there is a tendency towards fear of making people uncomfortable with a cultural discussion and so more often than not, cultural differences within or between organization are ignored. The result of this tendency is that everyone is treated the same, in the guise of equality (Hofstede, 1980). This may seem fair but according to Deardorff (2009) this is a trait of an individual or organization with a low development of intercultural competency.

A more recent study of cultures within an organization was carried out in 1990 which utilized both quantitative data and qualitative data to explore the influence of culture on organizations (Hofstede et al., 1990). The qualitative data for the study was generated through interviews that asked participants about the influence of symbols, heroes, rituals and values of the company, and how these influenced the company culture. The findings of this study showed that rather than values being at the heart of the company culture, it was the daily behaviors of the employees and company leaders which had the greatest influence on a company's culture (Hofstede et al., 1990). Although this study was carried out amongst manufacturing and technical companies, it is useful to reflect on how an interpretation of the results could be applied to the behaviors of teachers and school leaders in an educational setting.

Critiques of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede's cultural dimensions have been used as the basis for hundreds of studies since he first developed his original four cultural dimensions in 1980. However, scholars have also critiqued his research. One of the critiques of his work comes from Orr and Hauser (2008) who argued that there were several major methodological problems with Hofstede's original study. They explained that he used data collected from IBM employees in 1966 which provides views that are now outdated for the 21st century. Orr and Hauser (2008) also contend that by using data from only one company, a type of pre-selection of participants had already been carried out as compared to using participants from many different employment backgrounds.

Signorini, Wiesemes and Murphy (2009) argue that Hofstede's cultural dimensions do not accurately account for the 'fuzziness' of culture, and that it ignores the

possibility that culture is a series of integrated systems rather than a set of layers (Signorini, Wiesemes, & Murphy, 2009). In addition, Hofstede's cultural dimensions tend to emphasize differences between cultures rather than similarities, a process which may support more cultural disharmony than finding shared experiences between cultures (Signorini et al., 2009).

Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1997) critique Hofstede's use of cultural dimension categories that they claim are exclusive. For example, a country can have the trait of *collectivism* or *individualism* but it cannot be both. Researchers also argue that the original purpose of the questionnaire used by Hofstede to collect data for his study was not initially intended to seek out information about cultural differences. Rather, the questionnaire was designed to find out information about employee satisfaction at IBM (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1997; Orr & Hauser, 2008).

Conclusion

Hofstede's six cultural dimensions provide a useful framework to compare and contrast cultures both at an organizational level and an international level. Although critiques have indicated that there are concerns with his data set and the applicability of the cultural dimensions at an individual level, the cultural dimensions serve as a useful and valid lens to explore cultural diversity of larger groups. For the purposes of this study, the six cultural dimensions will be applied as Hofstede intended; as a means to look at a group in society, namely a school organization, and not to be used when examining the cultural dimensions of individual teachers.

Defining Intercultural Competency

As a term, *intercultural* was first used in the 1600s by Comenius who described the concept as an important part of understanding multiple perspectives, leading to social harmony (Cushner, 2011). Over time, the term has been used interchangeably with other terms such as *cross-cultural* and *multicultural*. Bradford, Allen, and Beisser, (2000) explain that this initial mix of terms is to do with the fact that researchers of intercultural competency come from different disciplines and so use different theoretical frameworks and conceptual models to justify using a particular term. In addition, theories of intercultural competence developed haphazardly and quickly, stemming from several practical needs. These include the need to predict success of placement of employees overseas, understanding failure of overseas placements, improving personnel selection, and the need for designing, testing and implementing training methods for employees to work in overseas locations (Bradford et al., 2000). Although these terms, *cross-cultural*, *multicultural* and *intercultural* have been used interchangeably, it is important to clarify the different meanings of the terms and why intercultural competence is being used in this research setting.

Landis and Wasilewski (1999) explain that *cross-cultural* is used when describing similarities and differences between cultures. The term doesn't include a description of how an individual or group of people react when spending time in a different culture, or how an individual's cognitive, affective and behavioral skills can help them adapt to living and working in a culturally diverse environment.

The term *multicultural* is applied when more than two cultures are being described. It can be used to describe the mix of cultures within one region or country, or

within an organization. As a term, *multicultural* is more descriptive of a particular location, rather than a skill or competency of an individual or an organization (Landis & Wasilewski, 1999). In order to describe the ability of an individual to interact successfully in a cultural different to one's own, Cushner (2012) explains that the term *intercultural competence* is most appropriate. *Intercultural competence* focuses on "interaction of an individual from one culture to another" (p. 606). The emphasis on interaction is particularly appropriate when considering the dynamics between teachers, students and parents in an international school. Cushner (2012) further explains that it is not enough to have an interaction between different cultures; intercultural competence is about appropriate and successful interactions that are a result of an individual's cognitive, affective and behavioral skills. By using the term *intercultural*, Deardorff (2011) explains that it is preferred over terms such as *culturally aware* or *cross-culturally able* as it "applies to any who interact with those from a different background, regardless of location" (p. 66).

Although there is general agreement as to the definition of intercultural competence, there are more than 70 different models that aim to conceptualize intercultural competence (Spitzberg & Changnon, in Deardorff, 2009). Researchers have used broad dimensions and domains to clarify the different traits of intercultural competence (Bradford et al., 2000; Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006; Matveev & Merz, 2014). Fantini and Timrizi (2006) emphasize the importance of language when assessing intercultural competency of an individual. They argue that the level of knowledge of the host language is directly connected to the individual's developmental level of intercultural competency (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006). In providing a framework for

evaluating intercultural competency of an individual, Fantini and Tirmizi use three domains of relationships, communication and collaboration, and four dimensions: knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness.

Bradford et al. (2000) use similar categories to Fantini and Tirmizi when analyzing the intercultural competency of an individual. Although Bradford et al. do not place as strong an emphasis on learning the host language as Fantini and Tirmizi, there is still a focus on effective and appropriate communication as being an important characteristic of intercultural competence. In addition, Bradford et al. (2000) include measurements of affective and behavioral skills as important in intercultural competency, specifically the ability to deal with psychological stress, ability to communicate effectively and the ability to establish interpersonal relationships.

Matveev and Merz (2014) include similar affective dimensions, focusing on cultural empathy and emotional stability/control as essential traits of an individual who is interculturally competent. Matveev and Merz (2014) define intercultural competency as “one’s knowledge and ability to successfully deal with intercultural encounters” (p. 123). Similar to Cushner (2012), the emphasis is not just on being able to communicate in a different culturally setting, but to be able to be both appropriate and successful in intercultural interactions. Deardorff (2011) also reiterates the importance of intercultural competency being about effective and appropriate behavior, regardless of whether the interaction is in one’s own culture or in another culture.

Use of Terms in Literature

Throughout the review of literature, researchers, schools and communities used different terms to describe how a person learns to operate successfully in a culturally

diverse environment. *Diversity training* is used to describe student practicum placements in culturally diverse communities as a way of increasing cultural awareness.

Additionally, colleges and universities may run courses for pre-service teachers that are labeled *diversity training* (Keiser, 2009; Oller et al., 2012). Other teacher training programs provide *multicultural service learning* which combines community service projects with exposure to diverse cultures (Chang, Anagnostopoulos, & Omae, 2011).

Within K-12 schools, pedagogy that has been specifically designed for cultural diversity is called *culturally responsive pedagogy* (Callins, 2006; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2011).

As well as curriculum, *culturally responsive pedagogy* implies that teaching methods are specifically tailored to the culture of the school community. *Culturally sensitive* and *culturally aware* are terms that can be used to describe a person's ability to recognize differences but they don't adequately describe the importance of being able to take action or change structures or curriculum based on cultural differences.

Models Depicting Intercultural Competency

The varied use of terms related to intercultural competency, and the varied backgrounds and contexts for research related to the topic are also reflected in the different models that have evolved to describe intercultural competency (Deardorff, 2009). Spitzberg and Changnon (in Deardorff, 2009) grouped these models into five categories, based on the method used to develop the model, the type of data collected and the background of the researchers. The categories are:

Compositional Models – Models comprised of different categories related to cultural competence. Categories within these models tend to be at differing levels of abstraction, making them challenging to apply in some research.

Co-orientation Models – These models focus on the skills needed for successful intercultural communication, particularly language and interpretation. Co-orientation models usually don't include reference to actions of intercultural competence.

Developmental Models – Developmental models indicate that the skills, knowledge and behavior related to intercultural competence all develop over time, through the experiences of an individual.

Adaptational Models – These models highlight the process of adaptation as being an indicator of intercultural competence. They focus on process rather than an outcome such as a change in behavior.

Causal Path Models – Causal path models attempt to represent intercultural competency as a linear process, demonstrating the variables (inputs) that influence behavior (outputs) related to intercultural competence. These types of models tend to be more amenable than other types of models when applied to empirical data collection and testing (Deardorff, 2009).

As Bradford, Allen and Beisser (2000) indicate in their meta-analysis of intercultural competence research, the lack of empirical research in the field of intercultural competence has influenced the varied development of intercultural competence models (Bradford et al., 2000).

Conclusion

Historically, the term *intercultural* has been used alongside *cross-cultural* and *multicultural* when describing interactions between different cultures. Researchers from different disciplines have chosen to use a specific term in connection to a theoretical or conceptual framework from their discipline. *Intercultural* specifically describes the

interaction of individuals from and between many different cultures. In an international school setting, where there are usually more than 20 different nationalities amongst staff, students and parents, intercultural is best suited to describe these complex and diverse interactions and relationships.

Intercultural competency is used as a term to describe effective and appropriate communication where there are individuals more than two cultures interacting. In order to be intercultural competent, individuals develop a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills that may include knowledge of another language, cultural knowledge, non-verbal communication skills, open-mindedness, motivation and emotional stability/control.

The development of models to describe intercultural competence has been influenced by the backgrounds of the researchers, as well as the contexts for which they are developed. Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence was developed from research based in educational institutions, and so it is particularly relevant to the proposed research for this dissertation.

Defining International Schools

International Education and International Schools

The terms *international education* and *international schools* have often been used interchangeably in literature about the subject of global education but it is important to clarify the differences between these two terms and how they apply to the research of intercultural competency in international schools. As Thompson (2002) points out, there is a lack of agreement amongst theorists and practitioners as to how the term *international education* is defined. As a term, *international education* has been in use

since the late 1800s (Bunnell, 2007; Hayden & Thompson, 1995; Sylvester, 2002) and developed as a result of increasing international trade. International education and the concept of an international curriculum were seen as filling a need created by immersing multinational companies wanting employees who were *global citizens* (Thompson, 2002). International education focuses on the goal of developing international understanding, and so can be considered a descriptor of the curriculum which is offered by a school (Hayden & Thompson, 1995). International education offers to give students a global perspective on life, educating students about the world outside of their own culture, and encouraging them to think beyond their immediate boundaries (Wylie, 2008). Therefore, the concept of international education is something which can be taught at a school regardless of whether the school is international or a national or state school.

History

The institution of international schools arose as a result of increased expatriate populations seeking education for their children in English, regardless of the country they were located in (Hayden, 2006; Thompson, 2002). The oldest international schools are the International School of Geneva and Yokohama International School, both founded in 1924 as English-medium schools promoting international education (Hayden, 2006). Another example of an early international school is the United Nations International School of New York (UNIS). UNIS was founded at the end of World War II when the establishment of the United Nations brought expatriates from many different countries to New York. The early goals of UNIS were to create an education that focused on the increasing interdependence of global systems such as economics, trade, and politics (Hayden & Thompson, 1995).

Types of School

Because of the organic and market-driven growth of international schools, there are only loose classifications for defining what is meant by the term *international school*. Any school can call itself 'international' but there are several organizations that have attempted to clarify and define what is meant when a school describes itself as being international.

Bunnell identifies international schools as being established for *global nomads*, families that move to different countries, usually as a result of employment opportunities (Bunnell, 2007). International schools typically have English as the language of instruction and have a student and teaching body that represents more than 30 different nationalities. International schools also tend to have a mission statement that includes reference to being internationally-minded, as well as being inclusive of many cultures, including that of the host country (Bunnell, 2007; Hayden & Thompson, 1995; Terwilliger, 1972).

In contrast to this definition of international schools, is the term *overseas school*. Overseas schools are also described as *encapsulated* schools. They offer a national curriculum of only one country for the primary focus of preparing expatriate students to reintegrate with their country's national education system (Bunnell, 2007; Hayden, 2006). An example of an overseas school is Rikkyo School in England where the students follow the Japanese curriculum. Terwilliger (1972) terms these schools '*binational*' and gives the example of US schools located in Germany that were established to provide education for children of US troops stationed at bases throughout Germany.

Several international organizations have been established to connect

international schools in different regions of the world. Each of these organizations has their own classification for membership. For example, the European Council of International Schools (ECIS), an organization representing over 700 schools, specifies that schools may be considered ‘international’ if they have the following characteristics:

- offering a curriculum in which the culture and educational system of two or more countries is represented;
- offering a curriculum typical of one country, but located in another country and actively pursuing cultural exchange with its host country;
- having a student body of diverse nationalities and educational aims and curricula offerings which promote and support the purposes of ECIS. (ECIS, 2012)

Nagrath (2011) refers to a list of criteria that the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) compiled during their 2009 conference. This list offers more specificity than that of ECIS, stating that schools that are international meet the majority of the criteria from the eight listed on their website. These criteria include non-selective student enrollment, a transient and multinational teacher population, and that schools are “usually English or bi-lingual as the language of instruction” (Nagrath, 2011, "IASL Criteria for International Schools," para. 8).

Matthews (1988) indicates that international schools can be divided into two broad categories; market-driven and ideologically-driven. Market-driven international schools are established where there is a specific demand such as company establishing a large presence in a new country, employing expatriates and needing a school for their

employees' children. Ideologically-driven schools are established because of a belief in the role of an international education. As Matthews also points out, these two categories are not mutually exclusive but they do provided researchers with another way of classifying international schools (Matthews, 1988 in Hayden, 2006).

Students in International Schools

Students in international schools tend to be the children of expatriate employees of multinational companies (Hayden, 2006; Terwilliger, 1972; Wylie, 2008). Students usually come from high-socio economic backgrounds and often have experienced living and studying in several different countries (Bunnell, 2007; Hayden, 2006). Research by Hayden, Rancic and Thompson (2000) on students in international schools found that both students and teachers perceived that being able to speak more than one language fluently was important in the context of a school being international. This also reflects one of the criteria that the IASL considered as important in defining an international school. Hayden et al. (2000) also found that students perceived that internationalism, a significant focus of international schools, was connected to having a positive and open-minded attitude towards the cultures and values of others.

International Schools Today

Data from the International School Consultancy in 2013 indicates that international schools continue to increase in number with approximately 6800 international schools located throughout the world. The majority of international schools are located in Asia with significant growth in the number of international schools in the Middle East and Africa (ICEF Monitor, n.d.).

There is also an increasing market for international schools. Brummitt (2007) indicates that there is a move for international schools from independent non-profit entities to becoming part of larger corporations that run a group of schools, sometimes in several different countries. As the market expands, the range of definitions and authorization processes for international schools is reflected in the very broad range of standards amongst the thousands of international schools. In addition, international schools with English language medium are becoming sought after educational options by local parents who wish for the children to be educated in English. Market growth also has increased the demand for teachers who are qualified and experienced at working in such culturally diverse environments (Brummitt, 2007; Bunnell, 2007; Farber & Sutherland, 2006; Hayden, 2006).

Leadership Within International Schools

It is difficult to understand the cultural influences within international schools without looking at the impact of leadership and school administration. Although there is a significant body of research on school leadership in state or national schools, there is less of a focus on leadership in international schools. However, an increasing amount of research is being carried out to better understand how international schools define leaders, preparation of school leaders, accountability, and the interaction between school leader values and values of an international school community (Day, 2007; Hayden, 2006; MacDonald, 2009; Machin, 2014; Slough-Kuss, 2014). School leadership plays a key role in school reform and therefore understanding more about the experiences of school leaders can help influence policy and practice for improving schools (Melton, Mallory, & Chance, 2012).

Defining Terms

The varied cultural background of international schools has influence the terms used to describe leadership within these schools. International schools with a British background may use *principal or head of school* to describe the school leader. International schools with an American background may use *superintendent, director* or the generic term of *administrator*. More recently, international schools that are for-profit have begun appointing CEOs as the head of the school (Hayden, 2006). The director of the school is equivalent to the CEO of a company, usually reporting directly to the school board. In any one international school, there may be several principals, usually responsible for primary/elementary school and middle/high school, also called secondary school. For the purposes of this research, the term *school leader* will be used to describe anyone who has a level of responsibility in a school, outside of teaching in the classroom.

Preparation and Recruitment of School Leaders

The majority of international school leaders have been recruited from a pool of teachers and leaders already working in the international school domain (Hayden, 2006; Slough-Kuss, 2014). There is a lack of research on the type of preparation that potential international school leaders experience although there are several independent organizations that offer principal preparation programs, specifically designed for international schools (Hayden & Thompson, 2000; Slough-Kuss, 2014). Melton, Mallory and Chance (2012) explain that a common theme emerging from interviews with principals is a disconnect between preparation for the role of principal and what the job actually demands.

Hayden (2006) indicates that the role of principal or director has elements of both leadership and management. Leadership focuses on strategic planning, setting the direction of the school for a period of two, five or even ten years. Managers tend to be more about ensuring compliance within an existing operational structure (Hayden, 2006). A director will tend to have more leadership focus whereas a principal role will be more managerial, although this can vary school by school.

Studies of principals in state and national schools, as well as principals in international schools have identified four broad premises for successful school leaders. Firstly, school leaders are the second most important factor influencing student learning, after teachers. Secondly, the same basic practices are shared by successful school leaders, regardless of the culture or country they work in. These include building collaboration amongst staff and faculty and creating a shared vision. Thirdly, the most successful school leaders are open-minded and ready to learn from others. They demonstrate traits that are similar to people who have a high level of intercultural competency; they are flexible, persistent and non-dogmatic. Finally, effective school leaders often practice distributed leadership, empowering other staff and faculty within the school (Day, 2007; Deenmamode, 2012).

Several studies have indicated that there are some challenges around the process of recruiting leaders for international schools (MacDonald, 2009; Machin, 2014; Slough-Kuss, 2014). The increase in CEOs employed in for-profit schools highlights the use of school leaders who may not have an educational background or previous experience working in an international school. They may be hired for their expertise in finance management or to ensure that investors of an international school gain returns on

investment (Hayden, 2006; Machin, 2014). Hiring a school leader with strong financial management experience may benefit the school in terms of profit but may have a negative impact on academic achievement.

Research by Slough-Kuss (2014) and Hayden and Thompson (2000) show that in an analysis of recruitment strategies for school leaders, existing leaders tended to mentor teachers who had similar qualities to them such as background, values and even gender. With only 20% of school leadership positions held by women, mentorship of potential male leaders by existing male leaders tends to reinforce gender bias (Hayden & Thompson, 2000). International schools are places of cultural diversity but this appears to be primarily amongst the teachers and students and not school leaders. There is not a similar focus on cultural diversity when recruiting school leaders (Slough-Kuss, 2014).

Slough-Kuss (2014) shares the statistic that school leaders spend on average 2.8 years in one position despite recruitment processes for a school director taking between 8-12 months (Slough-Kuss, 2014). As the researcher points out, 'it would appear that those appointed to headship positions are not always those who are most likely to succeed' (p. 228). This research reinforces the need to adequately prepare school leaders, including those looking to work in international schools.

In reviewing the literature related to preparation and recruiting of leaders in international schools, it appears that there is a disconnect between preparation and recruiting practices, and the actual demands of the job.

Accountability and Measuring Leadership Achievement

Research by MacDonald (2009) provides some clarity as to the challenges when measuring success of leaders in international schools. He posits that there are three

‘bottom lines’ that directors and principals will be measured by when being evaluated on their effectiveness. These bottom lines are academic, financial and a third so-called intangible bottom line. MacDonald (2009) explains that the academic bottom line is usually measured through student exam scores or entrance to universities. For international schools, regardless of their profit status, the financial bottom line is something that directors are responsible for. Finally, the intangible bottom line is what MacDonald describes as school culture, social and emotional education of students, and faculty well-being (MacDonald, 2009). Intangible bottom lines are challenging to evaluate but they are connected with the core of the school through the school mission and values. MacDonald (2009) indicates that quantifiable data should form the basis of director and principal accountability but he ignores the potential value in using qualitative data for evaluation of school leaders.

Other studies indicate the challenges of accountability between directors and the school board. In general, the school board is responsible for hiring school directors but there may not be clear accountability or evaluation procedures to measure effectiveness of the director (Hayden, 2006; Machin, 2014; Slough-Kuss, 2014). Where a school is for-profit, micromanagement from school owners may erode trust and confidence in a school leader, affecting the school leader’s ability to achieve goals (Machin, 2014). In addition to the school board, directors may also be accountable to local education authorities. This may prove challenging, depending on the language barrier and the relationship that the school community has with local education authorities (Melton et al., 2012; Moos, Krejsler, & Kofod, 2008).

Values

A dominant theme throughout the review of literature related to international school leaders was the importance of values. Most studies mentioned that the values of a school leader were very important when being recruited (Day, 2007; Deenmamode, 2012; Harper & Hayden, 2008; Hayden, 2006; Hayden & Thompson, 2000; Machin, 2014; Slough-Kuss, 2014). In for-profit schools, school leaders emphasized that their educational values superseded the financial demands of their role; education came above profits (Machin, 2014). Deenmamode (2012) went into more detail to understand why values were important for a school leader. The researcher explained that shared values between a school leader and school community helped provide a guide for decision making in unforeseen circumstances. In addition, the school leader is responsible for creating and maintaining school culture so it is essential that there is alignment between leader values and school values (Deenmamode, 2012). Slough-Kuss (2014) also indicates that during the recruiting process, finding a director who is the ‘right fit’ for a school is very important. This idea of ‘right fit’ is based on values and over-rides hiring choices such as cultural diversity (Slough-Kuss, 2014). The importance placed on matching values of a school and a leader is at a contrast to the research findings of Hofstede previously mentioned where the daily behaviors and actions of leaders had a greater influence on a company than the values of the leader (Hofstede et al., 1990).

Several studies indicate a possible influence of culture but there is a lack of research that explores intercultural competency of school leaders and school culture (Deenmamode, 2012; Machin, 2014; Melton et al., 2012). Some researchers indicate that

the lack of cultural diversity at the school leadership level may impact school culture but this is an area for further study (Shaklee & Merz, 2012a).

Intercultural Competency and Leadership in International Schools

International schools may seem like ground zero when it comes to understanding the strategies of interculturally competent leadership. As noted earlier, international schools typically have communities consisting of more than twenty different cultures, amongst both the teachers, administrative staff and students. On closer examination, it appears that within the international school community, intercultural competency is valued highly but there is very little guidance on how to understand it, measure it or create professional development that supports this skill in teachers, staff and school leaders.

Shaklee and Merz (2012) summarized the round table discussions of international school leaders who attended the European Council for International Schools (ECIS) annual conference. The discussions focused on the point that although many teachers working in international schools experience cultural diversity training in their own country, this is not necessarily suitable preparation for teaching in an international school environment. Additionally, international school leaders shared concerns that there was a lack of research or recommended strategies both for assessing their staff intercultural competency and that of their schools which would in turn provide guidance for professional development, and provide a level of support for teachers who are new to working in international schools.

Walker and Riordan (2010) also document the impact of interculturally competent leadership, providing an overview of how this may take place in international schools.

Their research emphasizes the importance for school leaders to understand their own culture and that of the school community in order to support a culturally diverse staff. McCarthy, Rezai-Rashti and Teasley (2009) also support the idea that effective and inclusive leadership can support teacher efficacy when working in culturally diverse classrooms (McCarthy, Rezai-Rashti, & Teasley, 2009). The factor of self-awareness, understanding and reflection is supported by Fisher (2011) who noted that schools with culturally diverse faculties need to ensure that there are frequent opportunities for teachers to self-reflect on their own cultural understandings to support communication with teachers and students from other cultures (Fisher, 2011a).

Leadership within a school has a powerful influence to support intercultural competency amongst teachers, support staff and students. By leading through example, a school leadership team can model interculturally competent strategies in meetings, parent communications, selection of curriculum resources, design of the schedule, and extra curricular activities. This leadership can have a ‘trickle down’ effect, providing teachers with guidance on how to be interculturally competent, which in turn will have an impact on student academic achievement.

Conclusion

Research in the field of leaders in international schools indicates that there is a variety of ways school leaders are prepared and mentored for the role. Although there are some small institutions that provide training for future leaders in international schools, mentorship is the primary means for international teachers to become school leaders. The lack of culturally diverse leaders and the male gender bias amongst existing school

leaders tends to mean that this lack of diversity is perpetuated through the recruitment of new leaders.

International school leaders face challenges when being held accountable for their positions. They are responsible for academic achievement as well as financial stability, and they have a significant influence on the culture of the school. There are a broad set of skills that all school leaders need, including the ability to form collaborative faculties, build vision, to be open-minded and flexible. However, the values of a school leader are of primary importance. To be an effective school leader, it is necessary to have alignment between the values of the school leader and the school community.

When examining leadership and interculturally competent practices in international schools, the limited amount of research on this topic indicates that school leaders are aware that there is a need to support teacher intercultural competency, but school leaders lack support or direction on how best to address the concerns.

International Teachers

Teachers who work in international schools experience a diverse set of challenges, beyond what would normally be faced by a teacher working in a school within his or her own country. Snowball (2010) defines international teachers by a set of qualities, skills and where they come from. Teachers need to be working outside of their country of origin to be described as *international* (Snowball, 2010). Joslin (2002) highlights the difference between being an international teacher and being an expatriate worker. An international teacher has chosen to go and work in a different country whereas an expatriate worker tends to be posted by their company. As a result, preparation to live and work in a different country is usually part of the preparation in a

company posting but may not necessarily factor in to preparation for an international teacher (Joslin, 2002).

Hayden (2006) identifies three different categories of teachers who work in international schools. Firstly, there are the expatriate teachers, hired specifically to come and work at an international school. The majority are from England, the United States, Australia and Canada, largely because of international schools teaching in English (Hayden, 2006). The second category of teachers are hired locally although may still be foreigners. Hayden (2006) refers to these teachers as *trailing spouses* as they tend to be partners of expatriates who have been relocated by a multinational company and the *trailing spouse* seeks employment at the local international school. The third category of teachers describes local citizens, often hired to work as language teachers or assistant teachers. These teachers usually do not receive the same employment packages that are given to expatriate teachers. For example, expatriate teachers often receive support for housing, health insurance and relocation allowances that are not afforded to local citizens hired to teach at an international school.

Why Work Internationally?

There are many reasons why a teacher may choose to leave their home country and work in international schools around the world. Hayden (2006) identifies several reasons indicating that international teachers want to move for the adventure and challenge of working in a completely different context than one in which they have previously studied and taught. These teachers have been described as *mavericks*, meaning that they are risk-takers, willing to live and work outside of their normal comfort zone (Hayden, 2006). Other reasons that draw teachers to international schools may be the

desire for more autonomy in teaching, the desire for a different climate and the remuneration packages.

On the other side of the coin are teachers who have chosen to work internationally because of the desire to leave their existing culture and work environment. Anecdotally, in the international school communities there is always a minority of teachers who have moved to work outside of their culture in order to avoid professional or personal repercussions. These teachers may not have a driving desire to learn more about different cultures, rather they tolerate the challenges of working in a culturally diverse environment in order to reap the benefits.

Skills Needed to Teach in an International School

Teaching in an international school requires a different set of skills, knowledge and attitudes than working in a local school in one's country of origin. Snowball (2008) draws the analogy between Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences and the multiple traits required of teachers to be successful in an international school. As well as needing knowledge of the subject and pedagogical skills, international teachers need to be goal orientated, adaptable, flexible, skilled in differentiated learning and have sensitivity towards gender and culture. International teachers also need to be able to thrive in very changeable environments, supporting students transitioning into and out of a teacher's classroom (Snowball, 2008).

Joslin (2002) adds to the list of traits described by Snowball (2008), explaining that international teachers also need a high degree of self-awareness of their own views and beliefs. Additionally, international teachers need to be critical and reflective in order to be able to recognize and act upon any cultural biases that may be a part of their

teaching (Joslin, 2002). Joslin (2002) describes the challenges of international school classrooms by explaining that “the unique population of the international school necessitates that the teacher is able to accommodate a range of cultural interpretations leading to a broader understanding of phenomena from different cultural perspectives” (p. 43). Flexibility needed by teachers to work in an international school is connected to the teacher ability to be comfortable with different cultural views, values and beliefs, and be able to impart this skill on the students (Hayden, Rancic, & Thompson, 2000; Joslin, 2002; Snowball, 2008; Sunder, 2013).

Demands Outside of the Classroom

Outside of the classroom or international school environment, international teachers also have to face the challenges of living in a culture different to their own. As part of the recruitment process, schools tend to have diverse approaches to preparing teachers for living and working in a new country. Unlike multinational company postings where employees often undergo cultural adaptation courses, teachers are generally left to their own devices to prepare (Joslin, 2002). International schools will usually provide support for obtaining work permits, finding housing and initially greeting teachers when they arrive in the country but there is little research of effective pre-departure or arrival programs run by international schools for incoming teachers (Bunnell, 2007; Hayden, 2006; Joslin, 2002).

The challenges that teachers face working in culturally diverse classrooms are often replicated outside of the classroom when collaborating with a culturally diverse faculty and staff within an international school. Sunder (2013) explains that teachers working in international schools require high levels of emotional labor. Working with

other teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds can often mean differences in opinion when trying to define effective pedagogy, or choosing course materials or agreeing upon standards of skill or knowledge (Sunder, 2013).

Outside of the international school setting, international teachers face cultural differences in everything from social norms in a new culture to the myriad of administrative tasks that come with relocating to a new country. There are also the challenges of culture shock and homesickness, undergoing difficulties often removed from the support network of friends and families. Hayden et al. (2000) highlight differences in how international teachers approach these situations, indicating that there are some teachers who adjust with difficulty, turning inwards and interacting only with people from the same or a similar culture. This group, termed *encapsulators*, show a low level of intercultural competence (Hayden et al., 2000)

Preparation to Teach in International Schools

Farber and Sutherland (2006) explain that “competent teachers are the most important and valuable resource in an educational institution” (p. 14). For international schools, teachers who have a high level of intercultural competence have the potential to support student academic achievement, as well as reduce the rate of teacher attrition or recruitment failure due to culture shock.

International schools face a challenging task when recruiting teachers. Recruitment is often about schools making sure that there is a mix of teacher nationalities but they also have to balance this with finding teachers with expertise in the correct subject areas, work permit limitations often imposed by the local government, whether a teacher is relocating as a single or with accompanying spouse and children, and the

international school experience of the teacher. Schools and parents of children at international schools want teachers who are native English speakers but this contradicts the demand for a culturally diverse teaching faculty (Hayden, 2006). Joslin (2002) explains that “poorly adjusted personnel are more likely to perform inadequately” (p. 36) and Hayden (2006) estimates that the cost of assignment failure, where a teacher breaks their contract with a school, can be as much as 80,000USD per teacher.

So, what is being done in teacher training programs to prepare teachers for working in culturally diverse environments? A review of literature indicates that there is some research on programs for pre-service teachers, as well as some qualitative research related to intercultural competency training for international school leaders and administrators. However, there is a lack of quantitative or mixed-methods research that provides data how pre-service training or cultural experiences support teachers in working in international schools. This study will address these specific gaps in the literature.

Intercultural Competency Training Experiences of Teachers

Pre-Service Teachers

Pre-service teachers and teachers enrolled in administrative credential training at universities undergo a variety of experiences to improve their level of intercultural competency, depending on the institution they attend. Research on intercultural competency training for pre-service teachers in Australia, the US and Canada documents several different strategies and types of experience in order to raise the level of intercultural competency of teachers. This training is termed in several different ways; *diversity training*, *cultural sensitivity training*, and *cultural competency training*. Despite

the differences in terms, the objectives for the training are generally the same; to enhance a teacher's ability to teach and collaborate effectively in a culturally diverse school environment.

Keiser's (2009) study of teachers studying for an administrative credential utilized the diversity disposition model to measure teachers' diversity disposition pre and post diversity training. Keiser indicates that although there are increasingly diverse student populations, educational administrators still tend to be predominantly white and middle-class. The intention for this training was to support the development of diversity dispositions amongst students training to be school leaders. The researchers concluded that participants had more diversity disposition after completing the course. Although results from the surveys did not show significant changes, observations of participants in the workplace recorded their increase in diversity disposition (Keiser, 2009).

A study by Chang, Anagnostopoulos and Omae in 2011 focused on the experiences of pre-service teachers taking part in a program called Multicultural Service Learning (MSL) in a university in the United States. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effects of MSL on pre-service teachers' abilities to work with diverse student populations. The authors cite research that indicates student populations in many countries are becoming increasingly culturally diverse. In the US, despite a diverse student population, teachers are predominantly white and middle class. Although there are already studies of small groups of pre-service teachers and the effects of MSL, this paper addressed the gap of integration of MSL with a large number of teachers and compared this information with the race and social class of the participants. The results of

this study supported results from previous studies that demonstrated the positive impacts of MSL programs on teachers' intercultural competency skills (Chang et al., 2011).

A third type of intercultural competency training was studied by Saleh, Anngela-Cole, and Boateng (2011) who researched the effectiveness of intercultural competency training taught as a module within a pre-service teacher preparation program. Through use of a control and treatment group, the researchers analyzed the impact of diversity training, concluding that diversity training was effective in increasing cultural competency of the treatment group. Additionally, the results indicated that students who lack exposure to diverse cultural groups when growing up may have an impeded ability to benefit from diversity training.

The authors concluded the study by indicating that it is important to understand students' past experiences of diversity in order to plan diversity training. Those with less exposure may take more time to internalize diversity training and be able to take action based on new knowledge.

A review of literature on intercultural competency training for pre-service or administrative credential teachers indicates that there are a variety of strategies employed in different organizations. Placement programs such as MSL usually involve students spending extended periods of time working and learning in cultural contexts that are very different to what they know or usually experience. Intercultural competency training in theoretical courses tends to provide students with an historical perspective of culture and give them opportunity to reflect on their current level of awareness and understanding.

All of the studies report that intercultural competency training does have a positive impact on teacher intercultural competency, regardless of the format of the

training or the context in which it takes place. Previous cultural experiences of pre-service teachers have an influence on the effectiveness of intercultural competency training; pre-service teachers who already have had exposure to a variety of cultures through community, peer group or colleagues show greater gains from cultural competency compared to those pre-service teachers who have had less exposure to cultural diversity.

There is a gap in the literature around comparison of the effectiveness of different intercultural competency training models, or an analysis of the impact of context on the effectiveness of the training model.

Experienced Teachers and Diversity Training Within Schools

There is only a very small amount of literature that has been published on the impact of intercultural competency training taking place within schools, with the specific purpose to improve intercultural competency of experienced teachers. A small study from an international school in Turkey documented the process of intercultural competency training amongst teachers and administrators in the school. Over the course of several months, two workshops were run for the staff that included sessions on Hofstede's cultural dimensions as well as agreement over meeting protocols. Through the workshop, participants identified how cultural differences were expressed in the way that meetings were structured which was then used by the school to develop meeting protocols that were more culturally aware (Fisher, 2011a).

Research Challenges Involving International Schools and International Teachers

International schools are complex and dynamic organizations. The rapid growth of multinational companies and the ad-hoc development of international schools has lead

to international schools having very individual cultures (Hayden et al., 2000). This indicates the importance of schools to carefully consider the match between school culture and the intercultural competency of a teacher when hiring new teachers. Bunnell (2005) also concurs that it is important to have a match between international school culture and a teachers' personal culture and beliefs. International teachers are largely left to their own initiative to prepare for living and working in a culturally diverse environment (Joslin, 2002). Teachers who have a high level of intercultural competency are more likely to acclimatize to a new international school, and cope with the inevitable culture shock. Teachers who are poorly prepared and may not have experienced any sort of cultural diversity training will be less effective in the classroom, and international schools run the risk of having these teachers break contracts (Hayden, 2006).

There is a limited amount of peer-reviewed research that explores the experiences of teachers in international schools in the context of intercultural competency. Research from Sleeter (2012), Walker and Riordan (2010) and McCarthy, Rezai-Rashti and Teasley (2009) all provide theoretical guidelines of what interculturally competent leadership should look like but there is a gap in the literature that provides understanding of how these guidelines work in practice.

The strong bias towards Western educational ideals and culture in international schools indicates that there is a need for intercultural competence awareness and training amongst teachers and school leaders. However, as the research from Shaklee and Merz (2012) indicate, there is not a research based methodology for school leaders to follow in order to support cultural competency amongst teacher culture and school organizational structures.

Intercultural Competency and Student Academic Achievement

As student populations in schools become increasingly culturally diverse, it is necessary to understand the impact of cultural diversity on student academic achievement. For the purposes of this literature review, student academic achievement is defined by measures on standardized tests and state or national examinations, comparing student scores with the expectations of the student's grade level. Organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) use testing measures such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in order to measure and compare student academic achievement across countries. Primarily, most of the measures of student academic achievement involve testing student reading, writing and literacy levels as well as mathematics scores and so these measures are being used to classify student academic achievement for this literature review (OECD, n.d.). It is worth noting that ideally, measurement of student achievement would involve assessments from a range of subject areas as well as learning skills, and social and emotional development. A possibility for further research would be to examine the relationship between intercultural competency of teachers on student social and emotional development.

Testing data of students in international schools is rarely available and so for the purposes of this literature review, many of the articles included refer to student academic achievement in a local or state school. For the few studies that document academic achievement in international schools, research results use qualitative data to report changes in student academic achievement as a result of interventions such as curriculum changes or teacher training that include aspects of cultural competency.

Student academic achievement does not happen in isolation. Students arrive to the classroom with a set of cultural influences they come from their family, friends and the culture that they have grown up in. During school, student academic achievement is influenced by teachers, the curriculum, and the resources used in lessons. These factors combine together to create a school community with a culture all of its own which, in turn, also has an influencing factor on student academic achievement.

Impact of Family

Chiu and Chow (2010) sought to understand the effects of cultural values on student achievement by examining reading test data from 193,841 participants in 41 different countries who were aged 15 years. In particular, the authors were examining the effect of cultural values on student motivation. The researchers analyzed data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Program for International Student Assessment (OECD-PISA). The results of the study revealed that girls' reading scores were lower in countries determined as 'masculine'. Where cultures were classified as 'collectivist', there was a reduced gap between reading achievements of students from single parent families and students of two parent families. Students who came from families with high cultural capital had higher scores on reading.

The influence of family and culture is also shown in the work of McCarthy, Rezai-Rashti, and Teasley (2009) who documented the intersectionality between low socio-economic status, culture and student academic achievement. Research showed that academic achievement of students was increased when whole families were provided with support, rather than the students just receiving support in the school environment (McCarthy et al., 2009).

These studies highlight the connection between both family and community culture, and academic achievement. Secondly, the studies indicate that cultural influences may cause teachers and students to have bias tendencies towards academic achievement, and impact student motivation and persistence.

Impact of Curriculum, Culture and Student Academic Achievement

The decision of what should be taught in school (the curriculum) is often intentionally culturally biased. Curriculums established by a state or national educational organization often include standards that refer to the culture of the state or country, its history, traditions and customs that define the state or nation. In international schools, the curriculum is largely influenced by the founding community of that school or the school mission statement. As student populations become increasingly diverse, the choice of curriculum topics may seem irrelevant or not allow for students to incorporate their own culture and heritage in order to allow them to connect with the curriculum on a personal level.

Callins (2006) described the importance of curriculum to be *culturally relevant* and that teachers must use *culturally responsive pedagogy* in order ensure that there is a relevant and meaningful connection between the students' cultural backgrounds and what they are learning in school. Callins' research of culturally responsive literacy instruction demonstrated that student academic achievement improved through using culturally relevant lessons and resources (Callins, 2006).

Research by Schellenger and Grothaus (2011) tracked the impact of culturally responsive counseling curriculum used with students who had low academic achievement. The results of their student indicated that when curriculum was made

culturally relevant for students, there was improvement in their academic achievement as well as student behavior (Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2011).

Although the focus for this literature review is analyzing the impact of cultural competency on student academic achievement, both of these studies also indicate that culturally relevant curriculums have wide reaching impacts on student behavior as well as student social and emotional development.

Impact of Intercultural Competency of Teachers

Teachers are more than facilitators of learning for students. They model behavior, knowledge and skills, and they provide emotional support and guidance for students. They can also be seen as enforcers of rules or codes of behavior, giving praise or punishment to the students within the classroom, school hallways or in the playground. Teachers help provide students with the connection between student life and the curriculum. Cultural competency of teachers can influence the effectiveness of the connection between teachers and students (Snowball, 2009).

A study by Oller, Vila and Zufiaurre (2012) examined the influence on academic outcomes as a result of teacher and student perceptions and prejudices related to cultural stereotypes. The study involved a series of questions that asked teachers and students on their perceptions of academic achievement connected to the culture of the student. The participants of the study included 4078 immigrant students attending secondary schools in Catalonia, Spain, as well as 384 regular teachers and 384 support teachers. The results of the survey data reveal that there are discrepancies between what students perceive

about teachers and vice versa. For example, African² students reported that they were satisfied with their school but teachers reported that African students were not satisfied. Teachers perceived that Chinese students were more involved in their schoolwork than was reported by the Chinese students. Additional analysis reveals a complex relationship between teachers, students and support teachers that is influenced by the language and cultural background of the students, racial stereotypes and the role of the teacher in the school (Oller et al., 2012).

This study serves as a reminder that expectations of achievement and attitudes towards learning are influenced by culture, even if the learning context is different to the culture that the student or teacher has grown up with. Increasingly diverse classrooms mean that teachers will continue to experience more cultural variety amongst their students and so need to be more knowledgeable of how culture influences student learning, and the impact of teacher bias towards students' cultural backgrounds.

Impact of School and Peer Culture

Until this point, culture has been used as a term to indicate different nationalities or ethnicities of a student. However, it is important to remember that schools create their own cultures which influences the teaching and learning taking place within them. Dwyer (2006) examined the impact of students who attended culturally diverse colleges compared to students who were part of a cultural minority in college. Colleges that had cultural diversity embedded through all aspects of the community (teachers, curriculum,

² The study did not specify which countries in Africa the students were from.

support staff, subjects) had a more positive impact on student academic achievement compared to colleges that had limited diversity (Dwyer, 2006).

The impact of school culture, specifically peer culture within a school, has also been the subject of several studies. Lynch, Lerner and Leventhal (2013) tracked academic achievement compared to peer culture amongst 5th graders. Students who experienced positive and supportive peer cultures had higher levels of academic achievement and engagement compared to those students who were not part of a supportive peer culture (Lynch, Lerner, & Leventhal, 2013). Walker and Riordan (2010) also studied peer culture but from the perspective of school leaders and peer culture of teachers. Culturally responsive leadership supports the collective capacity of teachers within a school, which in turn supports student academic achievement (Walker & Riordan, 2010).

Conclusion

Student academic achievement is influenced by a student's family, cultural background, experiences in school, teachers and curriculum. Student academic achievement will be impinged if there is a disconnect between a student's cultural experiences and the curriculum. Teachers bring their own cultural biases and perceptions to the classroom which can also influence the academic expectations of students. Sleeter (2012) describes this process as marginalization of students through culturally irrelevant pedagogy, giving examples of schools in the US where curriculums have not developed to support an increasingly culturally diverse population (Sleeter, 2012). Students come to school with a complex background of experiences connected to family, culture and community. The influence of school and peer culture can have a direct impact on student academic achievement which in turn, can influence their preparedness for entering the

workforce. Students show academic improvement when they are learning in environments with resources and curriculum that are culturally responsive to the students, Therefore, culturally responsive pedagogy and school climate that promotes student engagement is vital for student success.

Supporting Teacher Intercultural Competency and Student Academic Achievement

Research has shown that intercultural competency of teachers can enhance the academic achievement of their students (Chiu & Chow, 2010; Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008; Lynch et al., 2013). Intercultural competency training of pre-service teachers indicates that it is possible for teachers to improve this skill through practicum placements, modules on diversity training and experiences in culturally diverse environments (Chang et al., 2011; Keiser, 2009; Saleh, Anngela-Cole, & Boateng, 2011). Experienced educators working in international schools have an even greater need to be interculturally competent, and leaders of these schools should provide opportunities for their teaching staff to self-assess their level of intercultural competency, and take part in training where necessary. Therefore, the review of literature provides specific recommendations for supporting intercultural competency amongst pre-service teachers, experienced teachers, school leaders and curriculum.

Intercultural Competency and Pre-Service Teachers

The review of literature indicated that intercultural competency training or diversity disposition training amongst pre-service teachers can have a positive impact on teacher intercultural competency (Chang et al., 2011; Keiser, 2009; Saleh et al., 2011; Shaklee & Merz, 2012a). However, there are several different models of intercultural competency training for pre-service teachers such as placements, theoretical studies and

training that incorporates self-reflection and awareness. Colleges and universities that are responsible for teacher training should incorporate intercultural competency within the requirements for pre-service teachers. It would be beneficial for additional research to be carried out in order for colleges and universities to be able to assess the type of intercultural competency training that will be most effective for their students, and be in a format that is suitable for the educational goals of the institution. There may not be one singular approach which is the best form for supporting cultural competency amongst pre-service teachers, and so additional research in this field should be carried out to help identify what form of training is best suited to different learning contexts and the needs for different groups of pre-service teachers.

Supporting Intercultural Competency Amongst Experienced Teachers

As indicated by the small amount of existing literature on intercultural competency and experienced teachers, there has been an identification of the need for professional development for teachers but no clear direction as to what this might be (Shaklee & Merz, 2012a; Sleeter, 2012). Further research in this field can help establish guidelines for what an interculturally competent school organization looks like, as well as provide guidance on school assessment tools and professional development strategies. This would help an individual school review the cultural impact of its current organizational structures and support school leaders in planning and implementing professional development related to intercultural competency, both for teachers and administrative staff.

For experienced teachers, the few articles that provide information on intercultural competency indicate that the first step to be taken is for teachers to self-

assess their level of intercultural competency. Further research in the field of intercultural competency and self-assessment can provide recommendations of tools that teachers can use to analyze their current intercultural competency skills. Through understanding and awareness of own biases or cultural ‘blind spots’, experienced teachers will be able to participate in professional development with specific learning goals for development and refinement of intercultural competency skills.

Supporting Intercultural Competency Amongst School Leaders

In addition to supporting intercultural competency of teachers, it is important that school structures are able to support the increasing cultural diversity of students. Organizational structures within a school can include structures of leadership teams, timetabling, classes and resources (Walker & Riordan, 2010). Cultural diversity amongst teaching staff provides rich opportunities for collaboration and learning but can provide challenges in terms of communication and process. School leadership has tremendous influence on teacher efficacy and student academic achievement but there needs to be more research-based guidance on how best to manage and support culturally diverse teachers and administrative staff.

Supporting Intercultural Competency Within Curriculum

Within any school, the curriculum provides the scaffolding structure that teachers use to create lessons, select resources and generate assessments in order to best support student learning. Curriculum and resources are powerful tools that can connect the student’s home life and cultural background to their learning experiences in school. A culturally responsive pedagogy is a vital part of supporting student academic achievement. As cultural diversity increases in schools, knowing the ways and means of

interculturally competent curriculum, resources and pedagogies becomes even more important for teachers and schools.

At an individual class level, a teacher can use their pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of their students' cultural backgrounds to select resources and activities that are appropriate and supportive of cultural diversity. At a departmental or school level, lead teachers can make use of intercultural competency knowledge to ensure that the curriculum is adapted to the cultural needs of the students. For educational organizations that design curriculum, there needs to be a regular process of review to ensure that curriculum standards and assessments are suitable and adaptable to support changing cultural demographics in school districts of regions.

Conclusion

A review of the literature related to culture and student academic achievement indicates that intercultural competency, in particular the intercultural competency of teachers, has an impact on student academic achievement. Pre-service teacher training programs include some elements of culture and diversity training but further research could provide great insight into the effectiveness and relevance of different types of programs.

There is a need for intercultural competency assessment and training of experienced teachers in order to support ongoing professional development. For school leaders in international schools, the review of literature indicates that there is a willingness to provide intercultural competency training as well as establish interculturally competent school practices but there is no clear guidance on how to go

about establishing these protocols. Further research in this field will be particularly helpful for international school leaders.

Student academic achievement improves when schools, international or local, have interculturally competent teachers and leaders, as well as culturally relevant pedagogy. The review of literature indicates that there are many possibilities for further research in this field, especially with the growing cultural diversity of school populations in many countries around the world.

Summary

Intercultural competency is defined as having the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors to effectively and appropriately live and work in a cultural different to one's own. It is a term that has been used interchangeable with *cultural sensitivity*, *cultural awareness* and *intercultural communication competence*. Hofstede's six dimensions of culture provide a lens through which we can make generalizations about the characteristics of different cultural groups or nations. In order to examine the cultural backgrounds and intercultural competencies of individuals, it is more appropriate to use Deardorff's process model of intercultural competence. This model indicates that developing intercultural competence happens over time, and is the result of changes and adaptations in skills, attitudes, knowledge and behavior. As a field of research, intercultural competence is becoming more prominent, especially with increasing diversity in workforces due to migration, companies becoming multinational and an increasingly connected world.

Like the increases in diversity in workforces, international schools are also experiencing a period of growth. As companies become multinational, their employees

are moving to work in new countries, requiring new schools to be established.

International schools define themselves by the cultural diversity of their staff and students, the international focus of the curriculum and their philosophy of international mindedness. Teachers who work in international schools should have a high level of intercultural competency, but as indicated in the research, cultural diversity preparation in pre-service programs for teachers is haphazard at best. Although research shows that interculturally competent teachers and culturally responsive curriculum support student academic achievement, there is a gap in the research that examines how the ability of intercultural competency is developed in international teachers.

Research on school leaders in international schools has also demonstrated the interaction between school leader culture and values, and school culture. Much of the recruiting and development of leaders in international schools takes place through on the job experience and mentorship which may not adequately develop a leader's skills in intercultural competency. Leaders within international schools recognize that the skill of intercultural competency is an important one for their teachers to have but there is little research or guidance to indicate how best to support the development of this skill.

In conclusion, a review of the literature indicates that the interculturally competent teachers and a culturally responsive curriculum have a positive impact on student academic achievement. There is a gap in the literature on the development of intercultural competency amongst teachers who work in international schools which this study directly addresses. There is very little research on professional development programs in international schools that support the development of intercultural competency. School leaders in international schools have expressed the need for more

guidance when it comes to supporting intercultural competency of their teachers, and the results of this research provide clearer direction for this. Finally, a literature review of international education has indicated that there is a need for more research on international schools, including the experiences of international school teachers and leaders, which this study addresses.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Restatement of Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed method study was to explore the organizational processes of international schools, specifically hiring and professional development, and compare these processes to the intercultural competencies of the teachers working there in order to understand how these factors interact. Students who attend schools where the teachers and curriculum have a high level of intercultural competence experience greater academic benefits (Chiu & Chow, 2010; Oller et al., 2012; Shaklee & Merz, 2012a; Walker & Riordan, 2010). Understanding intercultural competency at an organizational level provides information that can influence school policies, such as those related to hiring staff, requirements for staff training, and organization of leadership. An understanding of the level of intercultural competence in a school can also influence the planning and structure of staff in-service sessions or professional development opportunities.

On a larger scale, the results of the study can have benefits beyond international schools. Increasing globalization is resulting in diversity of student and teacher populations in national schools. Research to understand the influence of intercultural competency is applicable in these settings as well as international school environments.

Research Design

Research for this study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach. As noted in Creswell (2012), research in an education setting can be carried out using several different data collection methods. Mixed-methods research has the potential to bring equal weight to both qualitative and quantitative data, ensuring that data collected using

different methods can be compared more readily (Creswell, Shope, Clark, & Green, 2006). Mixed methods research is particularly applicable in a social or educational setting. Mason (2006) describes these settings as ones that generate “questions about social experience and lived realities” (p. 10) where the complexities of the data that is generated require multiple methods of collection and analysis. A purely quantitative analysis carried out in an educational setting may not be adequate for researchers to describe and understand the phenomena being researched. From an organizational study perspective, Azorín and Cameron (2010) highlight the benefits of mixed-methods research as a way of understanding micro and macro phenomenon occurring within an organization. When researching the organizational structure of international schools and the teacher experiences, it is important to understand the micro (individual teacher experience) and the macro (how school organizational structures influence teachers).

Several studies of intercultural competency amongst international teachers have utilized qualitative methods (Fisher, 2011a; Shaklee & Merz, 2012a; Walker & Riordan, 2010). Other quantitative studies of intercultural competency in schools have focused on the student experience (Moliner, Sales, Ferrandez, & Traver, 2011; Oller et al., 2012). There is an absence of literature in this field that uses mixed methods to focus on the teacher experience and triangulate the data with qualitative information on school organization structures.

A mixed-methods approach allowed for the use of a validated survey tool as well as providing the opportunity for analysis of school organizational policies as told through the experiences of school leaders. Creswell (2012) describes several possibilities for design using a mixed-methods approach. For the purposes of this research, Creswell’s

convergent parallel design was used, meaning that data collection involved qualitative and quantitative data being collected simultaneously. Once both sets of data were collected, they were compared and then an interpretation was made of the results. The advantages of using this type of research design is to gain more detailed data related to the research questions (Creswell, 2012).

Research Setting

Four international schools were selected through convenience sampling (Creswell, 2012), using the author's existing network of contacts in international schools. As discussed in Chapter 2 Review of Literature, there are several interpretations of the term *international school*. For the purposes of this research, the international schools used for data collection had a diverse mix of nationalities represented amongst the student and teacher population, and had a focus on international mindedness and global awareness as part of their mission and vision. Additionally, these international schools used the internationally-focused curriculum from the International Baccalaureate. The four schools were in geographically different locations; South East Asia, Western Europe, East Africa and South America. The selection of different geographic locations provided an opportunity for analysis of the school culture data compared with the culture of the host country using the lenses of Hofstede's six cultural dimensions.

The international schools selected in the study are well-established schools, with a K-12 student population of more than 1000 students per school. Each school holds accreditation with the International Baccalaureate as well as several other educational organizations such as the New England Council of International Schools or the Dutch Ministry of Education. They all spend significant time and resources recruiting teachers

suitable to working in the school. The four schools also have policies related to hiring of teachers, as well as yearly plans for professional development.

Population

In each school, all teachers were invited to contribute to the study based on convenience sampling. To be involved in the study, teachers had to meet the following criteria:

- Teachers must have been living in the host country for more than three months
- Teachers may not be from the host country
- Teachers must not have a combined nationality (for example, they cannot have dual citizenship from the host country and another country)
- Teachers may be working at either the primary (elementary) or secondary (middle and high school) level

The survey data collected from the teachers formed the quantitative portion of the study as well as providing qualitative data through open-response questions on the survey.

In addition to the teacher participants of the study, at least one school leader such as a director or principal from each school was interviewed in order to gain qualitative data from the study. For the purposes of this data collection, it was not necessary to have the same requirements for the school leader as for the teachers in terms of length of residence or nationality. This is because the school leader was responding to questions about school organizational structures rather than giving information about their personal cultural experiences. When possible, interviews were conducted with more than one school leader within each school, for example a high school principal and an elementary principal. This allowed for additional data analysis of school policies and professional

development strategies that may apply to teachers of different grade levels. It was important that the school leaders who were interviewed for the study were directly involved in the hiring process for teachers so they could give relevant and detailed information about the school hiring processes and their experience in interviewing candidates. Research from Poore (2005) documented that the majority of school leaders in international schools were white males and this was represented in the demographics of the school leaders participating in the study.

Instrumentation

Quantitative data was collected using an electronic survey tool with questions modified from the Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC), a tool developed by Dr Alvino Fantini through the Federation Experiment in International Living (Federation EIL). The Federation EIL is an organization that supports cross-cultural exchanges and experiences to “engage individuals in intercultural living and learning” (<http://federationeil.org/> n.d). The AIC was developed in the YOGA format; Your Objectives, Guidelines and Assessment. This means that the survey format is dependent on participants’ self-reflection and analysis of their own knowledge, skills and behavior when responding to a series of questions. The AIC is a type of self-awareness inventory which can be used before, during and after a person’s experience in a different cultural environment. Self-awareness inventories provide a ‘snapshot’ of a person’s experience and are not considered a test of a particular skill or knowledge set (Fowler & Mumford, 1999). For the purposes of this research, the AIC provides a non-threatening means for teachers to reflect on their skills, behavior and knowledge related to intercultural

competency without the perception that completing the survey is a form of evaluation of teaching capabilities.

The AIC consists of seven parts that ask respondents about their personal characteristics, motivation, language proficiency, communication styles and intercultural abilities. For the purposes of this research, some of the questions on the AIC had the wording clarified to ensure that they were relevant for teachers who are currently living in a host country. Some sections were also removed; the original version of the AIC included a section related to participant's experiences once they had returned home from their host country which wasn't relevant to this research. Additionally, wording of some questions was changed to explicitly refer to working in schools rather than other workplaces. The revisions of the AIC were sent to Dr. Fantini for approval, and to ensure that the integrity of the instrument was maintained.

The modified AIC included sections that are directly related to Deardorff's process model of intercultural competence. Deardorff's model includes identification of interculturally competent factors such as attitudes, knowledge and comprehension, skills, and the external outcomes in the form of behaviors. For the purposes of this research, the survey was modified to only include sections related to intercultural abilities, motivation and personal characteristics. The reformatted sections are as follows:

Part I and II – Personal characteristics

Part III – Motivation and options

Part IV – Intercultural abilities (attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviors)

Part V – Background information

The biographical data questions were adapted to ensure that information collected from participants remained confidential. Additionally, the survey was moved from a paper format to an online format in order to make data collection more simple.

Qualitative data was collected through an interview process. The interview questions were previewed, tested, and revised for clarity and validity before being used. This preview process involved the questions being tested with several school principals and directors who were not involved in the study but who have worked or are currently working at international school sites similar to the ones intended for the study. Interview times were set up via email and five out of the seven interviews took place via Skype. Each interview was transcribed and then sent to the interviewee for confirmation, along with any clarifying questions. The remaining two interviews were done via email, involving several exchanges of the initial interview questions followed by additional clarifying questions.

All participants in the study were informed that their responses remain confidential. As acknowledgement for participation in the study, schools were given the option of receiving an executive summary, an online presentation, access to the completed dissertation, or a combination of these.

Reliability and Validity

Quantitative Data – Assessment of Intercultural Competency (AIC)

Creswell (2012) defines reliability and validity of a survey tool as one which reports individual scores consistently, regardless of the time that the tool is administered. Specifically, reliability refers to questions used in a survey tool or interview to be clear and unambiguous. The Assessment of Intercultural Competency (AIC) developed by Dr.

Alvino Fantini has undergone development and assessment as part of the work for the Federation of The Experiment in International Living (“Resources « Federation EIL,” n.d.). The AIC (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006) was developed after a systematic and comprehensive review of 138 articles related to intercultural competency. Initial trials of the AIC involved comparison of responses to empirical data collected by the School of International Training. Through the process of the development of the survey tool, items were tested for internal consistency reliability as well as test-retest reliability of participant groups in three different countries; Ecuador, Switzerland and Great Britain (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006).

As Creswell states, reliability of a survey tool also means that the participants are taking the test or survey under similar conditions (Creswell, 2012). As part of the data collection process, all participants in the study will be contacted using the same method, and provided with the same version of the modified AIC.

The AIC has not been widely used outside of research completed by the School for International Training. Validity for the AIC was developed through several small trials of the AIC using participants in the programs run by the Federation EIL. Administration of the instrument was followed up with in-depth interviews to check for question validity (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006). The survey then underwent revisions before being more widely used by Federation EIL projects. The data from this research project will be also shared with the Federation EIL to contribute to increasing the validity of the AIC.

Qualitative Data – Interview Questions

The interview questions for school directors and principals were developed through reviewing the information gained from the AIC, the research questions, and a review of literature related to the experiences of international school directors and principals and cultural diversity. Creswell (2012) emphasizes the importance of having open-ended interview questions to provide opportunities to share their views without being limited by the perspectives or opinion of the researcher (Creswell, 2012). Aside from some brief background questions, the interview questions are open-ended for this research:

- Where and when do you do most of your hiring?
- Aside from seeking particular subject/year level expertise, are there other qualities you look for when hiring?
- What are some of the generic questions that you ask applicants to elicit information about working in culturally diverse environments?
- How do you evaluate an applicant's intercultural competency in an interview or written application? What specifics are you looking for?
- What do you believe are important attributes/skills for international teachers to have?
- Do you ever include cultural diversity training/intercultural competency training as a focus for professional development?
- If you have included cultural diversity training as a form of professional development, what were the reasons that led to this inclusion?

To ensure reliability, interviews were recorded and transcribed, then sent to the interviewee for confirmation of accuracy and, if necessary, clarification of comments

before the data analysis was carried out. Several interviewees were contacted with follow up questions after the initial interview took place.

Data Collection

Using the researcher's existing network of people working in international schools, school leaders in the targeted schools were contacted via email to ascertain if they were willing to be involved in the research. Once the schools agreed to be involved, the researcher collaborated with the school to establish a timeline for collection of data from the school leaders and teachers. Data was collected throughout November and early December in 2015. With most schools hiring new staff to begin work in July, having data collection start in November ensured that teachers who were newly hired at the start of the school year in July were eligible for participation in the quantitative portion of the study.

Once schools gave their consent to be involved in the study, they were provided with a detailed information sheet that included an outline of the proposed research, a definition of terms and confirmation that the study had received Institutional Review Board approval from the University of San Francisco. Schools and teachers were also assured by the author that confidentiality of participants involved in the study would be maintained. Schools and teachers were informed of the possibility to receive information about the data analysis once the study has been concluded.

The researcher worked with school leaders to distribute the survey to teachers. An information sheet was included as well as the link to the online survey. Schools used a variety of methods to communicate this to their teachers; through a faculty newsletter,

faculty-wide emails, announcing at staff meetings and approaching teachers directly. Reminders to teachers to complete the survey were sent out regularly.

Qualitative data was collected from interviews with at least one school leader in each school. The researcher established a convenient time with the school leader for the interview to take place. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes via a Skype call and was recorded with the permission of the interviewee. Transcripts of the interviews were provided to the interviewees for checking within 48 hours of the interview taking place.

Timing of Data Collection

The intention behind the data collection process was to gain both a teacher and organizational perspective of intercultural competency from two separate sets of data. This means that the data from the teacher survey and interviews of school leaders took place simultaneously. It was intended that teachers should feel able to complete the survey without concern for having the raw data forming the basis of interview questions with school leaders.

Data Analysis

Data analysis took place in three phases. The first phase compared the school culture to that of the host country using Hofstede's cultural dimensions as well as qualitative data from school leader interviews. The second phase of data analysis compared the quantitative data from the teacher surveys with the different phases of Deardorff's intercultural competency model. The third phase examined the qualitative and quantitative data collected from each individual school to address the research

question around alignment between teacher intercultural competency and school hiring practices.

Table 1 illustrates the connection between each research question, the data collected in the AIC and the data collected from the interviews with principals and directors.

Table 1

Alignment Between Research Questions and Data Collection

Research question	Relevant sections of the AIC (quantitative data)	Relevant interview questions (qualitative data)	Application of conceptual framework
What intercultural exposure do teachers have before working in international schools?	Part I – Background Information		
How do international teachers define and evaluate their own intercultural competence?	Part II – Personal Characteristics in Your Own Culture Part III – Personal Characteristics in Your Host Country Part IV – Motivation and Options Part V – Intercultural Abilities		Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence – development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes Deardorff's Model – desired external behaviors
How do school hiring processes seek to identify intercultural competency amongst new recruits?		Background information: -Where and when do you do most of your hiring? -Aside from seeking particular subject/year level expertise, are there other qualities you look for when hiring? What are some of the generic questions that you ask applicants to elicit information about working in culturally diverse environments? How do you evaluate an applicant's intercultural competency in an interview or written application? What specifics are you looking for? What do you believe are important attributes/skills for international teachers to have?	Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: Comparing the cultures of places where an applicant has lived or worked in comparison to the school culture Deardorff's Model – How does a school evaluate an applicant's desired external behaviors in relation to intercultural competency?
How is professional development planned in respect to improving teacher intercultural competency?		Do you ever include cultural diversity training/intercultural competency training as a focus for professional development?	Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: Understanding the cultural backgrounds of different groups within the school community and the school community as a whole
What is the relationship between intercultural competency of an individual teacher and that of the organizational processes of a school?	Research question addressed from analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.	Research question addressed from analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.	

All schools involved in the study received access to the results of the research. The information from the study can support the schools in planning staff development connected with intercultural competency. Schools involved in the research also received samples of the survey and interview questions which can be used for internal professional development.

Evaluation of Data Collection Tools

Evaluation of the Teacher Survey Tool

The Assessment of Intercultural Competency (AIC) was developed as a survey tool for educators moving to work in a culture different to their own. For the purposes of this study, the AIC was revised to ensure the questions were relevant for international school teachers who were already living and working in a different culture.

Benefits

There are several advantages to using the AIC as part of this study. The first is that there is clear alignment between the survey questions and sections, and the skills identified in Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence. When analyzing data from the survey, it is possible to draw conclusions on a respondent's level of intercultural competence based on their responses to the survey questions.

A second benefit to using the AIC as a data collection tool is that it is a survey designed to elicit responses from teachers who work in international situations. There are other survey tools that provide an assessment of a person's intercultural competence but these are not designed specifically for teachers or for people working in international

education environments. The AIC has been tested for validity and reliability specifically with teachers working internationally.

In addition, the AIC allows for collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from respondents which adds to the richness of information available for a study. For the purposes of this study, the information in the AIC provided more in depth detail about a teacher's experiences prior to working in an international school. The survey questions also prompted qualitative responses from teachers about their experiences after having worked in international schools for three or more months.

For teachers, taking part in the survey gave them the benefit of reflecting on their intercultural competence skill set, considering how they communicate and behave in a variety of different cultural contexts. This process of self-reflection is also an important part of developing intercultural competency and so by completing the survey, teachers have had the opportunity to undergo intercultural skill development.

Limitations

It is important to note that there are several limitations to using the AIC for the purposes of this study. Firstly, teachers completed the survey voluntarily and so data collected may not be a true representation of the experiences of international teachers. Those who chose to complete the survey may already have an interest in intercultural competency and so may already have a high level of competency compared to those who have no interest in participating in the study or engaging in the topic of intercultural competency.

Secondly, part of the limitations for participation in this study were that teachers had already been living and working in an international school for at least three months.

When reviewing the biographical information of the survey respondents, none of the teachers were new to international teaching. The minimum amount of international teaching experience amongst the respondents was two years. If there had been teacher participants who were new to working in international schools, their responses to questions around culture shock and being prepared to teach in culturally diverse environments may have yielded lower self-reported levels of flexibility, comfort and competence.

Finally, the modified AIC did not provide direct feedback to participants once they had completed the survey. The survey did not have a score, range or output that indicated the level of intercultural competency of the person completing the survey. This provided limitations for data analysis in terms of less quantifiable data. In addition, the lack of immediate feedback for survey respondents could have been a disincentive for teachers to complete the survey. It is recommended that future research in this area is carried out using a survey that provides some type of immediate feedback for respondents.

Evaluation of Interview Protocol

The interview questions were developed to align with the study research questions and to complement the questions from the modified AIC. The interview questions were tested with several school leaders not involved in the study to check for clarity.

Benefits

School leaders involved in the study were interviewed throughout November and December. This is the start of the 'hiring season', when international schools begin recruitment for teachers. The interview questions were based around school protocols

and policies for teacher recruitment and professional development, and these topics were at the forefront of school leader responsibilities at this particular time. For several of the school leaders, they were in the process of carrying out interviews with potential new teachers. For other school leaders, they were undergoing discussions in their leadership teams to review the school procedures for processing teacher applications.

The use of Skype video calls as a means to interview school leaders allowed for a more conversational approach to the interview process. Although several of the school leaders were known to the author, others been referred through colleague recommendations. Video conferencing provided a means to quickly break the ice with the unknown school leaders, and to have in depth interviews that yielded rich and detailed qualitative data.

Limitations

Although the majority of interviews for the school leaders were conducted using video or voice calls, this method of communication was not preferred or available for all school leaders. For school leaders in School B, Tanzania, it was only possible to interview via email. This provided much less data than the other school leader interviews done via Skype, even with the use of additional emails with follow up questions.

During the interview process, it became clear that there was another area connected to the study that warranted further investigation, namely the experiences of locally employed staff and teachers working in an international school. Some of the school leaders volunteered information about hiring and training procedures for locally employed staff and teachers. However, there weren't specific questions in the study interview protocol that focused in on cultural experiences of locally employed teachers

and staff working with expatriates. As such, the qualitative data from some of the school leaders yielded information that is part of the recommendations and implications, but it is not data that was methodically researched as part of all the school leader interviews. This point will be discussed further in Chapter V.

Researcher's Profile

Growing up on a small farm in South Eastern Australia, I had difficulty understanding the cultural backgrounds of people living around the world. I had very limited exposure to people who had different backgrounds to mine, aside from what I might read in a stack of aging *National Geographic* magazines that were owned by my parents. The people and places in these magazines were fascinating and portrayed as exotic, but far outside the realm of the world that I knew.

When I went to high school in Canberra, Australia, some of the students in my class were children of diplomats posted to Australia, or they were boarding at my school while their parents worked overseas. Again, their lifestyles and experiences were very removed from what I knew but I noticed that these students quickly banded together as a group, bound by their shared experiences of living in non-English speaking countries, eating strange foods, and traveling regularly on long-haul flights. Although my father traveled internationally a great deal with work, I never thought to ask him questions about the different languages he heard and spoke, the foods he ate, or the temples, churches and museums he might have visited.

A rite of passage for many Australians in their early twenties is to travel to England on a two-year working holiday visa. My brother and many of my friends took advantage of this opportunity and when I was in my early twenties, I began to think more

about the possibility of leaving Australia to live and work in another country. Through a series of coincidences, my husband received an offer of a job in Switzerland, and without too much consideration, and no preparation beyond buying *Lonely Planet's Guide to Switzerland*, we packed a suitcase each and relocated to Zurich. In hindsight, our youth and naivety meant that we viewed this as a great adventure without reflecting on what we might experience once we landed, or cause us to have any misgivings about living and working in a foreign country. But I also reflect today, with some sense of disbelief and embarrassment, at the opinions I had of the many different cultures I came into contact with, some of the teaching methods I used in my classroom, and the social gaffes that I made.

After several years of living in Switzerland, teaching in an international school, and making friends from many cultural backgrounds, I became much more aware of the thousands of nuances that exist in international schools and as part of an expatriate community in a foreign country. Through talking, asking questions and reflecting on my behavior and teaching, I became better at understanding situations and being able to adjust my actions to be more culturally appropriate. In the second international school I worked at, I joined the teacher-led welcome group that helped new teachers acclimatize to living and working in a different culture. I understood that my Indian and American friends had different experiences interacting with the Swiss compared to me as an Australian, and I learned that just because people speak the same language, whether it is English, German or French, doesn't necessarily mean that they understand each other.

My fascination with the experiences of teachers working internationally extended to my role as a committee member for the European League for Middle Level Education,

and my work as a consultant for the International Baccalaureate. I came into contact with teachers from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States and New Zealand who were living and working all over the world. Every story they told about their experiences was different but at the heart of every story was culture; its impact on how people adjusted, survived or thrived in an environment that was very different to the one in which they were brought up.

I am a passionate advocate for international teachers to help them be the best that they can in supporting student learning. In order for teachers to do this successfully in an international school, it is important for them to have a high level of intercultural competency. However, I didn't begin to understand or reflect on how this skill might be developed while I was working in international schools. It wasn't until starting my doctoral program at the University of San Francisco that I began to reflect more deeply on how my early learning experiences in those first years of working in an international school shaped who I am as a teacher, and my ability as a person to live and work successfully in a foreign country. Through my research, I hope to provide guidance for teachers who are considering working in international schools, or who are hoping to understand more about their ability to work in culturally diverse schools and classrooms. There are several large organizations that connect international teachers and international schools such as the European Council for International Schools (ECIS) the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS). These organizations host annual conferences and events which provide an ideal opportunity for me to share the results of my research, for both teachers and school leaders. Additionally, I hope to publish my findings in journals such as the *Journal of Research in International Education* or the *International*

Schools Journal. The focus for articles in these publications would be to provide guidance for school leaders on hiring policies and professional development planning for interculturally competent teachers.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

There are several parts to the data analysis for this study. This chapter will weave together results from the qualitative and quantitative data that were collected and compare the results with the conceptual frameworks used in this study. The chapter has been organized into four sections for data analysis.

The first section provides a more detailed context of the school sites used in the study. Each school has been given a moniker; School A, School B, School C and School D. Details about each of the school contexts includes the school geographical location, information about the school mission and vision, a brief historical background, teacher and staff demographics, and information on the school leaders who were interviewed as part of the research.

The second section uses Hofstede's cultural dimensions to analyze the similarities and differences between each individual school and the culture of its host country. Hofstede's six cultural dimensions provide an overview of cultural differences when comparing large groups such as schools, companies or regions. In addition to comparing school culture with host country culture, this section includes qualitative data from school leader interviews related to cultural differences. The analysis of school and host country cultures helps to provide a rich context for the schools involved in the study, as well as provide a context for teacher survey data.

The third section looks more closely at teacher experiences. The data being analyzed in this section is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data from all teacher responses collected through the modified Assessment of Intercultural Competency. The

data collected addresses the research question ‘How do international teachers define and evaluate their own intercultural competence?’. Data collected from the survey is compared to Deardorff’s Process Model of Intercultural Competence in order to understand the level of intercultural competence self-reported by teachers.

The fourth section looks more closely at data that addresses the research questions ‘what intercultural exposure do teachers have before working in schools?’ and ‘how do school hiring processes seek to identify intercultural competency amongst new recruits?’ Data analyzed in this section includes qualitative and quantitative data from teacher survey responses as well as qualitative data from school leaders. This data is analyzed to seek insight into the relationship between interview protocols used by school leaders and experiences of international teachers.

Finally, all data is aggregated to address the remaining research question, ‘what is the relationship between intercultural competency of an individual teacher and that of the organizational processes of an international school?’. This is done through a comparison of each school site using data collected from teachers and school leaders.

School Setting

South America

School A is located in a large metropolitan area in Peru. Although it is classified as an international school, it has its origins in the US education system. The school was established in 1946 and runs from kindergarten through to Grade 12. Like many international schools, it is accredited by local educational authorities as well as education associations in the US, and the International Baccalaureate. There are approximately 1700 students with over 40 nationalities represented amongst the student and faculty

body. Trends in international schools are showing an increase in the number of local student attending international schools (Brummitt, 2007; Bunnell, 2005) and School A is indicative of this with just over 50% of the students coming from the local culture.

Two school leaders were interviewed for the purposes of this research. Andrew A. has been at the school since 2013. Prior to this, Andrew worked in other international schools in Asia as well as the US. Brian B. has worked at the school since the start of the academic year in 2015. Prior to this, Brian worked at schools in Europe and the US. Both school leaders have been in leadership positions for more than a decade, and have been involved in hiring processes for teachers at local and international schools.

The mission statement and core values of School A demonstrate an emphasis on social responsibility, embracing diversity and building a sense of community, values that were highlighted during the interviews with two school leaders. Teachers for School A are recruited through direct applications to the school, recommendations, and hiring fairs. Like the student body, approximately 50% of the teaching faculty is from Peru, 30% from the US, and the remainder from a diverse variety of nationalities.

When teachers begin employment at the school, they are required by Peruvian law to arrive one month before the start of the school year. This policy is only two years old but has been viewed positively by school leaders. Andrew explains that “we have an odd situation because teachers actually have to come a month ahead of the time when they begin their work so there’s an extended period of time when they can be trained and oriented and live in the community before they actually have to be report for those first days of duty. So at that time we definitely build in some of the people locally... who meet with our new staff coming in.” Brian adds more detail by explaining that part of the

new orientation involves the process of “new teachers [are] buddied up before they arrived. They have a teacher buddy and a social buddy.... We take them to lunch, they meet the business staff, they meet a couple of people, they might not have their buddy here so they’re on their own, but we physically organize tours for them.” Additionally, teachers are given a cash bonus for the time that they are in Peru before school starts as an incentive to arrive early, become settled and perhaps see some of the surrounding country.

East Africa

School B is located in a suburban area of Tanzania, spread over two campuses. It was founded in 1963 as an independent school before the unification of Taganyika and Tanzania. In addition to being affiliated with the International Baccalaureate, the school has accreditation with the Council of International Schools and the Middle States Association. The school is a K-12 school with just over 1000 students, representing 60 different nationalities. There are approximately 120 teachers representing 20 different nationalities. Unlike School A, very few teachers are local hires although all of the support staff are Tanzanian with the exception of the human resources manager and the communication and marketing manager.

Two school leaders were interviewed via email from School B. Charles C. has worked in international schools in East Africa and Europe prior to working at School B. Don D. has been in East Africa since 2013 and previously worked in international schools in South America.

The school mission and vision is stated in both English and Swahili on the school website as an acknowledgement to the local language. On the website, the school also

publishes their statement of values as well as their teaching and learning philosophy, service charter and focus on international mindedness. School B's mission alludes to student contributions to improve the world, and the school's vision refers to understanding the diversity of people and cultures. These two parts of the school philosophy are indicative of the importance that is placed on intercultural competency at a student level.

When teachers arrive at the school they are given very little support in terms of cultural integration. As Don D. put it "we provide a bit of Swahili survival training as a part of our new teacher orientation." Teachers are provided with accommodation that includes basic furnishing. Charles C. explains more about the teacher accommodation: "We have various housing sites – a large number of apartments and houses on our elementary campus, others near to, but not on, the secondary campus. Most of the off-campus housing is on compounds which is typical here for up-market people of all nationalities, including Tanzanian." School B is the only school involved in the study that provides accommodation for teachers in compounds or gated communities.

South East Asia

School C is located in a large, densely populated area in Thailand. It is one of the newer schools in this study, established in 1992. The school was founded with the philosophy of being truly international; not aligned to any particular national education system. It was founded in conjunction with the United Nations and now has a student population of 1500 representing more than 50 nationalities. Thai students make up approximately a third of the student body.

Two school leaders were interviewed from School C. Ethan E. has had a long history with the school, having worked there as a teacher and school leader for more than 15 years. He has also worked in schools in the Australasian region and throughout Europe. Fran F. is newly appointed to a leadership position in School C but has been an active and engaged teacher at the school for more than five years. She has also taught at schools throughout North America.

The school has recently revised its mission, vision and values and these are clearly stated on school publications, as well as being emphasized through the interviews with school leaders. The school website also explains its culture, emphasizing that collaboration, balance, and having a growth mindset are defining parts of the school culture. Throughout the documentation of the school mission, vision, values and culture, the language constantly refers to students, teachers and parents, highlighting that school values apply to all members of the school community.

Thai law requires that all newly hired teachers undergo a Thai cultural course that includes elements of Thai language, history and customs. The school is an authorized provider of this course and frequently has teachers from other international schools come and attend. Fran explains, “The curriculum for that course is determined by the Ministry of Education and our Thai department do a really great job of leading that program. That covers basic things like very basic Thai language skills, basic Thai cultural practices, Buddhism, basic things like that, a little bit of history.” Aside from this course, the school allocates a week for induction of new teachers, focusing on the school policies and procedures.

The majority of the support staff and teaching assistants are local employees. The school has a large number of non-teaching staff that provide support in all areas from grounds maintenance to building engineering and secretarial support. Thai teaching assistants are expected to be fluent in English but they do not have to undergo any cultural training when they join the school.

School C provides support for teachers who are new hires when they initially relocate to Thailand. New teachers are guided through the process of gaining work permits, setting up bank accounts and finding accommodation. Most of the teachers live close to the school but there is no specified teacher accommodation or compound for teachers in which to live.

Western Europe

School D is located in an international city in The Netherlands. It operates slightly differently to Schools A, B and C in that it is part of an affiliation of six schools operated by the Dutch government, rather than being an independent private school. It is a semi-private school, meaning that the Dutch government subsidizes each child but parents also make financial payments for student tuition. Because of the school's location in an area with large multinational companies and the government offices of the European Union, there are over 85 different nationalities represented amongst the 1480 students from kindergarten through to Grade 12. Although most international schools have a fairly transient student population, it is higher at School D due to the surrounding industries.

School D is considered an international school by the definition outlined in Chapter II, but it is equally entrenched in the local Dutch education system. The school

leaders are held accountable to the Dutch Ministry of Education standards as well as accreditation standards from the International Baccalaureate and the Council of International Schools. Teachers are employed at the school under the same teaching contracts as Dutch public school teachers. This means that School D provides quite different teaching compensation packages compared to the other international schools involved in the study. Teachers are not provided with subsidized health insurance, repatriation flights or subsidized accommodation unlike teachers employed in Schools A, B and C.

George G. is the school leader who was interviewed from School D. He has a long history of working with international schools in the Middle East, Europe and Asia as both a teacher and school leader. George has been a school leader at School D for the past three years.

The school mission reflects the importance of being an international school that is firmly entrenched in the local community. The mission statement stresses the importance of active contribution to local and global communities as well as fostering global awareness, respect and tolerance. These values were emphasized during the interview with George who gave the following example of how the school had the challenge of balancing local cultural traditions with respect to the cultural diversity that exists within School D.

“You’ve got *Sinterklaas* [Dutch Santa Claus who travels with several companions called *Zwarte Pieten* who wear blackface] which is utterly racist so we stopped it. And the Dutch went nuts at us! We’ve got a lot of African kids in the school and they’d ask, ‘why is he dressed like me?’...And that’s why we did it. So we went

into massive research about it and ... we've done it the right way and managed to keep the tradition of *Sinterklaas* but we've stripped away all the bits that aren't very nice."

Teachers who come to work at School D do so for a variety of reasons; the school has a good reputation amongst the international teaching community. Its location is conducive for travelling throughout Europe, and for English teachers, it isn't too far from their home country. However, as it is more like working in a local school, there is no additional compensation for housing, flights home each year or health care. Teachers live in the surrounding community and work under the same conditions as Dutch teachers. The school orientation for new teachers must be attended by international and local teachers, and focuses on inducting new recruits into the culture of School D rather than helping them settle into the local Dutch culture.

Comparing Cultural Dimensions at Each School Location

Hofstede's cultural dimensions provide a means for analyzing differences between different groups of people such as schools, companies, communities or nations. Hofstede utilizes six dimensions to structure this comparison. Each dimension is measured on a scale from 0-100. Quantitative data that is used in the figures is sourced from Hofstede's research and cultural dimensions tools ("Dimensions - Geert Hofstede," n.d.; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 1990). Table 2 outlines the meaning of a high or a low score in each dimension.

Table 2

Descriptions of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

	High score (>50)	Low score (<50)
Power Distance Index	Hierarchical order a natural part of society	People strive to overcome inequalities in power
Individualism vs Collectivism	Individuals expected to take care of themselves and immediate family	Close-knit community bonded by loyalty
Masculinity vs Femininity	Preference for heroism, achievement and material rewards	Preference for quality of life, cooperation and modesty
Uncertainty Avoidance Index	Rigid codes of beliefs and intolerance for difference	Relaxed culture with focus on what people do rather than principles
Long Term Orientation vs Short Term Normative Orientation	Flexible and open to change based on future needs	Preference for time-honored traditions
Indulgence vs Restraint	Orientation towards having fun and enjoying life	Gratification regulated by social norms.

Each school site was compared using Hofstede's cultural dimensions data from the United Kingdom, the United States and that of the host country. Although all the schools have their own culture, they all have their roots in the English-speaking cultures of the United Kingdom and the United States, making it suitable to use UK and USA data for cultural comparisons. The figures for each school provide comparative information on all six cultural dimensions but for the purposes of this research, analysis is made of dimensions that show a difference of approximately 35 or more between a cultural dimension of the host country and that of the school culture (i.e. UK and USA cultures).

School A - Peru

School A strongly identifies itself as an international school with a significant United States cultural influence. This is seen in various guises in the school such as holiday

planning to include a Thanksgiving break and in the school mission and vision. Andrew comments that “I always remind all of our staff, both our Peruvian staff and our international staff that the thing about America, the United States and really Canada as well, is the American experiment is truly embedded in multiculturalism; people coming from all over the world and trying their best to exist and form society in a cultural context where people can live in relative peace, relative prosperity. It’s written in the constitution, the Declaration of Independence and so ... it’s why we take diversity very seriously and we work on it in terms of the people we choose to work here and in terms of the curriculum and the methodologies that we use in terms of embracing diversity to the best of our abilities.”

Figure 3 provides a visual comparison of Peruvian culture, the location of School A, with the cultural dimension scores for the UK and the US. There are several data comparison points that are notable.

Figure 3. Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for Peru, United Kingdom and the United States.

Each dimension is measure on a scale out of 100,with a higher score indicating the dominance of that dimension.

Firstly, the very low score in the dimension of *Individualism* for Peru indicates a culture with a strong collective focus, where the concepts of family and company collective are important. This is in direct contrast to the US and UK scores for this dimension where these countries have scored highly indicating that they are cultures which highly value individualism. The contrast between Peru, and the US and UK for *Individualism* is indicated by one teacher’s comment about Peruvian culture; “Sometimes it is too easy to spend time with those that speak your own language and you default to the easier path. I also find in Peru that with the family-centered culture it is harder to connect with the local hires as their weekends are focused on time with family.”

Secondly, the cultural dimension scores for *Uncertainty Avoidance* also show a difference between Peru and the dominant cultures of School A. Peruvian culture scores highly on *Uncertainty Avoidance* indicating a culture that has a fairly strong adherence to traditions and belief systems with a low level of tolerance for differences. When considering the context of an international school, this particular cultural difference can prove challenging, especially when 50% of School A's faculty are Peruvian. Both school leaders commented on the existing and developing practices for overcoming cultural differences between Peruvian staff and families and the school culture. School leader Brian talked about the process of initiating town hall meetings on diversity and inclusion for the broader school community. "There's probably 70% Spanish speakers and inclusion and diversity has been a hot topic here this year and in previous years because the Peruvians have pretty narrow mindset about your skin color and where you come from. So it's a pretty sensitive issue here, more so than I thought. I'm kind of surprised by it! Having said that, there's a lot we've done this year...like a town meeting and you have a topic... we did four or five of these. We did them in different parts of the city to invite parents in to talk about diversity and inclusion at the school and what do they see as the strengths and weaknesses."

A teacher response in the survey also points to cultural adaptation needed from both expatriate teachers and local staff, "When in an international or American school, it is more often the expatriate teacher who better identifies with the curriculum and a certain segment of the student population. As such, the onus is almost greater on Peruvian teachers to be "interculturally competent", since they are making the choice to teach in a "non-Peruvian" school."

School B - Tanzania

School B, located in Tanzania, has elements of the local language incorporated into its website, including the vision and mission available in both English and Swahili. The school employs very few Tanzanian teachers but does have a large number of Tanzanian support staff. There is very little local culture integration for expatriate teachers aside from some basic language class offerings. An analysis of Tanzanian cultural dimensions compared to UK and US cultural dimensions reveals some differences in several of the cultural dimensions.

Figure 4. Comparison of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions for Tanzania, United Kingdom and the United States.

Each dimension is measure on a scale out of 100, with a higher score indicating the dominance of that dimension.

As shown in Figure 4, the greatest difference is on the dimension of *Individualism vs Collectivism*. As a culture, Tanzania scores very low on the dimension of *Individualism* indicating a strong cultural preference orientated towards close-knit communities bonded by loyalty. In contrast, the US and UK cultures highly value individualism where people are expected to be self-sufficient, support themselves and their immediate family. Like School A, the difference between cultures for this dimension could have an impact on how expatriate teachers adjust to living in Tanzania, as well as how locally employed staff operate in School B's environment which has different values to Tanzania when it comes to collective support. While it may sound contradictory, the provision of school housing in compounds may go some way to help expatriate teachers have a sense of supporting themselves. As school leader Charles points out, "[The city] can be a frustrating place to work at times, with infrastructure limitations, poor maintenance and such like. It makes some people nervous and scared." A compound for living may help teachers overcome these frustrations and fears and give them back a sense of control, appealing to the UK/US preference for *Individualism*.

Power Distance is another dimension that reveals a difference between School B's culture and that of Tanzania. The high score for *Power Distance* in Tanzanian culture indicates that it is a culture that has a hierarchical order as a part of society structure. The lower scores for the UK and US indicate that the culture within the school may be less stratified with a more level approach to power. For Tanzanian staff, it may be challenging to work in an environment where there may not be distinct levels of power compared to what they may be used to. For expatriate teachers, it may be frustrating to

have to navigate different levels of bureaucracy when going about daily life in Tanzania, outside of the school environment.

School C - Thailand

School C, located in a busy urban area of Thailand was founded with the intention of having a school that is truly international and not influenced by a particular culture or country's education system. Although it is possible to have these ideals, the nature of having a school with English-language medium, utilizing curriculum developed in the Western world and employing teachers who are fluent English speakers means that this will have an influence on school culture.

Figure 5 shows a comparison between the host culture of Thailand and that of the UK and US. Like School A and B, the most obvious difference in cultural dimensions is the difference in *Individuals vs Collectivism*.

Figure 5. Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for Thailand, United Kingdom and the United States.

Each dimension is measure on a scale out of 100, with a higher score indicating the dominance of that dimension.

Thai society supports strong relationships and loyalties within a group. There is also the concept of ‘saving face’ when communicating with group members to avoid confrontation, which may mean that confrontation over issues is avoided for the sake of maintaining harmony. In contrast, the UK and US cultures have a very high score of *Individualism* meaning that people are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate family without necessarily being as mindful of cohesion in a community. This contrast is highlighted in an anecdote related by a school leader Ethan in relation to an expatriate teacher and a Thai teaching assistant.

“We had a huge clash between the teacher and the AA, the academic teaching assistant... Essentially [it] was all around the way in which the teacher was speaking, and it was the disrespect, if you like, of the cultural norms in Thailand.

The way papers were being handed or shoved in a ‘here you do this’ sort of [way]. I think even in our cultures we would find it a little bit blunt, I think is the word we would use. But here it’s highly offensive. This assistant, we spoke to her ahead of time, knowing that there might be some issues because of previous years, so we told her to be strong. She’s someone who’s worked in the school for 16 plus years and has worked in the role of assistant to the principle and different roles like that so has a really good understanding and is very confident. In the past, we noticed that people didn’t want to work with this teacher but we couldn’t put our finger on why because there was no feedback. This year we got our feedback because we put the right person in there. It’s been hard for her but now we’re sorting out the problem.”

School D - The Netherlands

School D, located in a cosmopolitan center in the Netherlands, shows some differences in situation between Schools A, B and C. Although the school had an English-language medium, it is incorporated into the Dutch education system with teachers being employed under the same conditions as Dutch teachers working in local schools. Figure 6 shows a visual comparison between the cultural dimensions of The Netherlands, the UK and the US.

Figure 6. Comparison of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for the Netherlands, United Kingdom and the United States.

Each dimension is measure on a scale out of 100, with a higher score indicating the dominance of that dimension.

In comparison to the other three schools in the study, the cultural comparisons for School D do not show a marked difference in the six cultural dimensions with the exception of *Masculinity vs Femininity*. For Schools A, B and C, the greatest difference in cultural dimensions was in *Individualism vs Collectivism* but for School D, the greatest difference was in the *Masculinity vs Femininity* dimension. A nation that scores highly on the *Masculinity vs Femininity* dimension indicates a cultural preference for heroism, material awards and achievement. A low score on this dimension indicates a culture that has a preference for modesty, cooperation and quality of life based on experiences. The low score for the Netherlands is representative of some of the qualities described by school leader George G. who explains about the hiring process for teachers. “On most

recruitment that's done in the school, I will let the subject area leaders, the right people, have all the time to make the recommendations, and invariably I agree and say 'that person is right for you.' So we do try and drop it down to the trophic levels. We don't have a board but we have a participation council by Dutch law, and they'll all be involved. It's very flat, as the Dutch say, very *polder*, everybody has their input."

Ambitious expatriate teachers who move to work in School D will not find a hierarchical system which they may expect, given the school's English speaking culture. Instead, they will find more of a Dutch-style focus on cooperation, modesty and quality of life rather than competition.

Teacher Experiences

As noted in the review of literature, international school teachers are underrepresented in the field of research on international schools. The data collected through the survey gave international school teachers the opportunity to take part in research to generate both qualitative and quantitative data on intercultural competency.

Data analysis of teacher experience has been done grouping teachers from three schools involved in the study, schools A, B and C. Data from School D teachers was unable to be collected. By grouping all the school teacher data together for the analysis, it is possible to generate an overview of international teacher experiences regardless of current employment location. The data from the teacher survey was analyzed in two main areas related to the research questions of the study:

1. Teacher self-assessment of intercultural competency
 - a. Research question – How do international teachers define and evaluate their own intercultural experience?

2. Being prepared to teach in culturally diverse classrooms
 - a. Research question - What intercultural exposure do teachers have before working in international schools?
 - b. Research question - How do school hiring processes seek to identify intercultural competency amongst new recruits?

As well as quantitative and qualitative data collected from the teacher surveys.

Deardorff's process model of intercultural competency provides a framework for analyzing teacher self-assessment of intercultural competency.

Completion of Survey

The teacher surveys were distributed in each school electronically. School leaders and heads of department supported the data collection process by circulating information about the study as well as the link for teachers to complete the survey. The researcher sent out weekly reminders to school leaders who were coordinating the teacher survey collection in order to gain as much teacher participation as possible. Unfortunately, School D, the Netherlands, was unable to contribute to the survey data. Table 2 shows the response rate per school.

Table 2

Completion data from teachers surveyed using the modified Assessment of Intercultural Competency

	School A - Peru	School B - Tanzania	School C - Thailand
Completed surveys	14	8	8

Teacher Self-Assessment of Intercultural Competency

Teachers were asked via survey to self-assess their level of intercultural competency in four skill areas; knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness. These

categories align with Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence. Deardorff explains that the process of developing intercultural competency is based on specific attitudes (respect, openness, curiosity and discovery) combined with cultural knowledge and communication skills. These factors enhance a person's awareness and ability to behave in a culturally appropriate and effective way, as well as their motivation to change or adapt their behavior to a different culture.

The survey required teachers to self-assess their intercultural competency skills in the four areas of knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness using a Likert scale.

Knowledge

Questions in the survey that related to knowledge included knowledge of behaviors as well as knowledge of techniques to culturally adapt and knowledge of cultural theories. Table 3 indicates the range of participants' responses.

Table 3

Teacher responses to survey questions on knowledge of intercultural competency

	Question	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently	Mostly	Always, with confidence	Total Responses	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I can cite a definition of culture and describe its components and complexities.	2	9	4	17	5	37	3.38	1.16
2	I know the essential norms and taboos of the host culture (e.g. greetings, dress, behaviors, etc.).	0	2	13	18	4	37	3.65	0.75
3	I can contrast important aspects of the host language and culture with my own.	2	7	11	14	3	37	3.24	1.04
4	I recognize signs of cultural stress and know some strategies for overcoming it.	2	6	13	14	2	37	3.22	0.98
5	I know some techniques to aid my learning of the host language and culture.	2	4	12	16	3	37	3.38	0.98
6	I can contrast my own behaviors with those of my hosts in important areas (e.g. social interactions, basic routines, time orientation, etc.).	0	5	9	20	3	37	3.57	0.83
7	I can cite important historical and socio-political factors that shape my own culture and the host culture.	0	11	11	14	1	37	3.14	0.89
8	I can describe a model of cross-cultural adjustment stages.	5	11	10	10	1	37	2.76	1.09
9	I can cite various learning processes and strategies for learning about and adjusting to the host culture.	2	9	15	10	1	37	2.97	0.93
10	I can describe interactional behaviors common among people in the host culture in social and professional areas (e.g. family roles, team work, problem solving etc.).	1	12	12	10	2	37	3	0.97
11	I can discuss and contrast various behavioral patterns in my own culture with those in the host culture.	2	5	14	13	3	37	3.27	0.99

Questions two and six report on participants' abilities to behave in a culturally appropriate way. The responses to these two questions had the highest means and the lowest standard deviations out of this set of questions, indicating that the majority of participants felt confident in knowing the correct behavior in a particular situation.

For questions related to knowledge of theories on cross-cultural adjustment, learning strategies to adjust to cultures, and being able to explain the subtle differences in cultural behaviors dependent on context and participants, teachers were less confident, selecting 'frequently' as a response, rather than 'mostly' or 'always, with confidence.' This is reflected in the process orientation in Deardorff's model where people are able to have effective and appropriate behavior but there may not necessarily have been a shift in internal frames of reference. Figure 7 demonstrates the connection between the responses to these questions and Deardorff's model.

Figure 7. A simplified version of Deardorff's process model.

The white arrows indicate the usual development of intercultural competency as stated by Deardorff. The gray squares and arrow indicate the responses from teachers in the survey and the connection with the different parts of the model.

Questions eight and nine show less confident responses from participants indicating that teachers are not always having an internal shift in intercultural competency. This aligns with Deardorff's model indicating that people can have a high level of knowledge and skills and move directly to having the desired external outcomes of effective and appropriate communication, represented by the grey arrow, without undergoing an internal shift in cultural frames of reference.

Qualitative responses from teacher also indicated knowledge connected to intercultural competency. When asked about experiences prior to international teaching,

one teacher responded, “they gave me insights and a heightened sense of interest specifically in Tanzania and the Swahili coast. I think it was those early experiences that enabled me to have made some mistakes and overcome the initial culture-shock of working abroad by the time I took a first post in an international school.” Another teacher commented that, “I have moved to new countries and new cultures six times now and every time I go through a sort of culture shock at some point. In spite of having become very competent as a global nomad, I still experience this. By now I have developed strategies to get through it relatively easily, but it still happens every time.”

Attitudes

On the survey, questions related to attitude referred to willingness of teachers to interact with different cultures, to adapt or change behavior and ability to reflect and cope with the impacts of changing (or choosing not to change) an attitude. Teacher responses for all of these questions had an average of ‘frequently’ or ‘mostly’ with no significant differences between the responses for each question as is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Teacher responses to survey questions on attitudes and intercultural competency

	Question Prompt: <i>While I am in the host country, I demonstrate a willingness to...</i>	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently	Mostly	Always, with confidence.	Total Responses	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	interact with members of the culture members (I don't avoid them or primarily seek out my compatriots).	0	6	10	11	7	34	3.56	1.02
2	learn from my hosts, their language and their culture.	0	9	4	12	9	34	3.62	1.16
3	try to communicate in the host language and behave in appropriate ways, as	2	5	9	10	8	34	3.5	1.19

	judged by my hosts.								
4	deal with my emotions and frustrations with the host culture (in addition to the enjoyment it offers).	1	1	10	19	3	34	3.65	0.81
5	take on various roles appropriate to different situations (e.g. in the family, as a volunteer, etc.).	1	8	6	16	3	34	3.35	1.04
6	show integration in new cultural aspects (e.g. to understand the values, history, traditions, etc.).	0	6	9	15	4	34	3.5	0.93
7	try to understand the difference in the behaviors, values, attitudes, and styles of host members.	0	2	9	17	6	34	3.79	0.81
8	adapt my behavior to communicate appropriately in the host culture (e.g. in non-verbal and other behavioral areas) as needed for different situations.	0	2	9	17	6	34	3.79	0.81
9	reflect on the impact and consequences of my decisions and choices on my hosts.	0	5	8	17	4	34	3.59	0.89
10	deal with different ways of perceiving, expressing, interacting, and behaving.	0	5	6	21	2	34	3.59	0.82
11	interact in alternative ways, even when quite different from those to which I am accustomed and referred.	0	3	8	19	4	34	3.71	0.8
12	deal with the ethical implications of my choices (in terms of decisions, consequences, results, etc.).	0	3	11	17	3	34	3.59	0.78
13	suspend judgment and appreciate the complexities of communicating and interacting interculturally.	0	2	10	18	4	34	3.71	0.76

Deardorff's model indicates that attitudes of respect, openness, and curiosity and discovery tend to be both the driving force and a key outcome of intercultural competency. The data from this set of questions indicates that international teachers identify that they have the attitude traits that are associated with a high level of intercultural competency.

Qualitative data from teachers also indicated that attitudes of respect, openness and curiosity had often been present in teachers' formative experiences of different cultures, and were still present today. One teacher noted that, "the experiences caused me to be more open-minded and curious about differences. I wanted more so that is why I moved abroad." Another teacher said that early intercultural experiences led to "an awareness of other cultures, curiosity, desire to [have] a more in depth experience."

Skills

Deardorff indicates that there are certain key skills required to develop intercultural competency. These include the ability to listen, observe and evaluate as well as to be able to analyze, interpret and relate to others in culturally diverse situations. In the survey, section three on skills included questions related to monitoring one's own behavior as well as being able to adjust behaviors to be appropriate to another culture. In comparison to responses related to attitude, teachers with a high level of intercultural competency skill have the ability to adapt behaviors whereas attitude refers to the willingness to adapt behaviors. As seen in the data in Table 5, teacher responses indicated a high level of skill in being able to contrast host culture with the teacher's own culture. This is perhaps not surprising as a key part of experiencing a new culture is to immediately compare it to a culture that one is very familiar with.

Table 5

Teacher Responses that Relate to Skills Required for Intercultural Competency

	Question	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently	Mostly	Always, with confidence	Total Responses	Mean
1	I demonstrate flexibility when interacting with people from the host culture.	0	0	7	18	7	32	4
2	I adjust my behavior, dress, etc., as appropriate, to avoid offending my hosts.	0	1	5	16	10	32	4.09
3	I am able to contrast the host culture with my own.	0	0	4	16	12	32	4.25
4	I use strategies for learning the host language and about the host culture.	1	8	8	14	1	32	3.19
5	I demonstrate a capacity to interact appropriate in a variety of different social situations in the host culture.	0	2	10	14	6	32	3.75
6	I use appropriate strategies for adapting to the host culture and reducing stress.	0	2	10	15	5	32	3.72
7	I monitor my behavior and its impact on my learning, growth, and especially on my hosts.	0	3	9	15	5	32	3.69
8	I use culture-specific information to improve my style and professional interaction with my hosts.	0	4	9	16	3	32	3.56
9	I help to resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings when they arise.	0	5	7	13	7	32	3.69
10	I employ appropriate strategies for adapting to my own culture when I return home.	1	5	4	18	4	32	3.59

Questions related to employing or using strategies, questions four, eight and ten, had lower means than other questions that focused more on a direct skill. Employing or using strategies related to intercultural competency implies that participants know the theory and have the skill to adjust their behavior. The lower means from participants in response to questions four, eight and ten, indicate that teachers may have the skill to

adapt to a new culture but may not necessarily have a frame of reference to be able to describe or explain a particular cultural adaptation strategies.

Qualitative data from teachers also indicated the important of skills when adjusting to a new culture. One teacher said, “I have to be flexible to live in other countries successfully.” Another teacher also remarked on the importance of flexibility saying that, “flexibility and acceptance of diversity in particular” were skills they had developed through early intercultural experiences that they now used in their role as an international teacher.

Awareness

Questions on the survey related to awareness refer to a respondent’s self-assessment of flexibility in thinking, adaptability and empathy. These traits connect with what Deardorff terms as a *desired internal outcome*, in particular the ability to shift through adaptability, flexibility, ethno-relative view, and empathy. As indicated in Table 6, the question with the highest mean response asked participants how frequently they realized the importance of not generalizing individual behaviors as representative of a whole culture.

Table 6

Responses Related to Awareness as an Intercultural Competency

	Question prompt: <i>While in the host culture, I realize the importance of...</i>	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently	Mostly	Always, with confidence	Total Responses	Mean
1	differences and similarities across my own and the host language and culture.	0	3	3	16	8	30	3.97
2	my negative reactions to these differences (e.g. fear, ridicule, disgust, superiority, etc.).	0	5	4	17	4	30	3.67

3	how varied situations in the host culture require modifying my interactions with others.	0	2	6	15	7	30	3.9
4	how host culture members view me and why.	0	3	11	11	5	30	3.6
5	myself as a "culturally conditioned" person with personal habits and preferences.	0	1	12	13	4	30	3.67
6	response by host culture members to my own social identity (e.g. race, class, gender, aged, etc.).	0	1	11	15	3	30	3.67
7	diversity in the host culture (such differences in race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.).	0	2	7	17	4	30	3.77
8	the danger of generalizing individual behaviors as representative of the whole culture.	0	1	5	13	11	30	4.13
9	my choices and their consequences (which make me ether more or less acceptable to my hosts).	0	2	9	13	6	30	3.77
10	my personal values that affect my approach to ethical dilemmas and their resolutions.	0	1	5	17	7	30	4
11	my hosts' reactions to me that reflects their cultural values.	0	0	12	14	4	30	3.73
12	how my values and ethics are reflected in specific situations.	0	2	6	17	5	30	3.83
13	varying cultural styles and language use, and their effect in social and working situations.	0	3	9	13	5	30	3.67
14	my own level of intercultural development.	0	2	10	13	5	30	3.7
15	the level of intercultural development of those I associate with (e.g. hosts, colleagues, friends).	0	2	10	16	2	30	3.6
16	factors that help of hinder my intercultural development and ways to overcome them.	0	4	11	13	2	30	3.43
17	how I perceive myself as a communicator, facilitator, mediator, in an intercultural situation.	0	2	7	18	3	30	3.73
18	how others perceive me as a communicator, facilitator mediator, in an intercultural situation.	0	4	8	16	2	30	3.53

Out of the total responses to this question, 35% of teachers responded ‘always, with confidence’. From the selection of 18 questions, participants never selected the option ‘not at all’ in relation to awareness of cultural behaviors.

Teachers also provided qualitative data related to the role of awareness in intercultural competency. One teacher notes that, “Because this is my fourth country, I feel that my competency has improved over time. I am more aware of how to address situations more quickly. Although there are still many challenges faced at work between local staff and expat staff that are not quickly apparent.” Another teacher commented that, “working at an international school has definitely made me a more sensitive intercultural person. This sensitivity stems from not only my interactions with people from the host country, but also with the other international teachers who come from a variety of different countries. We all bring something unique to the table, and we all learn from each other and help each other cope in the ‘foreign’ environment of the host country.” One teacher also indicated that awareness of other cultures increased awareness of how this would impact their interaction with their own culture, “The longer we live overseas, the more aware we are of how difficult living in the USA would be for us. We have a different view than those we are close to back ‘home’.”

Motivation to Assimilate

Deardorff indicates that motivation is a driving force when understanding why some people have better intercultural competency skills than others. The survey in this study specifically asked teachers about the connection between previous intercultural

experiences and the influence of these experiences on the decision to move to international teaching. Quantitative data from the teachers indicated a strong correlation between previous intercultural experiences and the motivation to seek work in an international school. From the teacher surveyed, 83% had an intercultural experience prior to working as an international teacher, and 92% of this group said that their intercultural experienced had a positive influence on their decision to teach internationally.

Part III in the survey asked participants about their level of motivation to learn about the host culture. Teachers responded on their level of motivation just before moving to their host country, just after moving to their host country and three months after moving to their host country. As can be seen in Figure 8, teachers reported an increase in motivation to learn more about their host country as soon as they moved there.

Figure 8. Teacher responses on level of interest and motivation to learning about their host country over three different time periods.

A high level of motivation, especially on immediately moving to a new culture, may indicate that respondents have a high level of curiosity and discovery which are traits identified by Deardorff as necessary for intercultural competency. The high level of motivation reported by teachers may also indicate valuing of other cultures and an ability to be open when entering new cultural situations. These traits of curiosity, discovery, and openness are all necessary for adapting to a new culture, and therefore are essential to developing a high level of intercultural competency.

Part II, section two in the survey asked participants about the current level of motivation towards the host culture. Table 7 shows the questions with teacher responses.

Table 7

Teacher Motivation Towards Host Culture

	Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	All of the Time	Total Responses	Mean
1	I sometimes want to return home.	6	20	10	2	0	38	2.21
2	I feel that I am not learning very much.	8	16	11	3	0	38	2.24
3	I feel forced or obliged to adjust.	9	19	8	2	0	38	2.08
4	I try to survive the best I can.	6	9	10	9	4	38	2.89
5	I want to get along well with my host culture.	0	0	4	18	16	38	4.32
6	I want to adjust as best I can.	0	0	5	17	16	38	4.29
7	I admire my host culture so much that I am working to become bi-cultural.	6	12	12	6	2	38	2.63
8	I admire my host country so much I am working to become fluent in the language of my host country.	10	8	12	6	2	38	2.53

This provides a useful indication of how being interculturally competent is a mixture of motivation to adjust behavior but doesn't necessarily indicate that intercultural competency is synonymous with becoming bi-cultural or fluent in the language of the host culture.

Summary

Teacher responses to the survey in the different categories of attitudes, knowledge, skills, awareness and motivation provide insight into the level of intercultural competency of international teachers when compared to Deardorff's process model. Overall, teacher survey responses demonstrate a high level of intercultural competency with teachers reporting behaviors and attitudes that frequently align with the

requirements as outlined by Deardorff. Figure 9 indicates the survey responses that showed the strongest alignment to Deardorff's model.

Figure 9. Annotated version of Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competency. White arrows indicate the process of increasing intercultural competency. Gray arrows indicate increased intercultural competency without internal outcomes. The annotations show the key connections between teacher survey responses and attributes needed for intercultural competency. The darker gray squares indicate alignment with the Deardorff model. The light gray square indicates a gap between the model and teacher responses from the survey.

As can be seen under the category for *desired internal outcome*, one area that teachers had less confident or positive responses was the ability to describe or explain behaviors that would help them communicate effectively and appropriately in culturally diverse situations. Deardorff identifies these traits as being informed and having a frame of reference in order to analyze, reflect and implement appropriate strategies for operating in a culturally diverse environment. Despite not reporting confidence in being

able to describe cultural models for understanding, teachers generally reported a high level of confidence in communicating in culturally diverse situations as well as frequently exhibiting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness for a high level of intercultural competency. This difference in what all teachers who were surveyed know and how they act in relation to intercultural competency could be likened to someone being a talented athlete but not able to explain the biomechanics or physiology behind their success.

Being Prepared to Teach in Culturally Diverse Classrooms

Teachers' Intercultural Experiences Before Working in International Schools

There are many ways that teachers can be prepared or gain experience in order to work effectively in culturally diverse classrooms and schools. The survey questions elicited teacher responses in relation to cultural diversity training as part of their teacher education and previous intercultural experiences. Teachers were then asked whether these experiences, either teacher training or other cultural experiences, had helped them be prepared to work in culturally diverse classrooms.

Diversity in teacher training experiences was a common thread running through the review of literature. While some teacher training courses have practicum placements or specific diversity training requirements, other teacher education courses don't have any requirements for supporting intercultural competency. The data from the teacher survey indicated similar diversity as can be seen in Figure 10.

Intercultural Competency Training as Part of Teacher Education

Figure 10. Differences in cultural diversity training experienced by teachers during their teacher training.

Out of total responses for this question, 47% of teachers did not have any sort of diversity or cultural sensitivity training as part of their teacher education. However, additional data from the survey provided insight into why teachers would choose to work in international schools, despite possibly not receiving training to prepare them to work in cultural diverse environments. When asked about significant intercultural experiences prior to a career in teaching, 83% of respondents said that they had experienced another culture, either through travel, work or a relationship with someone from a different culture. Of these respondents, 92% said that the experience influenced them to teach internationally. Out of the 92%, all of the respondents said that the intercultural experiences helped them develop intercultural abilities useful in their current role. Respondents also added

personal anecdotes to explain their experiences prior to teaching in international schools. One teacher wrote, “my studies and previous intercultural experiences (already in high school I was an exchange student in Australia) really made me interested in international teaching and helped me develop competencies to work with people and ideas different from my own.” Another teacher described the effectiveness of communication through learning the local language. “ Doing so shows the host country/culture that you are 'making an effort' and this effort goes a long way in intercultural interactions.”

Another teacher described how early experiences working in culturally diverse environments gave them insight into aspects of racism in other cultures.

“Working in Singapore alongside Chinese, Singaporean and Malaysians gave me a good insight into interacting with very different cultural norms, experiencing unintentional but very direct racism and observing different perceptions of class/sect. All these experiences come into play when teaching in the international school sector and living and working in Tanzania where there are very obvious intercultural prejudices between Tanzanian Indians, Black Tanzanians, Swahili and Masaii. Understanding the subtleties and nuances are essential to interacting and teaching here.”

Teacher responses indicated that early exposure to other cultures, ways of thinking and new experiences leaves a lasting impression. Teachers who had already had intercultural experiences recognized the value of being interculturally competent, as well as the challenges and opportunities that come with working in a culturally diverse environment.

Identifying Teachers who have a High Level of Intercultural Competency

During the interview process, school leaders were asked questions on their hiring process, as well as questions that they would pose to teacher applicants to elicit information about teacher intercultural competency. All school leaders indicated that they included questions about flexibility and adaptability to new environments, as well as finding out more about an applicant's previous international experiences.

Ethan from School C in Thailand, described an interview response that he had just recently heard, 'She talked about her own experience, she was a third culture kid herself, so she talked about her own experience and what that felt like ... how is she aware of that for children coming into the school.' Andrew, from School A in Peru, indicated he would use a similar question to elicit more information about a candidate's intercultural experience by using "a question that goes 'tell me about an experience or experiences in which you believe you successfully taught and helped understand the value of embracing cultural diversity'". Don, from School B in Tanzania, indicated that he "always asks about their teaching and career path and finds out if people have travelled. If someone has worked in other international schools and traveled, I assume they are more internationally minded." George, from School D in the Netherlands, gave some examples of how he found out more about an applicant's experiences of living in another country. He asks them, "Did they go out in the holidays? Did they go to other places or whatever? Did they travel within the area that they were in? For example, if they were in South America did they bounce around various places, and try and see if they embraced where they were. It's very easy just to sit at home and play on your Xbox but some of them do that! Most of them are keen to tell you why they want to come and what they've done in the past."

The responses indicate that school leaders are interested in both what a teacher has done or experienced in the classroom as well as wanting to know more about how they have lived when in another culture different to their own. This process of wanting to know more about an applicant's personal life as well as their professional experience is an ongoing theme of applicant interview questions from all the qualitative data collected from school leaders.

Selecting Candidates that 'Fit'

All of the schools that participated in the study used a variety of recruitment strategies to look for teacher applicants. These included word of mouth, application through the school website and human resources department, use of teacher recruitment agencies such as Search Associates and targeted head hunting based on the school needs. Once applications were received, schools carried out initial screening either through the human resources department or through the leadership team. It was at this point that school leaders gave some varied responses to how they choose a teacher recruitment screening methodology.

Andrew, School A, Peru: "We have used fairs for many years however, just the last few years, there's been much more emphasis using Skype and using technology to accomplish interviews and in many cases, actually making hiring decisions without meeting anyone at a fair. We're still learning this, working with this, and not always confident in it however, I think last year, about one half of our international hires was accomplished only over Skype, based on conversations and interviews over Skype and of course, based on recommendations from other people, and some investigation. So I would say that that process is definitely changing for international employment."

Brian, School A, Peru: “One of the screening things that this school has, [is] I think a far more sophisticated tool than I’ve ever worked with. You know, it’s a much bigger organization, 1800 kids, 250 faculty, and they actually have a human resources department, so somebody else is kind of looking at résumés ahead of time and shoving them into different piles and... she knows the school, so she’s looking for people who are going to be successful here.”

Charles, School B, Tanzania: “Increasingly we hire following Skype calls (around 50% of hires and rising). We also still use recruitment fairs, though I find them over-pressurized and less conducive to good, measured decision-making on both sides. Fairs are still good for PR and networking, however. Recruiting via Skype calls gives us the chance to make a few calls, spaced over a week or two, at minimal expense and with plenty of time for reflection on both sides. It also allows us to follow up references and allows the candidates a chance to talk to others from our school to find out about housing, security, education of their own kids, etc where they might appreciate a more objective view.”

Fran, School C, Thailand: “In terms of the criteria, we were actually just having a conversation this morning about if it’s possible to have a first screening at the HR level so we’re not going through so many different applications at the leadership level. But we actually found that it’s really difficult to do that because what we’re looking for isn’t as tangible as ‘Do they have MYP experience?’ for example. It’s not necessarily qualifications, for example that you’re saying years of teaching or program knowledge that we’re looking for. Often times, when we’re looking at the cover letter or when we’re looking at their CV or when we’re looking at their references, there are key words or key

attributes that we come across that we know would make them a really good fit for our culture.”

George, School D, the Netherlands: “Fortunately we have a lot of people who could call us. So we have a system now where we bank up everybody and keep them active on our files. Then we’ll go back to them if we want to, and interview them.... If they’re in Europe, my policy is now we will bring them to the school. The reason for that, and we’ll get them to teach a lesson and get them to meet the subject area leaders, is to see if they’d like the school and they like the atmosphere. It becomes easier because we’ve got them where we want them, as it were, in terms of understanding what type of school we are.”

Although the schools in the research used varied screening methods, they all indicated that they were trying to find candidates who had intercultural competencies, or the potential to develop intercultural competency, as well as candidates who would be a ‘good match’ for the school culture. When interviewing candidates, school leaders did not specifically focus on or worry about whether a candidate would be able to fit into the culture of the host country; rather they were more concerned about whether a candidate would match the culture of the school.

Intercultural Competency and Professional Development

Aside from initial induction for teachers new to the school, none of the schools involved in the research had ongoing professional development that was orientated around intercultural competency. School leaders tended to make the assumption that teachers are already interculturally competent or they will learn on the job. Although this study focused on intercultural competency training of teachers, it is worth noting that all

four schools involved in the study employed local staff for the majority of their administrative and support staff positions. This included positions such as teaching assistance, administrative assistants, and maintenance. When school leaders were asked about cultural training for local employees, only one school indicated that they included diversity or cultural training for local staff. Andrew of School A in Peru responded, “We are an American school, and we take that very seriously. We have a delimiter that we won’t do anything that takes the school afield from its American heritage. And we actually do some training for some of the local staff on some of those things that are American so that they can understand ...whatever kinds of programs we have that are American-based or at least different to what you find in a Peruvian school, so that we help them [local staff] understand.”

Ethan from School C, Thailand, acknowledged that this is an area that the school could pay attention to. When asked whether there was any training for Thai nationals working at his school, he responded, “I don’t think we do. I think, and this is going to sound terrible, no I’ll say it the nice way, they learn on the job. But what I was going to say is that I think they learn the hard way. We try so, so hard for there not to be a hierarchy but there is a hierarchy. Culturally, there’s a hierarchy anyway because of, if you’re a teacher and you’ve got an assistant, it’s very hard to get the academic assistants to speak up and say there’s a problem.”

Ethan’s comment on ‘hierarchy’ is a good example of a cultural difference influenced by the host culture that is strongly felt within a school environment. In this example, the Thai cultural trait of having a clear and respected hierarchy based on job and income permeates the culture of School C because of the high proportion of Thai

employees. The sense of hierarchy is also reinforced by the fact that most Thai employees hold ‘lower’ ranking positions such as administrative support or teaching assistants, whereas expatriate teachers hold ‘higher’, more revered positions of teachers and principals.

Understanding the Relationship between Intercultural Competency Teacher and Organizational Processes of a School

In analyzing data related to the relationship between intercultural competency of an individual teacher and that of the organizational processes of a school, there were no clear answers in relation to teachers and hiring. There was no statistically significant difference between the schools when comparing teacher motivation to learn about the host culture and the type of cultural integration program planned by the school. There was no statistically significant difference in levels of intercultural competency when comparing teachers from the three different school sites. Although none of the schools specifically focused on identifying teacher applicant levels of intercultural competency during the hiring process, all school leaders from all four school sites utilized questions and techniques to elicit applicant responses on skills and knowledge related to intercultural competency.

All school leaders indicated that they sought applicants who had particular personality or character traits that would allow them to fit in to the school environment and rise to the challenges of living and working in a different culture. For all school leaders, these traits took precedence over an applicant’s knowledge of curriculum. Charles from School B, Tanzania, commented that the most important trait he looked for in teacher applicants was the “ability to create a positive learning atmosphere with

students/classes.” Ethan from School C in Thailand indicated that, “I’d probably say that one of the things we look for, first and foremost, is someone who’s open-minded, willing to consider different perspectives.” Brian from School A in Peru described what he looked for when hiring international teachers: “I would say the skill set or skills that I think are really effective are problem solver, they have a growth mindset, they’re curious, they’re learners, they’re risk takers, the really good ones are not afraid of being wrong.”

All school leaders commented that their school mission and vision statements formed the basis of interview questions used when recruiting new teachers. However, they didn’t state whether this was a part of the interview protocol when hiring support staff. This is an area for further research which will be discussed in Chapter V.

All of the schools involved in the study employ both expatriate and local teachers and support staff. For schools A and D, 50% of the teachers are local employees whereas for schools B and C, all teachers are expatriates. For schools A, B and C, the majority of support staff are local employees whereas for school D, support staff are a mixture of local and expatriate employees. All schools had organizational process that involved induction for new teachers but only School A in Peru had any sort of cultural training for local employees, despite schools B, C and D having approximately 50% of staff as local employees.

During the interview data collection process, several school leaders commented that they were considering cultural training for local employees as well as developing ongoing cultural training for expatriate teachers. One school leader also acknowledged

that having intercultural competency training for local employees is something that would be useful to develop.

In summary, school organizational processes, in particular screening protocols and questions used in the teacher recruitment process indicate that school leaders can identify teachers with a high level of intercultural competency. One area for further research is the school organizational processes around cultural barriers that may exist between expatriate and local employees within a school. This will be discussed more in Chapter V as part of the research recommendations.

Conclusion

The four schools involved in the study all exist in different geographical locations yet share the common trait of being culturally diverse learning communities. Teachers from the different school sites generally reported a high level of intercultural competency which has usually been developed over a period of years, beginning with formative intercultural experiences before they started their teacher training. These early intercultural experiences have had a lasting effect on teachers, prompting them to develop skills of intercultural competency such as adaptability, curiosity and flexibility. In addition, early intercultural experiences often inspired teachers to choose to work in international schools.

Despite reporting high levels of skills, attitudes, knowledge and awareness related to intercultural competency, teachers indicated that they were less confident in being able to describe or utilize models or strategies of cross-cultural learning. This may indicate that although teachers may have success with demonstrating desired external outcomes of

intercultural competency, there is still opportunity for further development of intercultural competency knowledge that is part of desired internal outcomes.

There was correlation between quantitative data collected from teachers and qualitative data collected from school leaders in regards to desirable traits for international teachers. Both groups indicated that flexibility and adaptability were necessary traits for international teachers, and these traits were also targeted during the teacher recruitment process. School leaders did not specifically seek out interculturally competent teachers, however all school recruitment processes had elements that identified intercultural competency traits among the applicants and gave these a high level of importance when considering potential teachers for the school.

All schools involved in the research had cultural introduction programs for teachers who had been newly hired, although these varied a great deal from being process orientated (school requirements, operational processes etc) to being host country cultural introductions required by the government. Only one school in the study, School A in Peru, had cultural training for locally employed teachers. None of the schools had ongoing professional development for teachers and/or support staff, regardless of whether they were local or expatriate, that was orientated around intercultural competency.

Qualitative and quantitative data collected from the teacher surveys and school leader interviews provided insight into how intercultural competency is viewed by teachers and schools, as well as identified several areas for policy recommendations and further research. These key findings will be discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between international teacher intercultural competency and the organizational processes in international schools. International schools have existed since the 1920s and have been identified as an area in education that is in need of further research (Dolby & Rahman, 2008).

Although there have been some studies on international teacher experiences (Cain, 2010; Deveney, 2007; Fisher, 2011b), there is an absence of literature that uses mixed methods research to explore the international teacher experience in international schools. In addition, increasing cultural diversity in state and national schools is placing more importance on teacher intercultural competency to ensure that students are adequately supported throughout their schooling.

The research questions developed for this study prompted inquiry into individual teacher experiences as well as organizational structures of the school. Research questions for the teachers were: What intercultural exposure do teachers have before working in international schools? How do international teachers define and evaluate their own intercultural competency? Research questions for the school leaders focused on hiring and professional development processes: How do school hiring processes seek to identify intercultural competency amongst new recruits? How is professional development planned in respect to improving teacher intercultural competency? The fifth research question prompted analysis of teacher and school leader data: What is the relationship between intercultural competency of teachers and that of the organizational processes of the school in which they work?

Two conceptual frameworks were used to structure the research questions and collection of data, Gert Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Darla Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competency. Hofstede uses six cultural dimensions to explain cultural differences between groups such as organizations of nationalities. When researching the organizational process within an international school, it is useful to use Hofstede's cultural dimensions to understand how a school culture may differ to the culture of the host country in which it is situated.

The concept of intercultural competency has been defined by Deardorff as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in culturally diverse situations (Deardorff, 2009). Deardorff identifies certain skills, knowledge, and attitudes that support the development of intercultural competency in an individual. These include attributes such as openness, curiosity and discovery, respect, and cultural self-awareness. Through developing intercultural competency, an individual undergoes a shift in internal frames of reference which is then expressed in desired external outcomes; the ability to behave and communicate effectively in an intercultural situation (Deardorff, 2009). Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competency provided a framework for understanding individual teacher levels of intercultural competency.

This mixed methods study utilized a survey and interview protocols for data collection. The survey was a modified version of the Assessment of Intercultural Competency developed by Dr Alvino Fantini and modified with his permission (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006). The survey was distributed electronically to international teachers and the responses provided both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was also collected through interviews with school leaders in international schools.

The data was analyzed in comparison to the conceptual frameworks of Deardorff and Hofstede. Each of the four school sites used in the study yielded qualitative data from school leaders but only three of the four school sites yielded quantitative data as well.

In summary, data from the survey indicated a high level of intercultural competency amongst international teachers involved in the study. Teachers cited intercultural experiences before their teaching career as being formative experiences for living and working internationally. Approximately 50% of the teachers surveyed had diversity or cultural sensitivity training as part of the teacher education. Teachers indicated that flexibility and open-mindedness were essential traits to teaching in international schools, and acknowledged that awareness and understanding of one's own culture enabled understanding of other cultures.

The qualitative data from school leader interviews yielded several interesting data points. When recruiting new teachers, all school leaders included interview questions that were orientated around the skills of intercultural competency although school leaders did not actively use the term *intercultural competency*. There was strong alignment between the skills of intercultural competency desired of teachers by school leaders, and the skills that teachers identified in the survey as being important when working in international schools.

All schools included some sort of induction program for new teachers but there was variance between the school sites as to what this looked like. Some schools focused more on helping teachers integrate to the host country while other schools focused more on helping new teachers understand the school procedures. Some host countries also

mandated that schools have specific cultural training. All school leaders indicated that their schools had approximately a 50% split in employees between expatriates and locals. Questions posed to the school leaders on cultural integration within a school site revealed several areas for recommendation and further research which will be discussed below.

Key Findings and Implications

There are many nuances in the qualitative and quantitative data that indicate potential areas for recommendation or further research. In addition, there are several data points that stand out as providing information for practice or policy changes. There are also gaps in the data that indicate several areas where further research is needed in the fields of international education and intercultural competency.

Traits Required to Teach Internationally and the Concept of Intercultural Competency

Data from both the interviews with school leaders and the teacher responses from the survey clearly identified several key traits connected to intercultural competency. These traits of flexibility, adaptability and open mindedness were all mentioned by school leaders as indicators of a teacher who could be successful in an international school environment. Although school leaders did not have specific interview questions based around the term *intercultural competency*, the interview questions and protocols used by school leaders were designed to elicit information about an applicant's level of intercultural competency, specifically adaptability, flexibility and open-mindedness.

Teacher responses from the survey indicated that early intercultural experiences had led to development of the skills of adaptability, flexibility and open-mindedness, which in turn enabled them to cope better when moving to teach in an international school. This is in alignment with the results of research carried out by Saleh, Anngela-

Cole and Boateng (2011). In addition to developing these three particular skills early on in their lives, teacher responses indicated that they used the skills of adaptability, flexibility and open-mindedness *frequently* or *always with confidence* when encountering situations that required intercultural competency skills.

Implications

Although both teachers and school leaders did not use the term *intercultural competency* to describe the ability to communicate and behave effectively and appropriately in culturally diverse environments, the shared identification of traits implies that school leaders and interculturally competent teachers are aware of the traits needed to function successfully in a culturally diverse environment.

The description of intercultural experiences of teachers before they began their teaching careers implies that intercultural competency is sparked by exposure to culturally diverse situations over a long period of time. There is also the possibility that the findings indicate that it is necessary to have intercultural experiences early in life in order to develop intercultural competency. It would be interesting to compare intercultural competency levels of teachers who have had early intercultural experiences with teachers who have not had similar early exposure to cultural diversity. Is there a critical time period in which these experiences must happen in order to initiate development of intercultural competency in a person?

It is important to note that school leaders seemed to make the assumption that teacher candidates for employment already had intercultural competency skills, and that a teacher without these skills would probably not be hired, despite their level of subject area or curriculum expertise. This assumption may have an impact on school policies

around cultural integration and induction programs, implying that teachers do not need a great deal of support to begin living and working in a new country. This is discussed further as the second key finding of the study.

Current Cultural Induction Programs

All of the four schools involved in the study included some sort of induction or integration program for teachers who were newly hired. These programs varied in what they offered, the intensity, when they took place and whether the program was influenced by local or national requirements. For example, School A in Peru included cultural integration for both expatriate and local teachers as well as assigning social and work ‘buddies’ to new teachers to help them integrate in the community. This program was influenced by the Peruvian government requirement that non-Peruvian employees must arrive one month before beginning employment. As a contrast, School B in Tanzania offered some basic language introduction and Tanzanian behavior dos and don’ts for new teachers within the school orientation program but didn’t provide anything more comprehensive to support cultural integration. There were no Tanzanian government requirements to include specific cultural training and the school had not developed any of its own beyond the basics of language and behavior.

The data from all teacher responses demonstrated that there was no significant difference between intercultural competency levels of teachers and the type of cultural integration program offered by each of the schools involved in the study. There was also no significant difference between teacher motivation to learn about a new culture and the cultural program offered by the school. However, there were no specific questions in the

survey that asked teachers to evaluate the cultural induction program that they had experienced.

The results of data collected through school leader interviews indicated that the curriculum for cultural integration programs is influenced by government requirements and what is perceived as necessary by the school. There doesn't appear to be a great deal of research or planning behind the content of a cultural integration program beyond occasionally taking advantage of locally employed teachers or language teachers and having them assist with aspects of a cultural integration program.

The study also highlighted a gap between what happens when local teachers and staff are employed compared to when expatriate staff are employed. School leaders and international teachers appear to be aware that there are going to be cultural differences and a period of cultural adjustment, and this is acknowledged through the existence of cultural integration programs in international schools, regardless of how ad-hoc they may be. However, local employees who have chosen to work in an international environment do not appear to be afforded the same cultural integration acknowledgement. There appears to be the assumption that locally employed teachers and staff will adapt to the culturally diverse workplace that is found in international schools.

School A was the only school involved in the study that addressed cultural differences between local staff and school culture. A school leader at one of the other schools involved in the study had worked at School A previously. He mentioned in his interview that this was the only international school he had heard of to include cultural training for local staff.

Implications

Without specific survey questions asking teachers to evaluate cultural integration programs at the schools, it is difficult to extrapolate detailed implications from the data. The results of this part of the study indicate that there is more research needed in order to evaluate the design and implementation of cultural integration programs, especially examining their impact on teachers who may not have a high level of intercultural competency. The different designs of the programs also reflect the different requirements of the school culture and host country, which implies that cultural integration programs need to be tailored quite specifically to each individual school.

All schools involved in the study employed a mix of local and expatriate staff. The qualitative data in particular indicated that there was somewhat of a cultural divide between locals and expatriates which may have been influenced or exacerbated by the positions in the school that are held by the different cultural groups, cultural differences or different methods of recruiting and integrating staff. The results of this finding infer that school leaders may have adequately addressed cultural integration of expatriates to the host country but may have overlooked cultural conflict occurring within the school community between expatriate and local employees. This implication points to the broader challenge that international school leaders face; how do they lead a culturally diverse staff?

Leading a Culturally Diverse Staff in an International School

As indicated in the review of literature, school leaders demonstrated an awareness that their staff and teachers face cultural challenges but there were no clear, research-based strategies in order to overcome this (McCarthy et al., 2009; Shaklee & Merz,

2012b; Walker & Riordan, 2010). This finding was reinforced by qualitative data collected from school leaders through the interview process. The data from school leaders also indicated that they used appropriate questions to gain knowledge of a teacher applicant's intercultural competency skill level but the majority of interview questions sought knowledge of a teacher's alignment with the school mission, vision and values rather than if they would be able to adapt to living in the school's host country.

For the hiring of support staff, the emphasis in the recruitment process seems to be on whether the applicant can do the job rather than whether they are a good 'fit' for the school culture. This has the potential to result in a staff that consists of interculturally competent expatriate teachers who may need additional training in curriculum and school processes, and process-orientated support personnel who may not be interculturally competent and have challenges communicating effectively and appropriately in a culturally diverse environment. The result of this hiring process could mean a stressful and challenging environment for local employees with friction between them and expatriate teachers who may feel local employees do not understand the challenges faced by expatriates.

None of the schools involved in the study included any planned intercultural competency training for existing staff or had it as a priority for professional development for teachers or support staff in the upcoming academic year. School leaders at School A, Peru and School C, Thailand acknowledged that there had been occasions where cultural differences between expatriate and local employees had caused conflict and they emphasized that they were quick to take action in these cases. What was missing from all schools was a management strategy or plan to avoid these conflicts in the first place.

Implications

During the interviews with school leaders, they clearly identified when there had been cultural conflicts amongst the staff and recognized that it was the responsibility of the school leader to actively resolve these issues. These findings imply that the school leaders involved in the study are generally good at being reactive when it comes to resolving cultural differences or miscommunications amongst their employees. The lack of planned intercultural competency training implies that school leaders are not as proactive as might be required when it comes to leading a culturally diverse group of people.

Recommendations

The results of this study indicate several important points related to teacher preparation for working in international schools, and the strategies that school leaders use to hire interculturally competent teachers. A review of the literature indicates that that teacher and school leader levels of intercultural competency support student learning (Oller et al., 2012; Snowball, 2010; Walker & Riordan, 2010). From the data collected in this study, it appears that school leaders are generally successful in recruiting teachers with a high level of intercultural competency. However, the results of the study also raise questions around the recruitment and induction practices of locally hired employees and the establishment of cultural harmony within the school community. In addition, the results of the study generate several recommendations around teacher pre-service training to support the development of intercultural competency, and the passing on of intercultural competency skills from teachers to students.

Recommendations as a result of this study are organized into recommendations for practice, for policy and for further research. Figure 11 provides a visual overview of the connection between data results, implications and recommendations.

Connecting the Results, Implications and Recommendations

Figure 11. A visual overview of the study results, findings and recommendations.

Practice

Recommendations for Teachers

Intercultural competency is an essential skill for teachers working in international schools. As noted earlier, the teachers involved in the study demonstrated a level of skills, behaviors and attitudes that are indicative of a high degree of intercultural competence. As Deardorff's model indicates, having self-awareness, a sound understanding of one's own culture, and regular reflective practice are conducive to developing intercultural competence. Therefore, a recommendation for teacher practice is to engage regularly in the process of self-reflecting on behavior and communication in several different contexts. Firstly, teachers can reflect on how they are adapting to the culture of the host country and the culture of the school in which they are working. Secondly, teachers can reflect on their behavior and communication towards the students in the classroom, parents, other teachers and members of the school community. Thirdly, teachers can reflect on the choices they are making in regards to curriculum choices such as textbooks, topics of study and methods of teaching to ensure that they are culturally sensitive. Finally, teachers can also consider how to improve intercultural competence as part of their own professional development. This may involve the practice of regularly self-assessing intercultural competence or attending workshops or training to improve intercultural competence skills.

Recommendations for School Leaders

Recommendations for school leaders are based on increasing reflective practice. As indicated from comments of two of the school leaders, there is not regular evaluation of current induction programs experienced by teachers new to a school. School leaders at

School B and School C identified a need to revise how local employees were introduced to their school communities, and to evaluate the success of existing cultural induction programs for expatriates. Although some schools will have certain constraints around the format of their induction programs, it is important that school leaders adopt reflexive practice in this area to ensure programs are kept relevant and effective. This will be discussed further in recommendations for research.

In addition to looking at organizational practices, school leaders can also engage in the practice of self-reflection, particularly around their ability to lead a culturally diverse staff. As indicated in research by Shaklee and Merz (2012), school leaders are often aware that there are challenges in leading school communities with a large number of cultures but leaders do not have a detailed understanding of effective practices to overcome these difficulties. Through adopting the practice of self-reflection of intercultural competency skills, school leaders can become more aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. As a result of self-reflection, school leaders can plan for enhancement of their own intercultural competency, including a more detailed understanding of theories and best practices for leading a culturally diverse staff.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions were used to analyze the difference between school and host country cultures in order to provide a richer context for data analysis. School leaders may want to look more closely at the tools provided through Hofstede's research to complete a more detailed analysis of the organizational culture of the school. This would, in turn, help frame policies on culturally sensitive organizational practices and provide a basis for further research on effective cultural induction/integration programs used by the school. Hofstede's research also emphasizes the impact of the

‘daily behaviors’ of leaders when shaping a company’s culture (Hofstede et al., 1990).

Reflexive practice from school leaders would help them evaluate how their daily behaviors are influence school culture.

One area of caution emerged from the research and that is around the skill of flexibility. Both teachers and school leaders indicated that this was a desirable and necessary skill when working in the international school environment. School leaders sought to identify this skill in potential recruits, and teachers indicated that it was of great importance in being able to live and work effectively in a different culture. However, there may be the potential for flexibility in a teacher to be exploited by school leaders. Teachers who are more flexible and adaptable may be constantly required to work outside their area of expertise or to take on roles that may be less desirable at the school, in comparison to teachers who are less flexible and adaptable. School leaders need to consider the impact of overburdening highly competent teachers to compensate for teachers who may not be as interculturally competent.

Policy

Recommendations for policy primarily orientates around the organizational policies in schools. It is acknowledged that not all policies are documented by schools; rather they are integrated within the school culture, driven by the yearly school calendar of events and planning. For school leaders and their leadership teams, thoughtful and frank discussions on school policies can ensure that policies are in alignment with the school mission, vision and values. All of the schools involved in the study clearly publicized their mission and vision, which also formed the basis for interview questions from the school leaders. Recommendations for policies in the schools encourage schools

to continue implementing the mission and vision in areas of hiring and professional development.

Hiring Policies

The results of the survey indicate that teachers in international schools have developed strong intercultural competencies, supporting their ability to live and work effectively in a culturally diverse environment. This indicates that there is a relationship between the interview protocols used by school leaders and the intercultural competency of the teachers they hire. Hiring policies that focus on finding out more about a teacher's intercultural experiences and how a teacher's philosophy and pedagogy align with the school's mission and vision may have more success than policies that just focus on whether a teacher can do the job.

There seemed to be an assumption made by school leaders that teachers applying to international schools were already interculturally competent, and this was reinforced by the results of the teacher survey data. However, anecdotally, there are teachers in every international school who choose to work in that environment in order to take advantage of salaries that may be higher than in their home country. These teachers may have no interest in developing intercultural skills, which may cause challenges for their communication with students, teachers and parents. Formalized hiring policies and protocols would help school leaders identify applicants who may not have appropriate intercultural skills.

It is also recommended that a similar policy apply to the hiring of non-teaching staff; executive assistants, classroom assistants, finance and administrative staff. The majority of these staff tend to be locally employed and so may not have the intercultural

skills or experiences that teachers have. However, it is important that support staff and not just teachers are able to work effectively and appropriately in culturally diverse environments. Hiring policies and interview protocols for non-teaching staff should be similar to those used with teachers will help to ensure that locally hired employees are also interculturally competent, or have the ability and willingness develop intercultural competence.

Professional Development Policies

The anecdote of a conflict between a teacher and their assistant at School B in Thailand, is a clear demonstration of school leaders being reactive rather than proactive in avoiding cultural conflict. It is recommended that school leaders and management teams look closely at policies on professional development to ensure that there are professional development opportunities for all employees that support the development and enhancement of intercultural competence. This includes cultural integration/induction training for both local employees and expatriates when they are hired, and throughout the year if needed. As mentioned earlier, these policies will have to take into account local requirements but should also be aligned with the school mission and vision, and be appropriate to the culture of the host country.

Organizational Policies

Beyond specific professional development periods at the school, school organizational policies should also be responsive to the culturally diverse community. For example, meeting protocols should be planned to take into account cultural sensitivities. Fisher (2011) explains, “it is...urgent that we find ways of increasing intercultural understanding so that better communication and collaboration can occur among staff in

all our schools” (p.9). Organization policies that are interculturally competent will support collaboration.

Communications with parents and outreach to the local community should also be guided by school policies on effective and appropriate communication. Messages from the school reach varied audiences. For example, communications to parents will be received and responded to differently based on their cultural background. As Brian from School A explained, “We did [town hall meetings] in different parts of the city to invite parents in to talk about diversity and inclusion at the school, and what do they see as the strengths and weaknesses.” These meetings were in response to differing concepts on diversity an inclusion from the varied cultural groups within the school community. Open dialogues, such as town hall meetings, can help schools establish policies on communication that are suitable for all members of the school community.

Finally, policies around the day to day management within the school should be shaped to support effective and appropriate communication, a hallmark of intercultural competence. School D in the Netherlands provides an example of how organizational policies can support effective communication. George G explained that “one thing I’ve introduced is that every two to three weeks I have a front office with the back office meeting. So I have my admissions, my timetabler, and my secondary office meet my leadership team and we do information exchange.” Supporting and promoting communication between teachers, leaders and support staff is essential for a collaborative community. By improving the intercultural competence of all members of the school community, the school, as an organization, becomes interculturally competent which in turn supports successful collaboration.

Research

There are three areas where further research is recommended as a result of this study. These areas of recommendation emerged both from the literature review and the results of the data analysis.

Pre-service Teacher Training

As indicated from the review of literature, pre-service teacher training varies widely between different universities, states, provinces and countries (Chang et al., 2011; Keiser, 2009; Saleh et al., 2011). Training in cultural diversity is included as part of pre-service teacher training in some programs but again, there are many different formats. The results of the data collected from the teacher surveys indicated similar information to the literature review. Only half the teachers surveyed had completed some form of cultural diversity or intercultural competency training. Those that had completed training indicated that this was in various formats such as practicums, special units of study or a specific course. It is recommended that more research be done to find out the effectiveness of cultural diversity training for pre-service teachers, in particular where teachers are being trained to work in international schools or school districts with a high level of cultural diversity.

Research by Saleh, Anngela-Cole and Boateng (2011) indicate that teachers who already have intercultural experiences benefit the most from diversity training. Therefore, it is recommended that research be carried out to explore the impact of different cultural diversity training programs for pre-service teachers who may have no intercultural experiences. How can teacher training programs foster the skill of intercultural

competency in teachers who may have no desire to live or travel in another culture, but will be teaching in schools that have a culturally diverse student body?

School Leaders

Shaklee and Merz (2012) state that “while there is strength in the development of [Intercultural Competency] in some of our international schools, others are struggling to determine what, if anything, they should be doing.” Further research in this area could provide more concrete recommendations for school leaders on how best to go about supporting intercultural competency amongst all employees. Research on leading a culturally diverse staff could support school leaders to become proactive, rather than reactive in when managing staff discord as a result of cultural differences. Research in this field would also provide support for school leaders to develop culturally sensitive organizational policies in their schools.

Although this research recommendation targets the challenges faced by school leaders in international schools, the results would be also relevant for school leaders working in local communities that are culturally diverse, for example schools in urban areas or where there is a large immigrant population. In addition, research on leading culturally diverse groups could provide guidance for leaders of multi-national corporations, non-government organizations such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent or peace keeping forces.

Schools

One of the key findings from this research is the differences in cultural induction programs for teachers and non-teaching staff in international schools. Only one school participating in the research had cultural training for local staff but several of the other

school leaders indicated that this was an area for attention. Although the data showed that there was no significant difference in the impact of different cultural programs, it is an area that warrants more detailed research. Looking more closely at the different host countries in which international schools are located, it is clear that some schools will require more intensive cultural integration programs for their employees compared to other schools in different host countries.

Cultural induction programs are also influenced by local government requirements and so it would be worth researching the effect of these requirements. When asked if the school would still have a Thai cultural course for new teachers if it wasn't a government requirement, Fran F. from School C explained, "I hope so. I would hope that we would structure it so that it is a really nice introduction into Thai culture so that our new staff get an appreciation of it." What this 'nice introduction would look like would depend on what the school identifies as important for all their employees to know, and further research could provide specific guidance for schools in this area.

It is unlikely that all cultural induction programs would look the same for all international schools. The culture of the host country, the school, and the mixture of local and expatriate staff would all influence the goals of a cultural induction program. Research in this field could provide significant guidance to ensure that programs are designed to effectively and appropriately support the integration of employees to an international school.

Conclusion

Culture is a concept that is embedded in all parts of our lives. We come into contact with cultures of a country, work place, schools, and places where we vacation.

When we encounter people and cultures different to what we know, it is our intercultural competence that determines our success at navigating cultural differences. A person's level of intercultural competence is influenced by their self-awareness, communication skills and attitudes such as respect, openness and curiosity.

In the context of international schools, teachers must draw heavily upon their intercultural competencies to ensure successful interactions and communications with students, teachers and parents. Teachers must also be aware of cultural influences when selecting teaching materials, planning lessons and assessing students. Students learn best when they are taught using culturally-responsive curriculum and in order to do this, teachers must have a high level of intercultural competency.

The responses from the teachers involved in this study indicated that it was early intercultural experiences that prompted them to go into the field of international education. Interview questions from international school leaders that focus on the previous intercultural experiences of teachers are an effective means of identifying teachers with strong intercultural skills. For teachers wishing to work in international schools, it would be wise to increase their exposure to culturally diverse environments, whether it's through travel, education or socializing.

The results of the interviews of school leaders highlighted the challenge of leading a culturally diverse staff when there is a division between local employees, who tend to be non-teaching staff, and expatriate staff who tend to make up the majority of the teachers. This is a multifaceted challenge faced by leaders in many international schools, and one that warrants further research. For both teachers and school leaders, reflexive

practice on cultural self-awareness is an important first step in improving intercultural competency at a personal and organizational level.

Cultural induction programs in international schools are varied, influenced by the requirements of the host country, the school and the perceived needs of incoming teachers. Further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in connection to teacher intercultural competency and a sense of belonging. Teachers can be more effective in the classroom when they feel comfortable with the environment in which they live. A relevant and appropriate cultural induction program can speed along this process.

In order to prepare teachers to work in culturally diverse environments, it is important that teacher pre-service programs include courses and field placements that expose students to culturally diverse environments. Current research indicates that cultural diversity training is most effective for people who have already had intercultural experiences. Further research is needed to develop programs that support intercultural competency of those with little or no previous exposure to cultural diversity.

The current state of globalization and the increasing number of international schools means that school communities are most likely going to increase in their cultural diversity. In turn, this will reinforce the need for teachers who have a high level of intercultural competency as well as schools and school leaders. A school environment where organizational policies are culturally sensitive, and the teachers and staff are interculturally competent, will result in a school which best supports student learning.

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APPENDIX A PERMISSION FROM DR ALVINO FANTINI TO USE AMENDED
AIC IN CURRENT STUDY

Email response from Dr Alvino Fantini, 27 June 2015

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in the Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC). I attach a copy of it in American English. For your purposes, you may wish to translate it into another language. If you do, I would appreciate a copy for my records.

I also attach a list of publications where you can obtain some of my articles related to conceptualizations, components, development, and assessment of intercultural communicative competence. A list of many other assessment instruments is contained in the appendix of item #1 on this list, available online. You will find additional instruments plus brief descriptions of each, in items #5 (Chapter 27) and #7 (Chapter 24) on this list.

Finally, I also include my article that deals with "Language" (Chapter 16 from the Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication).

I hope you will find this information of use in your work and I would be happy if you are able to share any of your work and/or findings as well.

With best wishes,

Alvino

APPENDIX B INFORMATION SHEET TO SCHOOLS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

Understanding the Relationships between Teacher and Organization Intercultural Competency in International Secondary Schools: A Mixed Methods Study

Information Sheet

About the researcher

Sally Hirsch is a doctoral student studying at the University of San Francisco. Previously, she worked for 10 years teaching in international schools in Switzerland and teaching in government and Catholic high schools in Australia. Currently, Sally works as a consultant for the International Baccalaureate. Sally's previous research has been around student-centered learning, and the impact of online teaching and learning. Her interest in international schooling focuses particularly on the experiences of teachers, and how they can be best supported in their work.

What is the research project?

The purpose of this research is to understand how teachers perceive their ability to interact, live and work successfully in an environment that encompasses many different cultures. Additionally, this research aims to understand how school organizational structures identify teachers who are intercultural competent, and/or support the development of intercultural competency amongst teachers. This is a mixed-methods study meaning that teachers will be surveyed to gain quantitative data and school principals or directors will be interviewed to gain qualitative data.

What is the purpose of this research?

The number of international schools is growing exponentially, often in response to the demands of multinational companies needing schools for their employees' children. Additionally, graduates of international schools are viewed as adaptable, flexible and knowledgeable employees, experienced in collaborating with different people and with a global perspective, traits that are desired by many companies. We also know that teachers with a high level of intercultural competency have a positive effect on student academic achievement, especially in culturally diverse environments like international schools. However, there is very little research on how teachers develop the skills needed to be interculturally competent, or an understanding of how schools can support this skill amongst teachers. This research aims to fill this gap in knowledge and provide information for both teachers and schools.

Who is the information for?

The results of this research will be used for Sally's doctoral dissertation which will be published through the University of San Francisco. All participants in this research will be able to view the results as well as the analysis of information. All information about schools and teachers will remain confidential.

What will schools and teachers have to do?

Teachers involved in the research will complete an online survey that takes approximately 20 minutes. A principal or director from each school will be interviewed via Skype, phone or email which will take approximately 30 minutes. It is anticipated that the data collection for surveys and interviews will happen in October/November 2015.

What are the next steps from here?

1. School leadership agrees to the project
2. Signing of informed consent
3. Setting up times for survey completion and phone interviews
4. Sharing of data collection and analysis

Contact Information

Sally Hirsch
Doctoral candidate, School of Education
University of San Francisco
Ph +1 415 823 9072
Email: sehirsch@usfca.edu

APPENDIX C WELCOME LETTER TO TEACHERS WITH SURVEY LINK

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for expressing interest in being a part of my study on teacher intercultural competency in international schools. The purpose of this research is to understand how teachers perceive their ability to interact, live and work successfully in an environment that encompasses many different cultures. Additionally, this research aims to understand how school organizational structures identify teachers who are intercultural competent, and/or support the development of intercultural competency amongst teachers. This is a mixed-methods study meaning that teachers will be surveyed to gain quantitative data and school principals or directors will be interviewed to gain qualitative data.

What is intercultural competency?

Intercultural competency is the knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes that enable a person to live and work effectively and appropriately in a culture different to their own.

Why is this skill important for teachers?

A wide body of research has demonstrated that when teachers use cultural sensitivity in their teaching, and utilize culturally responsive curricula and resources, student academic achievement improves. In international schools, the skill of cultural competency is particularly important to ensure effective teaching, and effective communication between teachers, staff, and parents.

What will you have to do for this research?

For teachers, I am hoping to learn more about their cultural experiences before working in international schools, and to understand how teachers assess their own level of intercultural competency.

If you agree to be a part of this research, you will complete a questionnaire only, taking approximately 20 minutes. I do not collect any identifying or personal data. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco.

What do I do now?

If you would like to be a part of this study, please click on the link below to proceed to the survey. You will be asked to confirm your agreement to be a participant before proceeding to the survey. You may exit out of the survey at any time if you wish to stop your participation.

Link:

Thank you for contributing your time and effort to this research. It is greatly appreciated.

Sally Hirsch
sehirsch@usfca.edu
ph +1 415 823 9072

APPENDIX D SURVEY WELCOME LETTER TO SCHOOL LEADERS WITH REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW TIMES

Dear _____,

Thank you for expressing interest in being a part of my study on intercultural competency in international schools. The purpose of this research is to understand how teachers perceive their ability to interact, live and work successfully in an environment that encompasses many different cultures. Additionally, this research aims to understand how school organizational structures identify teachers who are intercultural competent, and/or support the development of intercultural competency amongst teachers. This is a mixed-methods study meaning that teachers will be surveyed to gain quantitative data and school principals or directors will be interviewed to gain qualitative data.

What is intercultural competency?

Intercultural competency is the knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes that enable a person to live and work effectively and appropriately in a culture different to their own.

Why is this skill important for teachers?

A wide body of research has demonstrated that when teachers use cultural sensitivity in their teaching, and utilize culturally responsive curricula and resources, student academic achievement improves. In international schools, the skill of cultural competency is particularly important to ensure effective teaching, and effective communication between teachers, staff, and parents.

What will you have to do for this research?

For school leaders, I am hoping to learn more about school hiring practices in identifying teachers who have a high level of intercultural competency. I would also like to learn more about professional development that may be planned to improve intercultural competency of teachers and staff.

If you agree to be a part of this research, you will complete an interview with me, via Skype, taking approximately 30 minutes. I do not collect any identifying or personal data and any school details, aside from continental location (eg South America), will not be part of the study. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed, then sent to you for confirmation. If necessary, I may contact you after the interview either via Skype or email for any clarifications.

This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco.

Benefits from the study

Schools involved in the study may choose to receive analysis from the data in the following formats:

- An executive summary of the data and analysis
- A complete copy of Sally Hirsch' dissertation
- An online presentation of some of the key results of the data analysis

What do I do now?

If you would like to be a part of this study, please respond to this email to organize an interview time.

Thank you for contributing your time and effort to this research. It is greatly appreciated.

Sally Hirsch

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APPENDIX E USF IRB APPROVAL

Protocol Exemption

To: Sally Hirsch

From: Terence Patterson,
IRB Chair

Subject: Protocol #526

Date: 09/26/2015

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your project (IRB Protocol #526) with the title **Revised Assessment of Intercultural Competency - Survey and Interview questions** has been approved by the University of San Francisco IRBPHS as **Exempt** according to 45CFR46.101(b). Your application for exemption has been verified because your project involves minimal risk to subjects as reviewed by the IRB on 09/26/2015.

Please note that changes to your protocol may affect its exempt status. Please submit a modification application within ten working days, indicating any changes to your research. Please include the Protocol number assigned to your application in your correspondence.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success
in your endeavors. Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP

Professor & Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection
of Human Subjects University of San Francisco

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<https://www.axiommentor.com/pages/home.cfm>