

**An Evaluative Case Study of Japanese Undergraduate Students' Gains in Intercultural
Competence as Learning Outcomes in Malaysia and Thailand**

by

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**A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education**

**Ontario Institute of Studies in Education
University of Toronto**

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ABSTRACT

Japan's policy on outbound student mobility reflects the national commitment to preparing the next generation of Japanese professionals in terms of intercultural understanding. However, very little evidence is available for evaluating a relationship between Japanese students' gains in intercultural understanding and their study abroad participation. Addressing the current shortcomings in several areas, including evidence, methodologies, diversity of destination, and theoretical application, this thesis designed a mixed-methods case study to evaluate Japanese students' gains in their intercultural competence as a measurement of learning outcomes from their study abroad in Malaysia and Thailand. The main framework was based on the cultural learning theory in the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive (ABC) model through the Sociocultural Adaption Scale (SCAS). The cultural learning theory gave a behavioral emphasis to my study, and the existing theories of intercultural competence in the literature were integrated into it. This study's sample came from two cohorts of the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU).

My results affirmed that research on study abroad learning outcomes in Japan needs to improve in terms of the availability and quality of evidence. The quantitative results illustrated that traditional variables such as language proficiency, destination countries, and gender are poor indicators for evaluating changes in the intercultural competence of Japanese students. One

promising result was the role of GPA in the 2015 cohort; this cohort showed a negative relationship between GPA and ICC changes. The qualitative findings were significant as they extended the existing intercultural competence theories by integrating concepts of cultural self-awareness and young adult development. The findings also formulated thematic relationships that identified students' perceived concerns and excitement in the pre-departure phase and perceived positive and negative learning outcomes in the post-return phase. The results of the data integration illustrated a correlation between the ICC scores and the comments in the 2016 cohort. Furthermore, the data integration uncovered a limitation of a self-administered instrument like SCAS. Although this study has acknowledged several limitations, it was possible to make recommendations to Japanese stakeholders to overcome the current shortcomings of both research and program administration relating to study abroad.

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My doctoral study was one of two goals I set myself in high school. I clearly remember talking about it with my high school homeroom teacher during my guidance counseling session in Japan in 1995, right before the departure of my high school exchange program to the United States. After more than 30 years since that day, I reached what I have set out to achieve: earning a doctorate. However, what I realized was that my degree would not have been achievable without support from so many people across countries and time zones. The experience I had at OISE was a humbling process and would not have been possible without those who shared their insights and assistance professionally and personally in the last five years.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Shaping Japanese undergraduate students' skills to enable them to bridge cultural differences has implications for promoting cultural diversity in Japanese society, building collaboration and finding diplomatic solutions to global issues between Japan and other Asian countries. These implications are critical for Japanese citizens due to Japan's historical legacies in the 20th century. In Japan, study abroad programs are believed to be a central approach to equip the next generation of Japanese leaders with the ability to work with culturally diverse groups of people in order to solve global issues and maintain Japan's global presence (Fukahori, 2017). Japan has also attempted to augment its diplomatic influence by increasing the number of Japanese citizens employed by the United Nations and other international organizations, so far without much success due to the underrepresentation of Japanese citizens at the UN headquarters for many years (Yokoyama, 2014). The current academic and policy discourse, as well as administrative practice at Japanese universities regarding study abroad, face several empirical challenges, including issues of reliable evidence, methodology, study destinations and theoretical frameworks. This study is my response to these existing challenges in the current discourse of study abroad research and policies.

1.1 Context and Objectives

The current academic, policy, and public discourse in Japan tends only to emphasize increasing the number of Japanese university students traveling overseas to participate in study abroad programs. The current dominant discourse may be a result of the declining number of study abroad participants in recent years (Ota, 2018). Japanese researchers have identified a variety of external issues (economic, political, and social) and internal concerns (motivation and so-called "inward-looking worldviews") among Japanese students as reasons for the current

decline in study abroad numbers (i.e., Hanada, 2018; Nakajima, 2010; Ota, 2018). Yokota (2018) added that the existing barriers for Japanese students to study abroad are more structural and nuanced than factors reflecting a lack of intrinsic motivation. Japanese corporate leaders were concerned about this decline in current study abroad participation as a sign of a potential challenge to the domestic recruitment of future corporate employees with global mindsets (i.e., Haji, 2012; Kawagoe & Narusawa, 2016; Sumiyoshi, 2010). The Japanese government (MIC, 2017) also have been concerned that such a continuing trend could negatively influence Japan's global political and economic presence. These stakeholders in Japan are also committed to reversing the situation by increasing funding and developing new university programs. Their conviction about the transformative influence of study abroad experience has led to the initiation of such Japanese higher education policies as the Top Global University Project (JSPS, 2017), Tobitate! (トビタテ！ [Leap for Tomorrow]) Study Abroad Initiative (MEXT, 2017), and Inter-University Exchange Project (JSPS, 2019). These internationalization policies by the Japanese government attempted to improve Japanese universities' international presence, increase Japanese students' outbound mobility, and diversify academic partnerships and study abroad destination countries to less-common regions. However, in my observation, these Japanese stakeholders hold a particular assumption about study abroad experience. Their assumption that the learning experience in a culture other than one's own would positively affect students' knowledge and behavior toward the individuals in destination countries is based only on anecdotal evidence or a tendency to rely on their own positive experience.

Until now, Japanese experts have inadequately addressed the dominant assumption that university study abroad inevitably contributes to positive change in Japanese undergraduate students who can bridge cultural differences with those from a non-Japanese culture. This

assumption requires several empirical considerations if there is to be sound policy decision-making.

First, insufficient evidence in research on study abroad learning outcomes poses a significant challenge for building academic and policy consensus in Japan. This shortcoming is also a major criticism within Japan (i.e., Hanada, 2015, 2018; Shinmi, 2018). My review of the literature in Japanese academic journals found that a majority of the existing studies only contain anecdotal stories in their reports and comments to describe participants' study abroad experience or faculty members' teaching experience on these study abroad programs; these existing reports are often descriptive (JASSO, 2005, 2017), and are unable to evaluate factors contributing to changes in Japanese students as a result of their study abroad experience. Other studies are more explanatory but only address the general impact of study abroad programs on Japanese students (i.e., Nomizu & Nitta, 2014; Yokota, Ota, & Shinmi, 2018). Specifically, Hanada's studies (2015, 2019) are two of the first empirical studies on Japanese students' study abroad learning outcomes. By applying intercultural competence as a theoretical framework in his research design, Hanada examined Japanese students studying in such English-speaking countries as the U.S. and Canada. Hanada's study found that Japanese undergraduate students' changes in their intercultural competence were most significant when these students received pre-departure preparation. Ward, Okura, Kennedy, and Kojima (1998) also contributed to distinguishing sociocultural adjustment from psychological adjustment among the Japanese undergraduate samples in New Zealand in their longitudinal study, although this study was not intended to test students' learning outcomes related to intercultural competence. Although a few researchers in Japan (i.e., Hiroshima University, 2016; Nagai, 2018; Nishitani, 2017) have discussed their attempts to fill the gap of the current shortage of evidence on study abroad research, the existing

shortage of evidence in the Japanese literature demonstrates the need for continuous effort to build more evidence in this area in Japan.

Second, the above shortage of evidence is linked to the need for improvement in the methodological design of the study of Japanese students' learning outcomes in study abroad research. Japanese researchers identified a need for diversifying methodologies used in Japan (i.e., Hanada, 2018; Kobayashi, 2018; Shinmi, Watabe, Akiniwa, & Ota, 2018) including using a mixed methods approach (Hanada, 2015; Ujitani, 2015) and longitudinal design (Ward et al., 1998). Furthermore, my literature review revealed that only two instruments were available in Japanese, and only one by Gouran and Nishida (1996) was accessible to the public. Although some English instruments are available in translation in Japanese, Paige and Stallman (2007) noted that these available instruments could be costly since some require a fee for licensing and specially arranged training requirements. Only five studies involving Japanese students (Hanada, 2015, 2019; Lee, 2019; Ujitani, 2015; Ward et al., 1998) implemented methodologies to explain social or psychological phenomena as a result of study abroad experience. Only recently, have researchers begun trying to address this methodological challenge in new research projects (i.e., Morishita et al., 2018; Nagai, 2017; Nishitani, 2018). While these studies primarily relied on quantitative approaches, only Hanada (2015) and Ujitani (2015) included both quantitative and qualitative data to examine Japanese students' learning outcomes. Hanada (2018) also recommended more research collaboration across disciplines, methodologies, and universities to build study abroad research capacities.

Third, an additional major challenge is expanding study abroad programs to non-traditional destination countries. The existing Japanese studies only represent students enrolled in study abroad programs in particular destinations in North America, Europe, or other English-language countries including predominantly the United States, Canada (i.e., Hanada, 2015, 2019;

Ujitani, 2015; Yokota et al., 2018) and New Zealand (Ward et al., 1998). Yokota et al. (2018) only included a small Japanese undergraduate sample ($n = 53$) who studied in less common destinations (i.e., indicated as “others,” meaning a country outside of North America, EU, Oceania, and East Asia). Unfortunately, the authors did not indicate the specific countries in their report to illustrate these students’ destinations. The same study identified two Japanese graduate students who were reported to visit Thailand during their graduate degrees in Japan; no student indicated studying in Malaysia. Even though the Japanese government has tried to expand possible destination countries by encouraging the Japanese universities to partner with countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Latin America, and Africa (JSPS, 2019), the new initiatives are too recent for their effects to be well known. Because European and North American countries have been the most frequent destinations for Japanese students historically, the current skew in destinations among study abroad programs poses a limitation on our understanding of Japanese students’ learning outcomes beyond these traditional destinations. More importantly, Japanese students participate in study abroad programs in other destinations, and those students’ experiences need to be accounted for or reflected in study samples.

Fourth, a critical challenge is a need for applying theoretical frameworks that focus on intercultural competence in behavioral terms as individual learning outcomes of study abroad programs among Japanese students. In Japan, researchers, policymakers, and university administrators described intercultural learning experience as one of the main objectives of educational exchange initiatives (Yamaguchi, 2008), especially among outbound study abroad programs for Japanese students (Hanada, 2018; Hirasawa, 2018). Among several theories available in English, intercultural competence as a theoretical framework to conceptualize and test study abroad learning outcomes (i.e., Deardorff, 2004; Fantini, 2000; Ward & Kennedy, 1999) has gained researchers’ attention recently. However, these researchers and university

administrators have not been explicit about their analytical focus and expected outcomes of study abroad programs in terms of intercultural learning. Some researchers focus on individuals' socio-cultural adjustment in destination countries as an intercultural experience (i.e., Kealey, 2001, 2015; Ward, 2004). Others emphasize individual experience in destination countries as intercultural experience at the program/curriculum level (i.e., Burrow, 2019; Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, 2009; Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012). The discourse of intercultural competence in Japanese literature is often simply a theoretical discussion of the literature (i.e., Arai, 1997; Matsuo, Morino & Kudo, 2018; Tomo, 2018). These publications included only limited empirical evidence on study abroad learning outcomes. One study suggested that more efforts from the researchers in Japan are needed to examine conceptual and methodological issues specific to the Japanese educational contexts instead of merely borrowing the existing theoretical frameworks from outside of Japan for the Japanese studies (Tokui, 2004). More studies are needed to develop a theoretical foundation for understanding intercultural competence in the Japanese literature.

These gaps in the academic literature on study abroad research result in inadequacies in Japanese government policy decision-making on higher education internationalization in Japan. This inadequacy in terms of evidence, methodologies, destinations, and theories also means administrators, faculty, parents, and students have incomplete information when making decisions relating to the educational opportunities and benefits of study abroad. There is a significant need for filling these gaps in the literature and for future studies that address the learning outcomes of Japanese undergraduate students' intercultural experience overseas. The current limitations could be dealt with if researchers in the areas of Program Evaluation, Higher Education, and Intercultural Education in Japan would intentionally integrate such expertise into analyzing issues related to study abroad learning outcomes in the future. Therefore, my plan for

this study is to integrate conceptual and methodological frameworks in the three fields into an interdisciplinary approach. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the changes in students' knowledge and behavior as a result of their study abroad experience by investigating the factors contributing to positive change. Specifically, my study focuses on two primary objectives:

- Identifying the changes of Japanese undergraduate students that result from their intercultural experience in Malaysia and Thailand, two less traditional destination countries for Japanese students.
- Evaluating the relationship between these students' learning outcomes and such background variables as gender, academic performance, and language proficiency.

1.2 Research Questions

My research poses a set of questions to identify relationships between Japanese undergraduate students' demographic data and change in Intercultural Competence (ICC). This study also includes one question which attempts to address their intercultural experience in Southeast Asian destination countries that may provide additional insight into their ICC change.

1. RQ1. What is the distribution of Japanese students' ICC scores including sub-group differences in the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase?
2. RQ2. What is revealed through the comparison of ICC scores between the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase? Are there sub-group differences between these phases?
3. RQ3. What can be learned from the narratives provided by Japanese undergraduate students in the survey, describing their experience before and after studying in Malaysia and Thailand, that illuminates these students' gains in intercultural competence?

1.3 Importance, Originality, and Contribution to Knowledge

Global student mobility as a dominant globalization force pushes governments and universities around the world toward the internationalization of higher education. Japanese

universities also face the challenge of globalization while the Japanese government and universities focus on outbound student mobility through study abroad programs. However, there are many gaps in the discourse. These Japanese stakeholders require empirical evidence to ensure sound decision-making on the current national policy and administrative practice in Japanese Higher Education. Recently, more studies examined study abroad learning outcomes in the field of International Higher Education by applying available intercultural education measurements and instruments to a variety of student groups including Japanese undergraduate students. Although these studies recognized the importance of the intercultural dimension in their internationalization concepts, these existing concepts need reframing with an analytical focus at the individual level since the intercultural dimension always assumes the individual development of intercultural interpersonal relations domestically or internationally. By aligning study abroad learning outcomes with the existing intercultural education studies, some researchers argued for applying intercultural competence as a sociocultural adjustment in the form of a cultural learning approach within an established social psychology model which examines outbound international students as educational sojourners instead of degree-seeking international students.

The existing gaps in the literature, policy, and professional practice in Japanese Higher Education affect Japanese government policy decision-making on Japanese universities' internationalization and also administrators, faculty, parents, and students who need to make decisions about study abroad participation. Because there is a need for more empirical evidence of studies on Japanese undergraduate students in study abroad programs, my research looks at the case of a private Japanese university in which one department requires studying abroad in Thailand and Malaysia for one Japanese semester (fifteen weeks). This study has the following goals:

1. Investigating study abroad learning outcomes through an evidence-informed approach that can inform the Japanese government's policy decision-making on the internationalization of Japanese universities
2. Diversifying the methodological designs of study abroad learning outcomes research by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches
3. Expanding the study abroad destinations included in such research on learning outcomes by focusing on the less common destinations of Malaysia and Thailand
4. Applying a social psychological theory that focuses on intercultural competence as an individual learning outcome expressed in interpersonal relations in order to align my study of international higher education with intercultural education

My justification for this study is based on my academic and professional practice as a researcher-practitioner in four different university organizations in Germany, the U.S., and Japan over the last 17 years. During that period, I held dual faculty-administrator positions in academic departments and international program offices at universities in these countries. Through my unique faculty-administrator experience, I developed a perspective that allows me to critically observe contrasting scholarly and administrative practices among faculty and staff members in these universities and countries. My professional experience has shaped my research principle which focuses on solving social and cultural problems surrounding university organizations by analyzing available quantitative and qualitative data through a thoroughly empirical approach (Creswell, 2014). I have often observed that some faculty and administrators involved in the internationalization projects in these countries focus on increasing the scale of student participation in the study abroad programs rather than on improving the quality of these study abroad programs in order to ensure a higher quality of learning outcomes. The faculty and administrators assumed that sending their students abroad would automatically change these

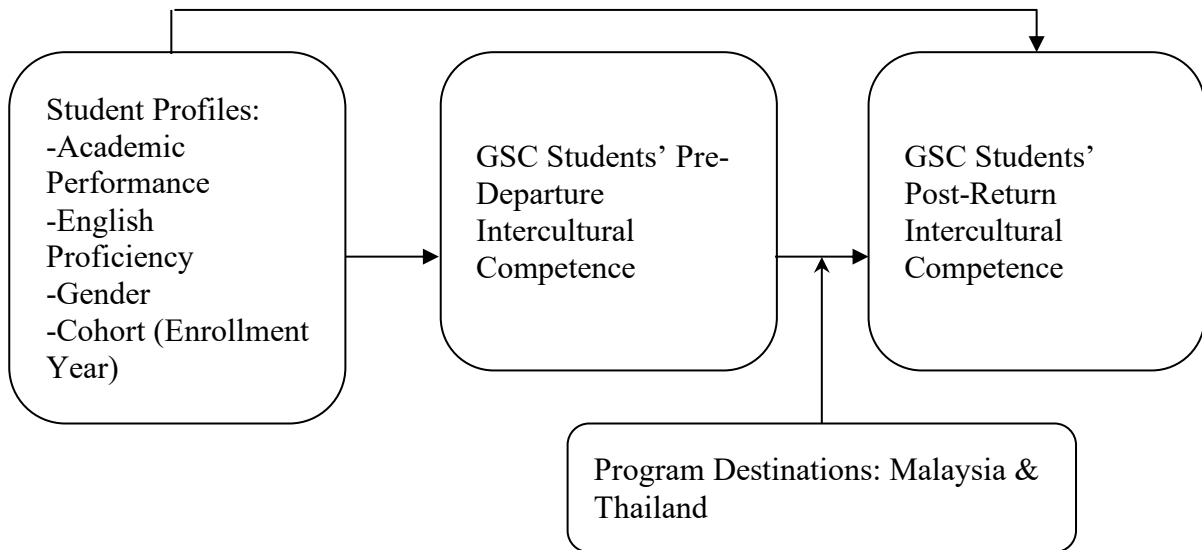
students without paying close attention to possible limitations. After practical experience at these four universities in these three countries, I realized that the faculty members' and administrators' assumptions were common across these places. At the same time, my concern has been that the Japanese higher education field requires more empirical evidence to evaluate the influence of study abroad programs on Japanese students' knowledge and behavior changes. As a doctoral student in Canada, I am able to have some cultural distance in carrying out this study of intercultural competence as a study abroad learning outcome in Japanese Higher Education. I hope it can make a significant contribution.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

Evaluating study abroad programs' contribution to Japanese undergraduate students' intercultural competence development requires my study to conceptualize a relationship among these Japanese students' demographic characteristics, destination countries, and intercultural competence (ICC) based on the prior studies of Japanese samples. Drawing from the ABC (Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive) model of Culture Contact (Ward, 2004; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001) as the appropriate social psychological theory for my study, my conceptual framework focuses on individual changes in a new sociocultural environment. My study conceptualizes these Japanese undergraduate students' demographic characteristics as including academic performance, English language proficiency, gender, and destination countries as intervention variables while ICC is conceptualized as an outcome variable. This study defines these Japanese students' course marks as their academic performance, their IELTS scores as English language proficiency, and their program assignments in Malaysia and Thailand as the destination countries. These demographic characteristics were included in two prior studies: gender, English language, and destination countries in Hanada's study (2015) and gender in Ward et al.'s study (1998). Evaluating a relationship among these variables contributes to

explaining study abroad programs' effectiveness for student learning outcomes. The diagram below describes this study's conceptual framework.

Diagram: Study's Conceptual Framework



1.5 Thesis Organization

This thesis is organized with the following structure: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion. This introductory chapter is followed by the literature review (Chapter 2) which synthesizes the existing studies, policy documents, and related articles. The synthesis of the existing literature aims to examine the current discourse on methodological issues, the existing empirical evidence and its shortcomings, the current trends and implications of outbound destinations, and theoretical challenges of intercultural competence as individual learning outcomes in study abroad programs. The literature review contrasts the Japanese literature and non-Japanese literature. After the literature review chapter, the third chapter describes my study method and its design. This methods chapter includes this study's case description (a definition, boundaries, and selection justification), two cohort datasets (including both quantitative and qualitative data), instrumentation, analysis, and ethics protocol and procedures at the University of Toronto and AGU's School of Global Studies and

Collaboration (GSC). Once the methods chapter has illustrated the design and procedure, the next chapter (Chapter 4) presents the results of my analysis. The fourth chapter includes my analytical results from a quantitative method section. The fifth chapter discusses the quantitative results by integrating the previous studies both in the non-Japanese and Japanese literature. The sixth includes a subsequent qualitative analysis section. Finally, the seventh chapter discusses the results of both quantitative and qualitative analyses. In this seventh chapter, my discussion gives a greater understanding of the differences between the two separate sets of results and a greater understanding of the overall result. This seventh chapter also contrasts the results with the prior studies in the literature. My thesis ends with a concluding chapter (Chapter 8) which evaluates my study holistically and makes possible recommendations to the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), Aoyama Gakuin University, and the greater academic and policy audiences in Japan.

Chapter 2

Review of the Existing Literature:

Globalization and Internationalization of Higher Education

The internationalization of higher education continues to be one of the major research areas in the field of Comparative and International Higher Education. The internationalization phenomenon emerged as a result of the globalization of higher education systems and institutions since the end of the Cold war and the 1990s. The academic discourse showed that the globalization and internationalization concepts are distinctively different from each other while they are intimately interdependent. For example, the internationalization of higher education institutions can be seen as a response to globalization when global, social, political, economic, and scientific forces push higher education institutions to engage in international activities (i.e., Altbach, 2004; Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit, 2002). Sometimes, internationalization is also discussed in terms of the relationships of nation-states and their individual national interests (Sugimura, 2018a). Most recently, some researchers considered the internationalization of higher education as a process that influences globalization as much as an institutional response to it (de Wit, Argarwal, Said, Sehoole, & Sirozi, 2008). One example of this process is a network of academic institutions across national boundaries to formulate a new higher education model (Sugimura, 2018a).

One way of defining the internationalization of higher education institutions is as “a process of integrating the international and intercultural dimensions into research, teaching, and service functions of the institution” (Knight, 1994, p.7). Although more recent definitions at the institutional and regional levels are available by the same author (Knight, 2003, 2004), this definition puts the analytical focus on university organizations. This organization-focused view also aligns with some studies by scholars who focus on organizational theory and structure (i.e.,

Clark, 2005; Scott, 1992, 2001, 2015). When these concepts are applied, they allow available studies to focus on university members within individual university organizations. The internationalization of university organizations can be defined as integrating the international and intercultural dimensions into university members' research, teaching, and services functions. A case study of a U.S. liberal arts college (Hiratsuka, 2011) and Japanese universities (Hiratsuka, 2017) described this conceptual integration by putting an analytical focus on university members. When the researchers are a focus within the boundaries of university organizations, the individual, interpersonal, and intergroup relationships among diverse members of different cultures becomes the core of intercultural issues at the organizational level.

However, the current academic discourse on the internationalization of higher education appears to have less emphasis on individual members' changes within university organizations. For example, Knight (2004) suggested that the intercultural interaction among members in university organizations is an aspect of "Internationalization at Home (IoH)" (p. 17). In this theory, the author included faculty, staff, and student engagement in curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs. This theory (Knight, 2004) is beneficial in that it recognizes an individual university's rationale for the intercultural dimension in the integration of internationalization into its purpose and mission. However, this theory's implicit structural focus on the intercultural dimension needs further explanation to describe components such as staff and student competency (knowledge and skills) development as the universities have to respond to increasing demands for diversity in the workplace and community. One study in Japan examined the internationalization of faculty members through their engagement in international development projects (Hiratsuka, 2017). The findings suggested that faculty members did not see the need to develop the intercultural dimension of their scholarship, even though they were clearly committed to developing an international dimension in other ways (Hiratsuka, 2017). For

some reason, the lack of the intercultural dimension in their responses was unclear in this study of the process of engaging in international cooperation projects. In order to address these intercultural issues, future internationalization studies need to reframe the IoH issues by shifting the analytical level from the structural dimension to a focus on university members.

2.1 Global Academic Mobility and International Students in Studies of Internationalization

The internationalization of Higher Education is intricately related to global academic mobility (i.e., Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit et al., 2008). Global mobility connotes individuals and groups moving across national boundaries for diverse purposes such as business, civic, educational, governmental, and religious activities (i.e., Banks & Bhandari, 2012; Matsuo & Morino, 2017; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). The mobility of university members is a global phenomenon that impacts higher education systems, institutions, and organizations around the world. Historically, university teachers and students have always been mobile for scholarly purposes (Altbach, 2001; Hayhoe, 2001). The European academic tradition allowed for the geographic movements of teachers and students from an early period (Hayhoe, 2001). In Japan, Buddhist monks traveled to China to acquire new knowledge as far back as the 5th century CE (i.e., Inglehart, 1964; Mori, 2010; Munakata, 1998). Global academic mobility has played a critical role in the internationalization of university organizations throughout the history of academia.

In the global academic mobility literature, international students make up a large proportion of individuals who pursue academic mobility (Banks & Bhandari, 2012). For example, the World Trade Organization (WTO) uses the term “consumption abroad” (Banks & Bhandari, 2012, p.380) when speaking of international students who take the opportunity to study in a foreign country as a part of their academic study and post-secondary degree attainment. UNESCO (2015) reported that 4.1 million international students were pursuing their

doctoral degrees in natural and life sciences globally in 2013. Another study reported that approximately six percent of the OECD member country universities enroll international students in their degree programs (University of Oxford, 2017). These international students seeking degrees outside of their own countries contribute to significant growth in terms of inbound student mobility in the national higher education systems, institutions, and organizations that host them.

On the other hand, national and regional policies often frame international student definitions differently within the context of global student mobility. Inbound and outbound student mobility are the two integral sides of the same university internationalization issue. In the case of community colleges and universities in Ontario, Canada, increasing recruitment of inbound students as degree-seeking international students drives the public discourse of internationalization policies at the provincial and the organizational levels. This phenomenon is recognized as bringing a major change to the Ontario provincial post-secondary system (Clark, Moran, Skolnik, & Trick, 2009). The EU mobility policy, Erasmus, included European Integration and cultural identity building through regional student mobility (Kuroda, 2018; Robertson, 2009).

In Japan, the most recent discourse dictates sending more Japanese students overseas as outbound students to prepare the next generation of Japanese university graduates for global competitiveness and economic innovation (Fukahori, 2017; Sugimura, 2018b). In one Japanese study, one definition of outbound international students is Japanese students who are studying abroad for academic purposes as a part of their home university degree programs (Yokota et al., 2018). These kinds of international students are also sometimes called exchange students, who are described as student sojourners studying abroad for less than 12 months (i.e., Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001; Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998). Japanese policies have currently

emphasized increasing the outbound student mobility of Japanese students through study abroad programs as a part of their degree attainment at home universities. However, little empirical evidence is offered for this focus by the Japanese government and universities. For example, the available series of internationalization studies often tends to focus on the effectiveness of the Japanese government's internationalization policies through policy analysis (i.e., Burgess, Gibson, Klaphake, & Selzer, 2010; Horie, 2002; Sato, 2003; Yonezawa, 2009). One of my previous studies also faces a challenge of identifying organizational aspects of the internationalization of Japanese universities when the literature review was only able to identify no more than five publications (Hiratsuka, 2016). The narrow scope of the policy and academic discourse of Japanese university internationalization poses serious implications for Japanese universities' strategies on outbound student mobility.

2.2 Outbound Student Mobility Studies

Outbound student mobility as a form of academic study abroad programs has always been aimed at an ambitious goal: to transform students' lives through their face-to-face experience with individuals from other cultures, thus promoting peace and intercultural understanding. For example, one of the oldest study abroad programs, Experiment in International Living (EIL), was founded with this critical mission in 1932 by the American Educator, Dr. Donald Watt (World Learning, 2000; Yamaguchi, 2008). EIL claims its purpose as "...to build world peace, one person at a time" (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006, p.9). EIL was a true experiment of international living through an outbound program when their first U.S. American students had traveled to have a "homestay" in Germany. This study abroad experiment was also sponsored by Syracuse University at the time. Between the two world wars in the European Continent, EIL attempted to build a bridge across cultural differences and develop mutual understanding among the citizens of the United States and Germany by making it possible for

them to live together. The organization claimed to be the first group to use the term “homestay” (Yamaguchi, 2008) in its record. The same principle was replicated when EIL was established in Japan in 1956 for the same mission, just 11 years after the end of World War II. The organization furthermore assisted in building study abroad programs at U.S. colleges and universities (World Learning, 2000). Participant testimonies also highlighted the ambitious goal. One of the early EIL participants, Sargent Shriver (World Learning, 2000) explained:

The Experiment was among the great learning experiences of my life. It changed us and taught us some very important truths about people, about peace, and about change in the world. The Experiment taught us that the way to find out about your world is to discover somebody else’s world. I developed attitudes and convictions that I put to a worldwide test years later. (p.1)

This statement remains a true core value for many researchers, policymakers, faculty, and administrators involved in the study abroad programs across educational sectors and levels today, myself included. Such testimony continues to reinforce the role of study abroad programs as a transformative experience for participants at colleges and universities in many countries. In spite of being involved in the administration of university study abroad programs for a good part of my professional career in Japan, Germany, and the United States, my questions about the educational evidence of students’ learning outcomes remained unanswered. More universities move forward with increasing outbound student mobility through study abroad programs while they seem to be less concerned about the quality of intercultural learning outcomes. What is needed is establishing evidence of the educational outcomes of study abroad programs that explain statements like the above by employing systematic and rigorous inquiries into student change in particular destination countries based on a sound theoretical framework.

2.2.1 The Existing Evidence

Research on study abroad programs has gained increasing attention by Higher Education field practitioners and researchers in recent years. My review traced this increased attention in the U.S.-based literature. For example, foreign language research areas had a track record since the 1990s in French Language (Freed, 1995, 1998) and Japanese Language (Jordan & Lambert, 1991). These early studies, which were often carried out within the disciplines of applied linguistics and foreign language education, emphasized the role of study abroad in students' target language proficiency improvement in these target cultures. More recent U.S. studies have been promoting the importance of study abroad learning issues since the 2000s (i.e., Fantini, 2002; Brockington, Hoffa, & Martin, 2005; World Learning, 2002). These studies stressed the importance of uncovering students' learning outcomes, such as language proficiency improvement and intercultural understanding. Target language proficiency improvement and intercultural understanding increase have been two issues focused on in study abroad research in early years.

Large-Scale Research on the Study Abroad Impact. Some of the most recent studies have shifted their focus to the impact on students' subsequent employment after completing their undergraduate programs. These studies were often designed as large-scale research projects. For example, in Europe, the Erasmus Impact Study (European Commission, 2014) found that the Erasmus students who participated in the program had a higher rate of holding managerial positions than those who did not participate. In an Australian case, Potts (2016) found study abroad to have a beneficial impact on undergraduates' early career. In the United States, one of the most recent large-scale studies by the American Institute for Foreign Studies (AIFS) examined changes in its participants in three areas: career, academic, and personal values and growth (2018). This AIFS study concluded that the participants affirmed that their experience in university study abroad programs impacted their career positively. In Canada, a series of studies

identified the state of Canadian student mobility. However, these studies often emphasized credit transfer principles, best practices, and international mobility partnerships (i.e., CBIE, 2014, 2015, 2016), while very little focus was on learning outcomes. Canada's student mobility issues tended to focus on inbound mobility rather than outbound mobility at both the provincial level (Government of Ontario, 2018) and the federal level (Global Affairs Canada, 2019; Hiratsuka, 2019). One study (Bond et al., 2009) surveyed the state of Canadian students studying abroad by carrying out public opinion polls about the impact on students' career development. The public poll found that 55% of the sample, including employers, value and support Canadian students' participation in study abroad programs, believing that participants become more knowledgeable about different cultures. Bond et al. (2009) recognized a lack of evidence about study abroad programs as a challenge in Canada, and recommended building evidence in this area by conducting more research and evaluation of Canadian outbound student mobility. In Japan, Yokota et al. (2018) found that a group of study abroad participants rated higher than non-study abroad participation employment-related indicators such as salaries. This large-scale study (Yokota et al., 2018) concluded that study abroad programs positively impacted the career and life development of students in the Japanese sample. These studies are often large-scale designs that defined the impact of employability based on job skills as a result of students' study abroad participation instead of emphasizing their students' gains in intercultural skills as the specific program impact.

The emphasis in these recent studies on students' career and professional competitiveness assumes that developing skills, including intercultural skills, is an essential advantage of study abroad programs for students' professional futures. Such a conceptual basis of building job skills through education and training in higher education is evident in the skills policy framework. The skills policy framework places the role of higher education as a supplier in the labor market

(Buchanan, Finegold, Mayhew, & Warhurst, 2017; Green, 2013). Since the skills policy framework has begun to extend into all aspects of higher education discourse, these large-scale studies also seemed to have accepted the skills policy framework as a conceptual basis to argue for the importance of intercultural skills for leverage in students' future professional careers.

The skills policy framework of individual employability based on job skills appeared to be a critical analytical unit in these studies. For example, the Erasmus Impact Study (2014) identified intercultural competence gains as one of the top five skills named by the participants. This result also was confirmed by qualitative analysis in the same study. However, no precise specification of the term "intercultural competence" (p.17) was provided in the Erasmus study. Unfortunately, the Australian case (Potts, 2016) neglected to specify outcomes related to students' skills or competence in intercultural understanding, although the study identified similar concepts such as "interpersonal and communication skills," "new perspectives of your home country," and "knowledge and understanding of your host country" (p. 32). The AIFS study (2018) also concluded that participants' cultural understanding and worldview improved between 2012 and 2017. The Canadian students in Bond et al. (2009) expressed such learning/growth as "general cultural awareness and understanding" and "knowledge of historical, cultural traditions and achievements of your host country." When this study surveyed their sample to compare learning/growth between study abroad and study at home, more learning occurred overseas than at home.

A part of the Japanese study (Yokota, et al., 2018) carried out a group comparison between study abroad participants and non-study abroad participants. This part of the study examined four main domains: curricular activities, co-curricular/extra-curricular activities, ability improvement, and awareness improvement, and found that in all four areas the Japanese group with study abroad experience had a statistically significant difference compared to the

Japanese group with no study abroad experience. In fact, two of their four areas (ability improvement and awareness improvement) included questions related to students' intercultural skills. These items were developed based on the list of recommendations in Japanese government policy by an expert group on the 21st-century model of Japanese professionals (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership, 2010). This Japanese policy framework is particularly prevalent in other recent studies on study abroad research in the Japanese literature (i.e., Hanada, 2015, 2019; Yokota & Kobayashi, 2013; Yokota et al., 2018). These studies tried to show evidence of benefits from study abroad programs in students' employability-based on relevant job skill gains in accordance with the skills policy framework.

These study abroad impact studies framed intercultural skills as employment and career advantages among university students. My review found that what was significant in the literature was an implicit expectation of an explanation for study abroad benefits in terms of employability based on job skill gains.

While evidence of students' employability based on job skill gains resulting from study abroad participation was perceived as essential among these large-scale studies, conceptual articulation among these major studies appeared to be inconsistent. These large-scale studies in the skill policy framework posed a conceptual challenge of articulating students' intercultural understanding due to study abroad programs for other researchers. While framing the economic and labor benefits of study abroad programs over the long term, these studies appeared to overlook essential educational benefits of study abroad programs on student participants. Further analysis of the existing literature of study abroad programs in areas other than the skill policy framework is needed to examine specifically student gains in intercultural understanding resulting from study abroad for educational purposes. Instead of exploring large-scale study abroad impact research emphasizing students' employability based on job skills gains, my review

shifted its conceptual framework to examining students' gain in issues related to intercultural learning as a result of study abroad participation. The unit of analysis is individual students' intercultural learning resulting from study abroad participation instead of the effectiveness of study abroad programs.

Studies of Sociocultural Adjustment as Learning Outcomes. While the field of higher education does not include a great deal of literature on a theoretical framework of sociocultural adjustment, some useful studies on this topic can be found in the field of intercultural relations. Some Intercultural Relations researchers who focused on the learning outcome issues contributed to the understanding of international students at high schools and universities in Japan (Ward et al., 2001; Ward et al., 1998), Australia, Britain, European countries, Israel and the United States (i.e., Push, 2004; Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). These researchers often focused on the sociocultural challenges experienced by international students, including “interpersonal and intergroup interactions; the difficulties faced by international students; academic issues in the intercultural classroom; temporal variations in psychological, sociocultural and academic adaptation; and the re-entry experience” (Ward et al., 2001, p. 146). Ward and Kennedy (1999) also contributed to the above academic discourse by conducting a meta-analysis on psychological and sociocultural adjustment changes in international students and other groups. This particular study (Ward & Kennedy, 1999) was one of the few publications that looked at a variety of individuals from several nationalities or cultural groups in different destination countries, and it also included the Japanese samples as one of the comparison groups. Shifting the focus of my literature review to the field of intercultural relations allowed me to identify a greater number of relevant studies. These relevant studies emphasized students’ sociocultural adjustment as study abroad learning outcomes.

Some studies focused on the United States were able to articulate American students' learning outcomes with respect to gains in intercultural skills in their study abroad programs. For example, Vande Berg, Paige, and Lou (2012) examined a variety of studies to evaluate study abroad learning outcomes in the form of intercultural competence (ICC) among U.S. university students. These authors applied the theory of intercultural competence from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1986) and an instrument called the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, 2012). Vande Berg and others collected a series of studies based on this ICC theoretical framework and the instrument. The authors concluded that their study abroad students had positive benefits from their experience abroad compared to non-study-abroad students in various ways related to their gains in intercultural competence. The authors also found that their study abroad students had improved intercultural competence; particularly, having a facilitator in the destination country to assist and reflect on the U.S. students' intercultural experience contributed to improving these students' intercultural competence (Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012). A major contribution from this study is to challenge the dominant sink-or-swim pedagogical approach in the field related to study abroad. Another major meta-analysis was conducted by Burrow (2019). This comprehensive study included 72 published studies of U.S. students and examined the relationship between these students' study abroad participation and their gains in intercultural competence, the overall effect size of the gains, different student/research/program characteristics, and specific predictors. The author found that, overall, there is a statistically significant relationship between U.S. students' study abroad participation and their gains in intercultural competence with an overall small-to-medium effect size. His study's effect size had theoretical and practical significance for the current academic discourse regarding evidence of study abroad learning outcomes. These studies

provided evidence of study abroad programs that contributed to students' overall gains in intercultural competence among American undergraduate students.

However, a few studies in the United States showed evidence against study abroad programs' contribution to improving participants' intercultural competence and related dimensions. For example, one study on short-term study abroad research by IDI (Keefe, 2008) found no statistical significance, although the author described specific characteristics related to intercultural competence that were found in these participants' qualitative data. Another earlier study (Sell, 1983) reviewed the existing literature on the affective dimension of intercultural competence and concluded that the evidence was insufficient to be conclusive. While these two examples came with limitations, recognizing studies with evidence against study abroad programs' positive contribution to students' intercultural competence gains is necessary for this study.

Relationship Between U.S. Student Variables and Their Gains in Intercultural Competence. In addition to the overall contribution of study abroad programs to students' gains in intercultural competence, specific individual, situational, and other variables require my study's attention. Foreign language proficiency, academic performance, and gender are three specific variables that are commonly discussed in the literature and required close attention in my study.

Among the above three variables, a relationship between foreign language proficiency and students' gains in intercultural competence received the most attention in the existing literature. In this area, one's proficiency in a target language is understood to contribute to or hinder one's gain in intercultural competence. One of the studies is the Georgetown Consortium Study (Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, 2009). In this study, the authors concluded that the U.S. students with prior target language studies achieved a statistically significant difference in

intercultural competence when these students had up to 14 semesters of the language studies compared to other students in the study. The same study also found that students who participated in academic courses in their target languages during their study abroad programs had a statistically significant difference in their gains in intercultural competence compared to students only taking courses in English. The authors also concluded that students who participated in their academic courses in both their target languages and English during their study abroad programs achieved a statistically significant difference in their gains in intercultural competence compared to the students who studied courses only in English. Additionally, students who studied their target languages during their study abroad programs achieved a statistically significant difference compared to students not studying their target languages (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Burrow (2019) found that students who had some courses in some foreign languages during their study abroad program had greater effect size than the students who had courses only in English even though this result was not statistically significant (Burrow, 2019). Although evidence in this area in the U.S. appeared inconclusive, there seems to be a relationship between U.S. students' intercultural competence gain and their target language studies before and during study abroad.

Second, U.S. students' academic performance was an important variable in studies of intercultural competence in study abroad programs. Among several different test scores and evaluation instruments, grade point average (GPA) is a standard indicator of U.S. students' academic performance. Only a few studies included GPA as an independent variable to examine its relationship with students' study abroad learning outcomes. Unfortunately, my review was unable to identify publications that included intercultural competence as their outcome variables. In fact, these available studies applied a theoretical concept and instrument other than intercultural competence, so a direct comparison was a challenge in this literature review.

However, examining these publications that take GPA into account holds merit for my study. For example, one large U.S. consortium study at the University of Georgia system (Sutton & Rubin, 2004) found that there was a statistical difference between the study abroad group and the non-study-abroad group among five factors they devised for their study. The authors explained that their result remained unchanged among five factors after running their analysis again by holding GPA constant. The authors concluded that their students' changes in their indicators including global awareness were an effect of study abroad participation and not due to students' academic performance. Furthermore, Kurt, Olitsky, and Geis (2013), who examined U.S. students studying in 23 locations through Elon University's short-term study abroad programs, found a statistically significant relationship between their students' GPA and their gains in two of five indicators: Foreign media exposure and foreign language exposure. The available studies' results indicated that U.S. students' gains in indicators related to intercultural competence appeared to be mixed and inconclusive in the existing literature.

Third, the role of gender in U.S. students' gains in intercultural competence often received U.S. research attention. Often, female students were thought to have greater success than male students. Gore (2005) argued that this may have been because female enrollment is higher than male enrollment. Several demographic sources, including the Institute of International Education (IIE), International Education of Students (IES), and Council of International Educational Exchanges (CIEE), all described a higher enrollment of female students compared to male students (Gore, 2005). However, the existing evidence seemed to be more nuanced than the current dominant discourse. On the one hand, Burrow (2019) found that a study with all male students had a greater effect size than a study with all female students although there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups. Another study by Roxeisen, Anderson, Lawton, and Hubbard (2008) examining a faculty-led Business semester

program in the United Kingdom found that their male students had statistically more significant gains than their female students. However, the study also noted that the female students scored higher on average after examining differences between their pre-scores and post-scores. This study was intriguing because the score gap diminished in their follow-up scores after returning from abroad. On the other hand, according to Vande Berg et al. (2009), female students were found to have a statistically significant difference in their intercultural competence compared to male students. The authors in this study also noted that these male students were found to have slightly lower intercultural competence scores compared to their scores before their study abroad. Since both Vande Berg et al (2009) and Roxeisen et al. (2008) used the same instrument (Intercultural Development Inventory [IDI]), these direct contrasts indicated that the role of gender in students' gains in intercultural competence resulting from study abroad programs appears to be inconclusive. At the same time, Burrow (2019) warned that there is little evidence of a contribution of student characteristics to their gains in intercultural competence since the samples tended to be demographically homogeneous; he suggested broadening samples to include greater participation from diverse student groups in the United States.

Additional variables that are included in the current literature deserve attention. For example, Vande Berg et al. (2009) explained that the following variables were related to gains in intercultural competence: program duration of 12-18 months, mixed class composition (U.S., local and other international students), and culturally dissimilar/somewhat dissimilar locations. However, the following variables were found not to contribute to students' gains in intercultural competence: areas of study, prior living or studying abroad experience, language study less than four semesters, taking a course offered entirely by the host university, and program duration of more than 18 months or less than 12 months. Burrow's meta-analysis (2019) also found that programs only taught by home institution faculty or only taught by local faculty members had a

greater effect size than mixed home/local faculty instruction even though the author found no statistical significance. However, the same study found no statistical significance in duration in weeks, type of housing, presence of intercultural interaction, or guided reflection. Most recently, Adam and others (2018) examined an effect of living abroad on individual self-awareness. The authors defined one's self-awareness as self-concept clarity, and recruited a variety of samples including MBA students to analyze a series of effects and relationships. The authors found that there is a statistically significant relationship between living abroad and clarifying one's self-concept, and concluded that living abroad improves one's self-awareness. It would be beneficial to seek more conclusive evidence of the contributions of these variables and the practical implications for students' intercultural competence development in future studies of study abroad learning outcomes.

Participants' active engagements in local communities are necessary, even though stressful, to successfully achieve participants' goals in their destination countries. Kealey's study (2001), which included some participants in Thailand, offered some relevant insight into this phenomenon even though his samples were Canadian technical advisors who were adults on international development missions. On the one hand, the author found that the most successful participants in achieving their mission objectives (technical transfer) were the ones who actively engaged in their local communities. Those who actively engaged in their local communities also expressed their struggles with a high stress level during their missions (Kealey, 2001). On the other hand, the author found that some technical advisors failed to guarantee their successful mission objectives (i.e., technical transfer) although these advisors in his study were effective in their cultural adjustment in their assigned locations. This study found that those advisors who failed the mission objectives but were successful in their cultural adjustments tended to stay in communities called ex-pats ghettos. The author explained that these advisors in the ex-pat

ghettos ended up withdrawing from their active community engagements and focusing only on their work on their missions. Having this piece of information from Kealey's observation might offer an insight into understanding study abroad students' success or failure of cultural learning in their destination countries.

Relationship between Japanese Student Variables and Their Gains in Intercultural Competence. My review identified a body of literature devoted to intercultural competence as a study abroad learning outcome. A review of this literature, which is mainly focused on the U.S., not only identified intercultural competence as the concept and measurement of study abroad learning outcomes; it also identified relationships between students' demographic variables and their gains in intercultural competence. However, applying the existing literature from U.S. studies and other non-Japanese studies to the Japanese context poses a challenge in terms of contextual alignment. This contextual challenge requires a review of study abroad learning outcomes research that involves Japanese samples and their gains in their intercultural competence.

There is minimal evidence of Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence in the existing literature in Japanese and English in this literature review. My review of the literature in *Intercultural Relations between 2000 and 2018* faced the challenge of identifying evidence related to the Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes. Often, existing studies were theoretically oriented analyses by a literature review (i.e., Ikeda, 2014; Kainuma, 2018; Shinmi, 2018), case practice descriptions (i.e., Cutting, 2015; Hashimoto, 2006; Wang, 2013), or program implementation reports (i.e., Matsumoto, 2008; Okamura & Nukaga, 2018; Takahara & Tanaka, 2011). These publications posed a challenge of providing empirical evidence to generalize their results beyond the context of their studies.

When examined more carefully to identify specific variables, the Japanese literature appears to suffer from an equal shortage of evidence. First, the question of a relationship between Japanese students' language proficiency and their gains in intercultural competence faces an empirical challenge. On the one hand, the empirical contribution of study abroad programs to Japanese students' English or other foreign language proficiency improvements has been studied extensively (i.e., Nonaka, Tanaka, & Sumida, 2001; Shimizu, Kirimura, & Nozawa, 2014; Suzuki & Hayashi, 2014). However, these studies did not evaluate the possible relationship between Japanese students' language proficiency and their gains in intercultural competence through study abroad programs. Second, there is a shortage of evidence on any relationship between Japanese students' academic performance and their gains in intercultural competence. One study found that academic performance appeared to be related to Japanese students' motivation to participate in study abroad programs (Kobayashi, 2018). However, no relationship was evaluated between GPA and students' gains in intercultural competence in this study. Third, little evidence is available on a relationship between the role of gender and participants' gains in intercultural competence among Japanese undergraduate students. Available government statistics (JASSO, 2017) illustrated that more female students were enrolled in study abroad programs than male students. One study (Takeda, 2013) also found that, on average, a greater number of female students had study abroad experience than male students. No examination of the role of gender in the ability and awareness analysis between the study abroad participants and non-study abroad participants was included in Yokota et al.'s study (2018). However, what is interesting in this study is that the female study abroad participants earned less than the male counterparts in the Japanese sample when the earnings of these study abroad participants were compared. A lack of data collection on gender in study abroad datasets is a major barrier. On the role of gender in study abroad programs, as reviewed above, a shortage

of evidence of Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence resulting from their study abroad programs is a significant challenge among researchers and practitioners in Japan.

Despite the shortage of evidence in the existing Japanese studies, five studies (Hanada, 2015, 2019; Lee, 2019; Ujitani, 2015; Ward et al., 1998) provided much-needed empirical insights into Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence as a result of studying abroad programs. One most recent study, Lee (2019) applied Intercultural Effectiveness Measures (IES) to identify a relationship between her students' study abroad participation and their intercultural competence gain. Although no destination countries were specified, Lee (2019) concluded that her students' intercultural competence gain was positively related to her students' study abroad participation compared to her non-study-abroad students. Specifically, in the context of sociocultural adaptation of Japanese students in study abroad programs, a longitudinal study of Japanese samples in New Zealand by Ward et al. (1998) found a statistically significant difference between the entrance score and the 12-month score. Hanada (2015, 2019) also concluded there was a statistically significant difference in Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence between study abroad groups in Canada and the United States and non-study-abroad groups. Ujitani (2015) found that Japanese students in her short-term program in Canada and the United States had a statistically meaningful difference between the pre-score and the post-score on three out of four variables. These five studies explained that their Japanese students' intercultural competence gain was related to their study abroad programs in New Zealand, the United States, and Canada.

Among these five studies, a few actually looked at specific Japanese students' variables related to their gains in intercultural competence. Hanada's studies (2015, 2019) examined eight (8) predictors that contributed to Japanese students' intercultural competence gains. Among these eight (8) predictor variables, pre-departure orientation participation was one key factor among

demographic and other factors for predicting the Japanese students' intercultural competence in his sample. This study also found that the Japanese students in academic credit programs had a statistically significant gain compared to Japanese students in English language study programs. Furthermore, the same study found that Japanese students' English proficiency at the advanced level contributed to these students' intercultural competence gain, although students with low or intermediate English proficiency did not show any statistical significance in Hanada's results. Gender, prior international experience, program duration, stay type, and destination were found to make no statistically significant contribution to Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence. From these findings, the author concluded that providing pre-departure orientations, promoting credit courses, and developing students' English language proficiency to the advanced level could contribute to future Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence during their study abroad programs in the U.S. and Canada. On gender, Lee's result (2019) contradicted Hanada's result; among nine (9) independent variables, Lee found gender was a statistically significant predictor with a medium effect size for two of her intercultural competence sub-indicators, interaction relaxation and interaction management. Lee recognized that her results were preliminary and only applied to her case at Meiji Gakuin University. These findings gave insights into variables contributing to Japanese students' intercultural competence gains.

More recently, a group of researchers at Hiroshima University (2016) attempted to remedy the current gap of evidence in intercultural competence as a result of study abroad programs. Nagai (2018) and Nishitani (2017) conducted pilot studies to examine a group of Japanese undergraduate and graduate students who have participated in their two-week study abroad programs. Although their sample sizes are small, and their studies are still in progress, these studies have included recommendations from their preliminary findings to fill the gap in the literature. These studies will contribute to improving the current gap of evidence in study

abroad research by examining relationships between student demographics, program factors, and intercultural competence when their results become available in the future.

Evidence on Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence resulting from study abroad programs currently remains limited (Hanada, 2018; Shinmi, 2018). There is a critical need to build evidence in order to establish a consensus about Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence as a study abroad learning outcome.

2.2.2 Methodological Orientations

Methodological orientations are partially responsible for the current lack of cross-field collaboration on outbound learning outcome studies. The current literature encourages researchers to overcome methodological challenges by diversifying approaches across disciplines and fields. In my review, studies in non-Japanese literature demonstrated more of a shift toward cross-field collaboration than their Japanese counterparts. In the United States, both the fields of Higher Education and Intercultural Relations have a shared research interest in outbound student learning outcomes as intercultural educational interventions. However, most often, researchers from both fields developed their work in parallel without explicitly integrating knowledge and methodologies beyond their own cross-field interests. More recently, individual researchers have attempted explicit cross-field collaboration. For example, Deardorff (i.e., 2006, 2009, 2015) argued for intercultural competence as a measure of learning outcomes in the internationalization of higher education. Her studies examining internationalization evaluation included the effectiveness of study abroad programs. Efforts like Deardorff's brought the two related fields of Higher Education and Intercultural Relations into a methodological cross-collaboration.

Methodological diversification in the U.S. intercultural competence studies was due in part to improved analytical quality. At one point, improving research designs to contribute to

methodological rigor was identified as a challenge for studies related to sojourners' adjustment and intervention approaches in Intercultural Relations (Landis & Wasilewski, 1999). One reason for this is conceptual. Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, and Sam (2011) pointed out that individual adjustment is difficult to conceptualize and to measure epistemologically. Another study (Deardorff, 2006) also found divergent opinions between U.S. university administrators and academic researchers. This study found that these groups agreed on the definitions, components, and methods of intercultural competence assessment, but their opinions diverged on one segment of research methodologies. On the one hand, university administrators overwhelmingly accepted the self-administered pre-/post- testing design, while only a little more than half of the academic researchers accepted a self-administered pre-post-test in Deardorff's interviews (2006). The higher education administrators found that the pre-/post- test would be easy to administer and likely to uncover contributions of study abroad programs to their student participants, Deardorff explained. The academic researchers expressed their skepticism about applying a self-report pre-post-test, especially a single measurement, due to its methodological limitations. Kealey (2001, 2015) also remained skeptical on this design and instrument issue.

Burrow's meta-analysis (2019) advocated for greater quantitative rigor and analytical design to ensure that their research conclusions would be more methodologically appropriate than those in many studies the author reviewed. More importantly, Burrow (2019) identified a series of methodological challenges. The author suspected inflation of effect size when he found a retrospective pre-test design scored a significantly larger effect size than a pre-post-test comparison design. Burrow (2019) warned against the use of a retrospective pre-test design in the future as this design tended to yield a larger effect size than other designs. The author also shared his concern about an over-application of an independent samples t-test comparison between study abroad students and non-study abroad students when the p-value was only a sign

of intercultural competence gain between the two groups. In some cases, Burrow (2019) recommended applying ANOVA or Multiple Regression as an appropriate method over an independent samples t-test. Burrow (2019) also recommended including a team research approach by bringing in a quantitative analyst for future studies to improve quantitative rigors.

The above characterization of U.S. studies' reliance on the pre-post design was consistent with my review of the existing evidence. The review of evidence in the U.S. literature identified that many publications used the self-report pre-post-testing to compare two or more groups (i.e., Sutton & Rubin, 2015; Vande Berg, et al., 2009; Vande Berg, et al., 2012). Only two studies (Kurt et al., 2013; Roxeisen et al., 2008) applied longitudinal designs. Adam et al. (2019) applied a series of quantitative methods, including an experimental design approach, to determine a causal relationship between self-concept clarity and living abroad experience. To remedy the current reliance on the pre-post-test design, some experts (Deardorff, 2015; Perry & Southwell, 2011) suggested integrating qualitative data such as student academic assignments abroad and portfolios to diversify data and methodologies. Other authors (i.e. Bloom & Miranda, 2015; Demetry & Vaz, 2017; Keefe, 2008) attempted to design their studies as a mixed methods approach; however, these studies only performed integration at the interpretation stage. Some mixed methods researchers recommend theoretical, methodological, and data integration approaches in addition to the interpretation integration (Creswell & Pinto-Clark, 2011). While their data integration was successful, the integration was performed at the interpretation stage. Other researchers recommended including qualitative data sources to evaluate intercultural education interventions (Hiratsuka et al., 2016; Mendenhall et al., 2004); their recommendations could extend to study abroad learning outcome studies. While the researchers examining study abroad learning outcomes continue to put their effort into building consensus, more discourse among these researchers on overcoming methodological orientations is needed.

The literature that focused on Japanese samples included in my review faced a somewhat different methodological challenge. The main challenge was insufficient accumulation of quantitative studies that evaluated Japanese students' gain in intercultural competence resulting from study abroad programs. Although Yokota et al. (2018) compared survey results of two groups, study abroad and non-study-abroad participants, their study applied a policy-driven instrument of intercultural competence. My review found only five studies that applied quantitative methods to generate empirical evidence in their respective fields: Hanada (2015, 2019), Lee (2019), Ujitani (2015), Ward et al. (1998), and Ward and Kennedy (1999). Hanada (2015, 2019) and Ujitani (2015) applied the mixed methods approach by designing their studies to collect quantitative data from the pre- and post- phases. These studies also gathered qualitative data through their students' reflection papers or journal entries during their study abroad participation. These studies specifically looked at intercultural competence as students' study abroad learning outcomes. Hanada included both a study abroad group and a non-study abroad group. Due to this mixed methods approach, Hanada's study was able to achieve an interpretation of data that had not been available previously by his mixed-methods approach. Ujitani's study also was able to supplement her quantitative results by adding qualitative findings; however, data integration was performed only at the interpretation stage. Ward et al. (1998) designed their study as a longitudinal study by collecting survey data in four different time points. Their study was able to illustrate Japanese students' gain in their intercultural competence across the 12-month duration. Ward and Kennedy (1999) conducted a meta-analysis to test an instrument and to theorize cultural learning as intercultural competence. Lee (2019) recently applied her regression analysis to develop and test a model. Her design remedied a shortage of econometric approaches since the author faced a challenge of identifying studies that applied an econometric model in her review. Other than these five studies, a majority of studies

on Japanese samples published in Japanese and English are predominantly qualitative studies by either content analysis of student journals and response sheets (i.e., Matsumura, 2007; Morishita, 2016; Takahashi, Hattori, Takechi, & Sawara, 2018) or interviews (i.e., Abe, 2009; Kirchhoff, 2015; Kudo, 2009). Even though qualitative analysis is a critically useful approach to outbound student learning outcome research, the existing landscape of the academic literature on Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence needs to diversify methodological designs to overcome the current limitations.

Two recent studies (Nagai, 2018; Nishitani, 2017) identified some critical considerations missing from the previous studies. Their recommendations would extend the methodological diversity of future studies. For example, Nagai (2018) emphasized the importance of examining unique individual cases through their qualitative responses to explain the quantitative results of his research. The author explained that the qualitative findings could provide insights into the quantitative changes in students' intercultural competence. Nishitani (2017) also proposed to include additional data collection phases to follow up on participants' changes after their return from overseas. A longitudinal design could examine students' changes in their intercultural competence over time, the author reflected. These authors identified essential considerations that were missing from the previous studies.

The Japanese literature needs to develop diverse methodological approaches by including quantitative, longitudinal, mixed-methods, and meta-analysis designs in more rigorous ways, as has been done in the non-Japanese literature.

Selection and Application of Psychometrically Valid and Reliable Instruments. Part of the challenge of evaluating students' gains in intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes involves selecting and applying appropriate instruments in the methodological design. A lack of a psychometrically adequate instruments for measuring dimensions was

identified as a significant challenge in Intercultural Relations (i.e., Landis & Wasilewski, 1999; Kealey, 2001, 2015). Kealey (2015) also recognized self-assessment bias and socially desirable responses as significant challenges for claiming predictive power among the existing instruments. Kealey (2015) recommended that behavioral based approaches would offer the best promise for assessing individual's potential for success in another culture. Kealy (2001) as well as Kealey and Ruben (1979) recommended that Canadian technical advisors' effectiveness evaluation by the local counterparts yielded more accurate results than their self-report survey results. However, recent efforts mitigated this issue in non-Japanese literature. One meta-analysis (Burrow, 2019) evaluated the existing instruments applied in intercultural competence studies in U.S. study abroad literature. The author found no statistical significance among instruments reviewed, although one instrument, Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), yields smaller effect sizes than other instruments reviewed. The author concluded that these instruments were all psychometrically valid and reliable. Although no specific implications were mentioned in the study, a key finding from this study is the importance of selecting and applying appropriate instruments in intercultural competence studies.

Intentional methodological design to select and apply an appropriate instrument to measure intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes could improve the current instrumental challenge. Deardorff (2015) recommended this position in her studies that identified numerous instruments available to contribute to intercultural competence assessment in the field of intercultural relations today. In the U.S., some studies have reviewed a variety of instruments to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of intercultural education training approaches (Fantini, 2009b; Paige, 2003) while other researchers evaluated the existing instruments' applicability to study abroad evaluation research (Paige & Stallman, 2007; Perry & Southwell, 2011). Vande Berg, Paige, and Lou (2012) also synthesized a series of studies that had examined intercultural

competence as study abroad learning outcomes by using one particular instrument, the IDI (Hammer, 2012), and thus were able to compare the results of the different studies. The authors were able to identify students' gains in intercultural competence that resulted from their study abroad programs (Vande Berg et al., 2012). Unfortunately, the Erasmus Impact Study (2014) and the Australian case (Potts, 2016) only included a series of items to indicate concepts related to intercultural competence; these two regional studies omitted specific instrument applications for intercultural competence analysis, but recognized the possibility of applying existing instruments, including IDI, in future studies.

Psychometrically valid and reliable instrument selection and application was an even greater issue in the Japanese sample studies than in the non-Japanese studies that were in my review. In my experience, identifying a proper instrument in the Japanese language was a problem for designing research on study abroad learning outcomes in Japan. Only two instruments in Japanese were available publicly while alternative options were Japanese translations of instruments designed in English. These English/Japanese instruments were fee-based instruments that were also copyrighted for their use. Lee (2019) also recognized the same challenge of finding an appropriate instrument in Japanese, and had to opt to explore a non-Japanese instrument with translation in her study. One study by Yokota et al. (2018) included questions related to curricular activities (five items), co-curricular activities (five items), ability improvement (18 items), and self-awareness improvement (16 items) selected from Japan's Global Human Resource Development concepts (Global Human Resource Development Committee of the Industry-Academia Partnership, 2012). This study included items related to intercultural competence in the ability items (i.e., communication skills, cultural knowledge in destination countries, and leadership) and self-awareness items (i.e., awareness of being a Japanese citizen, an awareness of peace, and awareness of global issues). However, the authors

did not distinguish intercultural competence from other individual characteristics and values in their instrument construction due to the instrument's basis in policy recommendations.

More recently, an effort was made by a group of Japanese researchers to remedy this instrument shortage. Morishita, Ariga, Harada, Sakai, and Tomita (2018) designed and implemented a Japanese-language instrument within the context of Japanese university study abroad learning outcomes. This instrument is based on the Multiple Intelligence Theory (Morishita et al., 2018). The instrument also showed psychometrical validity and reliability, but was not designed as an intercultural competence instrument.

The Hiroshima group's research program is more promising than Morishita et al. (2018) since their researchers employ an existing psychometrically valid and reliable instrument translated from English into Japanese (Nagai, 2018; Nishitani, 2017). The Hiroshima group selected the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) among a few academic and commercial instruments including the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI). According to Nishitani (2017), James Madison University (JMU) has been a research home of the instrument in the last 20 years. The Hiroshima team explained that their selection of BEVI was based on their institutional agreement between Hiroshima University and James Madison University (JMU)(Nishitani, 2017).

Although the instrument is not explicit about measuring intercultural competence, human self, beliefs, and values are core constructs of intercultural competence measurement. BEVI is a theory-driven psychometrically valid and reliable instrument designed and tested over the last 20+ years by Shirley (2016). According to the author, BEVI is based on Equilintegration (EI) Theory. The theory includes four domains that are the main constructs of the concept of self, values, and beliefs. The four values and beliefs domains included 18 factors with 336 items and 65 demographic items in the original version. BEVI also is available in the short form with 185

items with 40 demographic items. An advantageous aspect of the design of BEVI is a computer-assisted testing feature (CAT); the data collection is done digitally instead of by a traditional paper-based testing instrument. This CAT feature reduces data management errors while improving testing efficiencies. The instrument is intended for various individual and organizational assessment purposes including the Forum BEVI project that evaluated U.S. students' change in intercultural competence resulting from studying abroad (Wandschneider et al. 2015). Nishitani (2017) explained that the Hiroshima team translated BEVI from English to Japanese through a rigorous translation procedure to construct BEVI-j. Two pilot projects (Nagai, 2018; Nishitani, 2017) were published documenting BEVI's application to the Japanese students and the preliminary analyses that showed some promising results. The pilot projects could potentially fill the current gap in the literature and be compared with the other studies when they publish the full reports with their statistical results to explain a statistically and practically significant relationship between students' demographics, program factors, and intercultural competence change.

Only six studies (Hanada, 2015, 2019; Lee, 2019; Ujitani, 2015; Ward et al., 1998; Ward & Kennedy, 1999) applied psychometrically valid and reliable instruments to the measurement of Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence. Hanada (2015, 2019) applied the IDI to evaluate Japanese undergraduate students' intercultural competence gains. Ward et al. (1998) used the Sociocultural Adjustment Survey (SCAS) to evaluate Japanese students' changes with statistically significant results. The authors overcame a methodological limitation common to this type of study, such as the ceiling effect, by designing a longitudinal study. Ward and Kennedy (1999) concluded that SCAS was a psychometrically valid and reliable instrument across nationalities and geographic destinations including their Japanese students in New Zealand. Ujitani (2015) implemented the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) in her

study as CCAI is available in Japanese translation. Ujitani (2015) found that her students' post-return CCAI results were statistically significant compared to their pre-departure CCAI results. Lee (2019) applied the OECD's Global Competence in PISA Assessment (2018) and Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES)(Portella & Chen, 2010). The author explained that there existed a precedent of applying IES to Japanese samples. Unfortunately, no other studies except these six studies included psychometrically valid and reliable instruments in their designs. The literature review in the Japanese case illustrated that selecting and applying appropriate instruments as an integral methodological design has continued to pose a methodological challenge. These challenges could be critical barriers to future studies of Japanese undergraduate students in study abroad programs.

One last consideration deserves mention in my review of methodological orientation issues across the literature. What became apparent in my review of both non-Japanese and Japanese studies was methodological terminology inconsistency. Terms such as assessment, evaluation, outcomes, and impact were used in many studies in this review without conceptual consistency or epistemological distinction. Although it was difficult to articulate the way the studies were using these terminologies, the following studies appeared to apply the terms assessment and evaluation interchangeably: assessment/assessing (i.e., Deardorff, 2006; Hanada, 2019; Kurt et al., 2013; Sutton & Ruben, 2015), evaluation (i.e., Gillespie, Braskamp, & Braskamp, 1999; Hiratsuka, 2017; Morishita et al., 2018). The terms outcomes/impact also seem to be used inconsistently: outcomes (i.e., AIFS, 2018; Cutting, 2015; Kawai Juku, 2018; Potts, 2016) and impact (European Union, 2014; Inui, 2018; Yokota et al., 2018). Unclear distinctions in Education Studies fields also seem to be common. For example, in the field of study abroad administration in the U.S., researchers and practitioners often applied outcome assessment (Bolen, 2007; Hernandez, Wiedenhoef, & Wick, 2014) although program evaluation was used

by Laubscher and Pirog (1997). In Student Affairs, the term assessment (i.e., Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2010; Schuh & Lee, 2001; Waple, 2006) tends to mean program evaluation. In Education Studies, Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002) is one common guideline for epistemological vocabulary available, but the taxonomy appears inadequate to clarify differences among these four terms. While my review recognized field differences in these terms across Education Studies, this ambiguity among assessment, evaluation, outcomes, and impact remains a challenge when determining appropriate methodological designs in intercultural competence in study abroad programs.

Researchers in evaluative inquiry (i.e., Owen, 2006; Patton, 2001, 2008) brought clearer classifications among assessment, evaluation, outcomes, and impact than what are available in Higher Education. When applied in evaluative terms, a logic model is a concept which describes a step-by-step relationship among these four terms. Owen (2006) also explained that assessment and evaluation are interdependent. Assessment tends to be used as a term at the beginning of a study. Evaluation tends to be used as a term at the end of a study. Outcome was used as a term at the end of a study but immediately after an intervention or implementation. Impact is used as a term after a completion of intervention/implementation. Impact tends to be used after outcome (Owen, 2006; Patton, 2001, 2008). An impact study also tends to call for rigorous quantitative designs. Some higher education scholars (i.e., Deardorff & Deardorff, 2007; Deardorff, 2009, 2011) were able to apply these distinctions to their study abroad research designs. The Australian case described its logic model with evaluative terms (Potts, 2016). Although these term applications and conceptual distinctions remain normative in evaluative inquiries, these evaluative distinctions clarify intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes in educational terms rather than in policy framework terms as employability due to job skills.

2.2.3 Destination Country Trends

The third consideration of study abroad learning outcome studies is study abroad students' tendency to choose a small number of destinations. While the destination country trends depend on many external considerations outside of students and administrators, including economic, political, and social factors, this destination tendency could pose a limitation on evidence of regional variations of intercultural experience by study abroad participants. In my past faculty and administrative roles in university international programs in various countries, I observed that these study abroad students have preferred destinations. The program providers and administrators at universities also respond to these study abroad trends by their students.

For example, the Erasmus Impact Study identified the top five countries within the EU. Even though the new program, Erasmus+, has extended the participating countries outside of the EU members (European Commission, 2019), the top five countries (Spain, Germany, France, the UK, and Italy) account for 52% of the total student mobility out of 25 countries offered within the EU (the European Commission, 2014, p. 41). In the U.S., the AIFS study (2018) concluded that AIFS students tended to go to traditional destinations in the UK and European countries even though the programs were offered in 23 countries across four geographic regions (p. 18). By comparison, the Australian case illustrated mixed destinations. Among Canadian students, the top three destinations were France, the United Kingdom, and the United States (CBIE, 2017). However, Bond et al. (2009) found a scarcity of data that could identify these Canadian trends. Study abroad student choice tends to concentrate on a small number of common destinations. This kind of skewed destinations by study abroad students could limit the available intercultural competence studies to draw generalizable conclusions from their evidence.

The Japanese case described an even more skewed picture of the destination countries despite the Japanese government's effort to diversify destination countries for Japanese outbound students. Since 2011, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and

Technology has funded Japanese universities through the Inter-University Exchange Project to promote new consortiums and partnerships in countries in East Asia, ASEAN, South Asia, Russia, Latin America, and Africa. For example, the 2013 policy had a geographical focus on the ASEAN countries through the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) that aimed to diversify the destination countries of Japanese student mobility in the ASEAN countries (the Inter-University Exchange Project Committee, 2018). The last funding was available in 2020; in the previous ten years, the Japanese government had attempted to promote destination countries of student mobility by encouraging Japanese universities to explore new consortiums and partnerships with countries outside of North America, Europe, and Oceania. In 2018, the selected 14 universities from the AIMS project were evaluated, and granted S or A marks; the committee concluded that the selected universities achieved the goals at the beginning of their project (JSPS, 2018).

Despite the above policy efforts by the Japanese government, Japanese students' trends in terms of their destination countries seemed to have only small changes. The Japanese case has continued to be characterized by a skewed picture in terms of the destination countries. In my review, the U.S. occupied the majority of study abroad research in Japan. After the U.S. as a destination country, various English-speaking countries followed. For example, Japan Student Service Organization (JASSO) has tracked Japanese students' study abroad destinations in their for-credit programs at Japanese universities. Their records classified destination rather differently from other non-Japanese studies' data. Broadly speaking, the data about study abroad destinations is categorized according to language, in the case of English-speaking countries, or according to geographical region, in the case of non-English-speaking countries. In the most recent data, the top five destination countries are English speaking countries (the United States, Australia, and Canada) and Asian countries (China and South Korea) (JASSO, 2017). When

reviewed more closely, the availability of evidence on study abroad learning outcomes on destination countries in the literature was rather skewed. In Yokota et al. (2018), the sample ($n = 1870$) was extracted according to three classifications: For-degree programs, for-credit programs (i.e. institutional exchange programs), and others. The for-credit programs was identified as undergraduate study abroad for academic credits to transfer back to students' home degree programs ($n = 741$). For this particular sample, the top destinations as the United States (51.6%), English-speaking EU countries (9.0%), Oceania (7.6%), and then Canada (5.9%), defined as "the North American English-speaking countries other than the United States" (p.86) and English-speaking countries other than above (0.5%). This means that 74.6% of students in this category studied in English-speaking countries. After these countries come Non-English speaking EU countries such as France and Germany (10.1%) and the neighboring East Asian countries and territory: China, South Korea, and Taiwan (11.6%). The same study had no sample in the Southeast Asian countries under this category; the study only recorded graduate students who studied in the Philippines ($n = 3$) and Thailand ($n = 3$). Moreover, three studies with intercultural competence emphasis (Hanada, 2015, 2019; Ujitani, 2015) analyzed Japanese students in the United States and Canada. Ward et al. (1998) examined Japanese students in New Zealand. Other smaller studies analyzed Japanese students in less common destinations outside of the above countries such as Lao DPR (Inui, 2018), Malaysia (Aoki, 2018; Okamura & Nukaga, 2018) and Vietnam (Aoki, 2018; Ujitani, 2017). One study also included a semester-at-sea on-board program in Southeast Asia (Hashimoto, 2002). Unfortunately, these are all qualitative studies that focused on areas other than intercultural competence. These studies also faced methodological challenges due to their descriptive orientations that lacked systematic design. The current Japanese literature relies heavily on specific country experience in North American, English-speaking countries. This trend is alarming because the absence of evidence of

intercultural competence gains among Japanese students who studied abroad in other destination countries hinders our understanding of the role of destination countries in intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcome.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Analyzing gains in outbound students' intercultural competence requires a study to design, organize, and collect the data under a theoretical framework of sociocultural adjustment as a form of cultural learning in destination countries. The field of intercultural relations had contributed to measuring and theorizing individuals' effectiveness before, during, and after their overseas experience. This line of the research tradition in this field initially involved preparing military and diplomatic officers on overseas missions in the 1950s and 1960s in the U.S. (Hiratsuka, Suzuki, & Pusina, 2016; Push, 2004; Stewart, 1965), in the 1960s in Canada (Global Affairs Canada, 2016), and in the post-conflict reconstruction including higher education in the 1950s in Japan (Inglehart, 1964; Kawakami, 2009; Wasilewski & Kawakami, 2012). For example, research projects at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute contributed to developing theories of culture and human communication (i.e., Hall, 1981, 1984, 1990a, 1990b) and foreign language training pedagogy and classifications (Jordan, 2003). In Canada, a series of studies examined factors that contributed to successful Canadian technical advisors in developing countries. These studies assessed Canadian technical advisors' project and intercultural effectiveness overseas in the context of international development (i.e., Kealey, 1989, 2001; Kealey & Protheroe, 1996; Ruben & Kealey, 1979). A profile of the interculturally effective person (Vulpe, Kealey, Protheroe, & MacDonald, 2000) was constructed at the Centre for Intercultural Learning, the Canadian Foreign Service Institute. In Japan, U.S. post-conflict reconstruction efforts contributed to establishing International Christian University (ICU). ICU was established in part by recruiting U.S. American, Canadian and other non-Japanese faculty

members to work with Japanese faculty members to rebuild Japanese academia after the Second World War (i.e., Hiratsuka, 2016; Inglehart, 1964; Kawakami, 2009; Takeda, 2003). ICU had been an intellectual home of Intercultural Relations in Japan through these reconstruction efforts at the beginning (Kawakami, 2009).

One of the oldest attempts to measure a construct was that of cultural self-awareness to examine the individuals' changes as a result of pre-deployment training in the U.S. defense sector (i.e., Pusch, 2004; Stewart, 1995; Stewart et al., 1969). These early studies looked at the role of cultural self-awareness in the interpersonal relations or "the intercultural interpersonal area" (Stewart et al 1969, p.9). These studies had a theoretical emphasis on the interpersonal level when discussed about intercultural relations or "the interpersonal and intercultural capabilities required for effective interaction with foreign personnel" (Stewart et al., 1969, p.6). The studies also concluded that one of the first goals of preparing these officers for overseas deployment should focus on shifting these trainees' perspectives by taking the third-culture role as a result of increased cultural self-awareness. Applying a definition of Useen, Useen, and Donoghue (1963) into his own, Stewart (1972) defined the third-culture role to be a unique position that belongs to neither one's own culture nor a destination culture. In this sense, Stewart (1972) discouraged his U.S. American trainees in his cultural self-awareness training from behaving in accordance with a local culture because such an attempt is nearly impossible in the short preparation time available for these trainees. Stewart also discouraged his trainees from behaving according to American culture because such behavior is undesirable in their destination countries. In Stewart's view, raising cultural self-awareness allows his trainees to question their own behavior by recognizing their own American cultural patterns of thoughts and actions. This cultural self-awareness builds the first step toward bridging cultural differences in order to leverage cultural differences as a source of human creativity instead of interpersonal conflicts

(i.e., Stewart, 1995; Stewart et al., 1969; Stewart & Pryle, 1966). Achieving this goal requires an individual to be able to contrast their behavior through simulated interpersonal interactions or Contrast Culture Method (CCM) (i.e., DeMello, 1995; Kimmel, 1995; Stewart 1995). Most recently, a study contributed to this theory by generating evidence that one's experience living abroad could contribute to an increased sense of self (Adam et al., 2018). Cultural self-awareness is considered as a foundation for developing effective interpersonal skills in the target culture or one's own intercultural skills. As the above Intercultural Education researchers have always focused on preparing individuals with their own sense of self before their intercultural experience in destination countries, some studies also involved students' experience in study abroad programs.

The focus of these earlier studies in Intercultural Relations emphasized interpersonal relations as a unit of analysis: "the intercultural and interpersonal aspect of individual performance" (Stewart et al., 1969, p.17). Although the interdependence between intercultural and interpersonal relations continues to be unexplored theoretically, the role of personal characteristics in intercultural relations has been discussed in terms of its measurement and assessment in the literature (Berry et al., 2013; Kealey, 2001; Ward, 1996). Kealey (2015) suggested that intercultural relations are a particular case of interpersonal relations, even though he thought researchers and practitioners in Intercultural Relations often implied that this subject was a unique independent subject area unrelated to other similar academic fields. This conceptual divide remains unsettled today, but this focus area contributed to shaping dominant Intercultural Communication theories including high/low contexts (i.e., Hall, 1989, 1990a, 1990b), u-curve theory (Lysgaard, 1955), culture shock (Oberg, 1960), the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1986) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, 2012). These intercultural communication theories continue to

influence the current intercultural competence research in study abroad learning outcomes at colleges and universities in Japan, the United States, and Canada.

However, these mainstream theories and related instruments in study abroad learning outcomes seemed inadequate for my study. Some of these theories and instruments continue to face challenges including self-assessment bias and socially desired responses in better assessing and educating individuals for developing their ability to bridge cultural differences (Kealey, 2015). For example, the u-curve theory (Lysgaard, 1955) remains one of the most cited by researchers and administrators of study abroad programs while the existing studies pose challenges to this theory empirically. Kealey (1989; 2001) found that only 10% of his 277 Canadian technical advisors in developing countries followed the U pattern individual adjustment. Another study in the United States (Hirai, 2013) also found a similar result. One author concluded the u-curve was empirically “weak, inconclusive, and over-generalized” (Church, 1982, p.542). BEVI (Shirly, 2016) and BEVI-j (Nagai, 2018; Nishitani, 2017) are based on a sound theory, and include study abroad research as an intended research area; however, their focus on beliefs and values is outside of a behavioral domain. DMIS (Bennett, 1986) and IDI (Hammer, 2012) were theoretically sound and psychometrically valid and reliable as explained by these authors; however, due to their developmental emphasis and affective orientation, they were inapplicable as a theoretical framework and instrument for my study, which had a behavioral focus. This developmental focus of DMIS and IDI also omitted specific theoretical considerations on building cooperative relationships by resolving interpersonal conflicts. Even though DMIS recognized cultural difference's potential for leading to social conflicts (Bennett, 1993), the theory omitted further discussions on contributing to creative problem-solving and unexpected conflicts resulting from building and maintaining relationships. Conflict resolution requires improving cooperative behavior and decreasing competitive behavior in an

interdependent relationship (Deutsch, 2001). Changing a conflicting relationship between an authority and a subordinate requires both parties to work together to transform the relationship despite their power differences (Freire, 2001). Resolving conflicts across cultures requires improving skills or fluency related to conflict resolution across cultures (LeBaron, 2003; LeBarone & Pillay, 2006). My review of dominant theoretical frameworks in Intercultural Communication offered inadequate solutions to my study's aim. As a behavioral emphasis was recommended as a possible adequate approach compared to other domains (i.e., Kealey, 2001, 2015; Ruben & Kealey, 1978), my study had to identify an appropriate theoretical framework that holistically frames and addresses individual skill development issues within the behavioral domain of interpersonal relations.

Social psychology became a useful source for the purpose of addressing behavioral aspects of interpersonal relations. Social psychology offered theories organized around understanding individuals' cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. An appropriate social psychological theory for my study is the ABC (Attitude, Behavioral, and Cognitive) Model of Culture Contact (Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). The model represents the two major components of individual adaptation in a new environment: psychological and sociocultural adaptations (Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001; Ward et al., 1998). Ward and others defined psychological adjustment as individual psychological wellbeing or emotional satisfaction. They measured this construct by the depression scores (or self-reported depression) of the Zung Self-Reported Depression Scale (cited in Ward et al., 1998). They also viewed sociocultural adaptation as the ability to "fit-in or negotiate interactive aspects of the host environment" (i.e. social skills and learning in the target cultures) (Ward & Kennedy, 1999, p. 661). For example, a case of international students as student sojourners who studied less than 12 months abroad illustrated different patterns of changes in a depression score and a sociocultural adaptation score

(Ward et al., 1998). These researchers recognized that these two concepts were interrelated but distinct from each other when their findings concluded that individuals' psychological adjustment changed differently from their sociocultural adjustment over time. These theoretical distinctions empirically clarified the existing fragmented concepts when their study challenged classic concepts such as culture shock (Oberg, 1960), u-curve (Lysgaard, 1955), DMIS (Bennett, 1986), and IDI (Hammer, 2012) that have been dominant in the Intercultural Communication field. Distinguishing sociocultural adjustment from psychological adjustment in the cultural learning terms brings clarity to my study of Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes in the behavioral domains under the ABC model.

The ABC model treated people's reactions to a new cultural environment as their proactive process to confront their environmental changes. The model organized three different theoretical approaches as one holistic model: an affective approach (stress and coping theories), a behavioral approach (culture learning theories) and a cognitive approach (social identification theories) (i.e., Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001; Ward et al., 1998). First, an affective approach deals with individuals' positive and negative reactions to initial and ongoing exposure to unfamiliar settings. This ABC model integrates stress and coping of intercultural relations into the approach. In this approach, interventions aimed to reduce the distress of culture contact by providing personal and social resources and supports. In this sense, Oberg's initial definition of culture shock (1960) appeared to be a component in this affective approach. Second, a behavioral approach is related to culture learning. The culture learning approach is an extension of the social skills approach which assumes interpersonal behaviors to be "mutually skilled performance" (Ward et al., 2001, p.268). Individual characteristics appear to fit within this domain described by Kealey (1989, 2001) and Kealey et al. (2000). Sojourners need to acquire culturally appropriate interpersonal skills and knowledge as they face challenges establishing and

maintaining cooperative relationships with members of host cultures. Otherwise, these sojourners' behaviors tend to be inappropriate, resulting in misunderstanding and conflicts with members of the host culture. Interventions for this behavioral approach focus on adjusting sojourners' social behavior or skills by providing training, mentoring, and learning opportunities about the host cultures. Third, a cognitive approach is based on social identity and social cognition that deals with issues such as cultural identity, and intergroup perceptions and relations: ethnocentrism, prejudice, and discrimination (Ward, 2004). DMIS (Bennett, 1986) seem to be related to this cognitive domain. The cognitive approach considers that culture consists of shared meaning by a group of people; when people interpret cultural symbolism differently from society to society, differences in cultural interpretation in one's own culture and the host culture could become a source of conflict. Conversely, this conflict could influence changes in individuals' views about the world (Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). This model has been constructed based on evidence from various samples (Ward & Kennedy, 1999) including the Japanese sample (Ward et al., 1998).

At the same time, a few limitations were identified regarding a cultural learning approach, sociocultural adjustment, and associated constructs proposed by Ward and others (i.e., Ward, 2004; World et al., 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). First, cultural self-awareness, one of the commonly recognized existing ICC theories, has been discussed very little. Second, recognizing the importance of theoretically expanding the concept of intercultural competence, Wilson, Ward, Fetvadjev, and Bethel (2017) proposed a review of their constructs to identify possible revisions due to societal changes by globalization, global mobility, and cultural diversity. These researchers found at least three reasons for their proposed revision to the original construct and instrument: additional behavioral competencies, examining the potential bifactor structure, and adjusting the scale from the difficulty level to the competence level.

Moreover, Wilson, Ward, and Fischer (2013) identified such possible improvements as including language proficiency, communication skills, co-national contacts, and perceived discrimination in the existing constructs and instruments. Language proficiency was identified as one of the limitations in a sociocultural adjustment study of international students in Japan (Simic-Yamashita & Tanaka, 2010).

Based on the cultural learning approach in the ABC model above, Intercultural Competence (ICC) (i.e., Deardorff, 2009; Fantini, 2000, 2002) is applied to my study because of the term's alignment with a cultural learning approach (i.e, Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001; Ward & Kennedy 1999). My study defines "perceived Intercultural Competence" as Japanese outbound students' cultural learning from studying abroad in Malaysia and Thailand. My definition also refers to these Japanese students' self-reported survey responses about their perceived changes as a result of studying in the destination countries instead of objectively analyzing their changes by experimental or other social methods.

Table 2.1

Intercultural Competence (ICC) Definitions by Various Authors

| Authors | Theory | Definition |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Deardorff (2004) | Intercultural competence | "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 194). |
| Fantini (2000) | Intercultural competence | "There are also five dimensions...awareness, attitudes, skills, knowledge (A+ASK), and proficiency in the host tongue." (p. 28). |
| Ward & Kennedy (1999) | Cultural Learning Theory | "Sociocultural adaptation...defined in terms of behavioral competence, is more strongly influenced by factors underpinning culture learning and social skills acquisition" (p.661) including length of residence in a new culture, amount of interactions with the host members, cultural knowledge, cultural distance, language proficiency and acculturation strategies. |

Since a behavioral domain is integral to the existing intercultural competence theories by some scholars (Deardorff, 2009; Fantini, 2000), examining Japanese outbound students' perceived intercultural competence frames my study in the ABC model: a cultural learning approach. For example, because behavior is believed to be a facilitator between self and environment (Lewin, 1951), my study frames sociocultural adjustment of outbound international students as being "... concerned with the skills that are required to manage everyday social situations in a new cultural context" (Ward et al., 1998, p. 282). For formulating their theory, Ward and Kennedy (1999) explained that an instrument was designed to assess intercultural competence with a behavioral emphasis. Deardorff also defined intercultural competence as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (2004, p.194), while Fantini defined ICC as "awareness, attitudes, skills, knowledge (A+ASK), and proficiency in the host tongue (2001, p. 28). Although the above ICC definitions align concepts with the approximately 30 years of research about individual effectiveness in a new socio-cultural environment, defining ICC in a single term was difficult due to the term's conceptual diversity, as described by Deardorff (2006). These definitions include intercultural effectiveness (i.e. Hawes & Kealey, 1981; Kealey, 2001; Kealey & Protheroe, 1996; Vulpe, et al., 2000), intercultural communication competence (i.e., Koester & Lustig, 2015; Spitzberg, 2000; Spitzberg & Chagnon, 2009), and global competence (i.e., APEC, 2017; Mansilla & Jackson, 2011; OECD, 2018).

While integrating both Japanese and English literature into this study would have been an ideal approach, my review showed a lack of publications on the subject in the Japanese literature. What my review found was that intercultural competence discourse in the Japanese literature remains limited to the conceptual discourse without much empirical evidence. One of the first Japanese publications focused on journal writing as a pedagogical intervention in the clinical

setting with international student services at Japanese universities (Kurachi, 1991). Among 13 publications identified in my review, 10 were either conceptual examinations or literature reviews. Two publications were case descriptions of intercultural interventions at Japanese universities. One study included program evaluation of intercultural learning activities by quantitative analysis. Furthermore, these studies directly applied the existing theoretical frameworks, which had mostly been developed in the U.S. context, into the Japanese contexts without careful contextual consideration or precedent. My review findings aligned with two publications (Matsuo, Morino, & Kudo, 2018; Matsuo & Morino, 2017). Matsuo and Morino (2017) further explained that only a few studies surfaced in a database search in the Japanese language on intercultural competence. The theoretical and empirical underdevelopment of intercultural competence in the Japanese literature is a major challenge for these types of studies in general and study abroad learning outcomes specifically.

2.4 Conclusion

This review chapter outlined the existing literature on intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes in Japanese and non-Japanese literature. This comparative review established an outline of the existing studies on the subject according to evidence, methodology, destination countries, and theories. My review also identified a gap in the literature, especially in the Japanese literature, on studies related to intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes in these four areas. This chapter is a foundation for guiding my study to construct a methodological design that attempts to fill the existing gaps by trying to remedy challenges in evidence, methodology, destination countries, and theoretical frameworks. My methodological design, which is based on my review, is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Method

My study was designed as a case study of the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU). The sample in this case study was GSC's Japanese undergraduate students who were required to successfully complete participation in a 15-week study abroad program prior to their graduation. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were selected to analyze and interpret the data within the methodological framework of a Case Study approach as a variation on a mixed method design (i.e., Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Pinto Clark, 2011; Yin, 2014). Although this study employed the two approaches, the primary analysis took a quantitative approach, supplemented by a qualitative approach. The quantitative method focused on evaluating the changes in Japanese students' intercultural competence as shown in the results from surveys carried out by the university on two sets of students in these programs before and after their study abroad experience (pre- and post-survey results). The qualitative analysis involved an attempt to interpret the quantitative results by an analysis of student comments in the open-ended section of the pre- and post-study surveys. The data integration was performed by quantifying qualitative data to make sense of nuances of the data. This study involved methodological and data triangulation in order to ensure methodological validity (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Pinto-Clark, 2011). I have adopted this less common but more dynamic methodology of employing both approaches in order to permit a more holistic interpretation and to remedy analytical shortcomings in this study.

3.1 Case Description: Definition, Boundaries, and Selection

This evaluative case study focused on the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC) as a departmental unit of Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU). In Japan, AGU is a private university affiliated with the United Methodist Church in the United States. The university has

11 separate academic departments in the physical sciences, social sciences, and humanities disciplines and fields across two campuses. GSC was established in 2015 as the 10th department of AGU; GSC was the newest department to be established at the university. The school admits approximately 220 students each year, and planned to enroll approximately 880 students in the first four years. These GSC students pursue an interdisciplinary social science degree in the Bachelor of Arts program. Due to a national policy change in Japan in 2017, the actual enrollment declined below the original enrollment trajectory. The current enrollment at GSC in the 2019-2020 academic year is 794 (Gakko Houjin Aoyama Gakuin, 2019). In the academic year 2018-2019, the first GSC cohort graduated from the department. The second cohort graduated in March 2020. After completing the first cycle of its academic curriculum between 2015 and 2019, GSC is in a position to evaluate its academic policies and curricula including its study abroad requirement in order to make informed structural adjustments and improvements.

The School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC) was Aoyama Gakuin University's attempt to launch an internationally oriented undergraduate program. In 2010, Professor Ken-ich Semba was the Dean of the School of International Politics, Economics, and Communication (SIPEC) when I joined Professor Semba's project on AGU's Graduate School Reform funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). Based on this reform project, Professor Semba envisioned establishing a new international curriculum with innovative study abroad programs at AGU. In 2011, Professor Semba became the 17th president of the university. He made his vision to establish a new department his top priority by forming a steering committee with internal and external experts.

President Semba envisioned the new international department to be different from the existing academic departments at AGU. The president appointed Professor Hirasawa as the Vice President, International Programs, to lead the steering committee. The VP asked me to conduct

an environmental scan that would examine the internationalization strategies of Japanese universities. My research drafted recommendations from the analysis of the Global 5 Consortium, three Japanese universities and two academic departments that were leading the internationalization of Japanese universities between 2010 and 2014 (Hiratsuka, 2016). In addition to my recommendations, the VP concluded that the new department would need to focus on Southeast Asia, where the most promising economic growth is expected in the next 30 years. This strategic orientation in Southeast Asia allowed the new department to differentiate from these leading Japanese universities and AGU departments while infusing AGU's institutional commitment to international services as described by universities' founders (Hirasawa, 2018).

Once the steering committee established the core concepts of the new department, Vice President Hirasawa invited a few faculty members from the steering committee to organize a sub-committee. The sub-committee was asked to draft a grant proposal for the Inter-University Exchange Project by the Japan Society of Promotion of Science (JSPS) in 2011. This JSPS call included ASEAN International Mobility for Students Programme (AIMS) to establish a consortium with universities in the ASEAN countries to improve student mobility within the Southeast Asia region. The VP assured that AIMS could boost the new department project by receiving external funding. Unfortunately, AGU was unsuccessful with the grant and unable to take advantage of the AIMS infrastructure. Although the unsuccessful attempt for the AIMS scheme was a significant setback for the new department project, the president and the VP were determined to move forward without the government's support. AGU continued the project independently with its limited resources and infrastructure to establish new partnerships with universities in Malaysia and Thailand. In the next three years, the steering committee consulted the departmental details with the MEXT officials and ASEAN partner universities to finalize

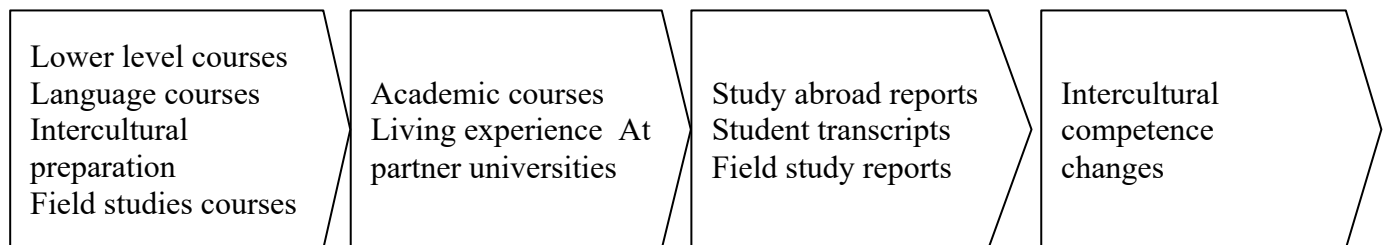
curriculum structures, and study abroad designs for the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC).

From its conception, GSC's vision was to respond to the needs of the next generation of Japanese professionals with the ability to work effectively with individuals from different cultures in Southeast Asia. Therefore, GSC's admission policies and graduation requirements were designed to meet its vision. The department established five specific areas that all GSC students would acquire by their graduation:

1. language proficiency and communication skills
2. Autonomy, cooperation, proactiveness
3. Intercultural understanding ability, self-identity
4. The breath of social science knowledge
5. AGU Collaboration Mind (Hirasawa, 2018 [translated by the author])

These five policies were in place for the initial four years from 2015 to 2019. The diagram below illustrates GSC's curriculum logic model.

Diagram: GSC's Curriculum Logic Model



The GSC students must complete 124 academic units to graduate with the Bachelor of Arts degree. Within the required 124 academic units, the GSC students also must complete a series of required courses known as Aoyama Standards (equivalent of liberal arts and science foundation courses across the departments) (Gakkou Houjin Aoyama Gakuin, 2016). In addition

to a series of required first-year courses, all GSC students are required to participate in one of the study abroad programs in Thailand and Malaysia as a part of the degree requirements in the second or third year (some exceptions apply). Annually, approximately 220 students participate in the required study abroad programs for 15 weeks or one Japanese semester. Another requirement in the GSC curriculum is a set of courses for preparing GSC students to engage in intercultural experience and reflection; all students were required to enroll in three courses (eight total undergraduate units) before, during, and after these students' study abroad programs. These courses were called Field Studies Program, and were designed as a mechanism to monitor GSC students' progress throughout their study abroad participation.

GSC was selected as a case for this evaluative study because of the uniqueness of its study abroad programs in non-traditional destinations in addition to my familiarity with the department and the university. As described in Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2014), generalizability would be a challenge due to the sampling procedure. However, when I considered my study's feasibility and uniqueness, the use of an analysis of secondary data is justifiable for my specific research purposes. A methodological response would be necessary to deal with this statistical limitation; one has been included in this study's analysis plan.

Although the data had been utilized for GSC's contribution to AGU's institutional accreditation and evaluation reports for government funding since 2016, the department has not been able to analyze the data comprehensively due to faculty expertise and departmental resource limitations. I have responded to these departmental shortages by performing an external analyst role with much needed subject expertise, experience, and proficiency in Japanese and English at the native/near-native levels. My role in this project was to analyze the existing data from GSC undergraduate students enrolled in the academic years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (The first two GSC cohort groups). The data had been collected at GSC as part of their departmental efforts to

establish an evidence-informed approach for the internationalization strategy. GSC's internationalization strategy has been integral from the planning stage when I was a member of the steering committee led by Prof. Semba, then the university president. Specifically, three GSC faculty members and myself proposed an evaluation project for the department's required study abroad program in 2014 in order to evaluate this departmental internationalization strategy. This proposal was submitted to the GSC dean, Prof. Hirasawa, for his permission. The dean accepted the proposal, and granted his permission to conduct this GSC analysis evaluating study abroad learning outcomes. This evaluation project eventually became an official research activity at the Global Studies Research Institute at GSC in 2015 when the proposal was approved by the GSC senior administrative committee (学部執行部 [gakubu shikkobu]). The project was also officially approved by the departmental faculty council (学部教授会 [gakubu kyojukai]) in 2016. The research project is currently in its fourth year as the initial data collection had begun in the first student group in the 2016-2017 academic year.

3.2 Description of the GSC Sample and the Data

3.2.1 Quantitative Data and Sample Descriptions

This study analyzed the secondary data that included survey responses of the GSC undergraduate students. Of four cohorts admitted to GSC between the academic year 2015-2016 and 2018-2019, this study examined the first two cohorts: the 2015 admission cohort (N = 225)(Gakkou Houjin Aoyama Gakuin, 2015) and the 2016 admission cohort (N = 214)(Gakkou Houjin Aoyama Gakuin, 2016). Out of the total GSC enrollment in the two cohorts (N = 439), 363 cases were included in the sample ($n = 363$). The cases with missing values greater than 70% were subjected to elimination from the sample. Seventy-two (72) cases from the two cohorts were eliminated due to their missing values. Four (4) additional cases also were eliminated as outliers after further examination; the pattern of responses to the selected-response items and

lack of response to the open-ended items suggested that these cases should be considered as inattentive responses. The total percent of responses dropped from the dataset was 17%. The sample ($n = 363$) from the two GSC cohorts in this study all participated and completed their required study abroad programs in one of two destination countries: Malaysia and Thailand.

3.2.2. Preliminary Analysis One: Demographic Characteristics of the GSC sample and Procedure.

The first phase of this preliminary analysis required describing the GSC sample: Gender, Destination Countries, Cohort Years (all categorical variables), English Proficiency and Academic Performance (all scale variables). For the categorical variables, a chi-square test of independence was conducted to evaluate whether there was a statistical difference in destination countries and gender between the cohort groups. The variables were destination countries (Malaysia and Thailand), gender (male and female) and the cohort groups (2015 and 2016). For the scale variables, an independent-samples t -test was conducted to evaluate whether English proficiency and academic performance were statistically different between the cohort groups.

Results. Among the categorical variables, the test for gender was found to be different between the cohort groups, Pearson $\chi^2(1, n = 363) = 6.122, p = 0.013$. The proportions of the two genders were 29.8% (male) and 70.2% (female) in 2015, and 42.3% (male) and 57.7% (female) in 2016, respectively. A greater number of female students were enrolled in the 2015 cohort than the 2016 cohort.

The test result for the IELTS scores was significant, $t(361) = 2.035, p = 0.043$. On average, the 2015 cohort ($M = 5.45, SD = 0.48$) scored higher than the 2016 cohort ($M = 5.34, SD = 0.52$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means was narrow, ranging from 0.036 to 0.21. The effect size (Cohen's d) was approximately 0.21, showing a small effect.

Defined as a measure of the magnitude, Cohen's d explains an effect size which illustrates the difference between two means in standard deviation (SD) units. The d values are

classified as small (mean difference less than .2 SD), medium (mean differences around .5 SD), large (mean difference greater than .8 SD) by computing a mean difference divided by a pooled standard deviation. However, these classifications are arbitrary, and vary depending on the disciplines and fields according to the existing literature (i.e., Fidler & Cumming, 2019; Field, 2013; Green & Salkind, 2011).

The test result for GPA also was significant, $t(361) = 2.96, p = 0.004$. On average, the 2015 cohort ($M = 2.69, SD = 0.57$) scored higher on GPA than the 2016 cohort ($M = 2.5, SD = 0.63$). The 95% confident interval for the difference in means was narrow, ranging from 0.062 to 0.31. The effect size, Cohen's d , was 0.31, showing a medium effect. The results are shown in Table 3.1. Based on the test results from the second preliminary analysis, the study required that the cohorts should be analyzed separately due to statistically significant differences in gender, language proficiency, and academic performance.

Table 3.1

Descriptive Statistics of the GSC sample

| | | 2015 | 2016 | <i>p</i> |
|------------|----------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Country, % | Malaysia | 44.2 | 37.4 | .185a |
| | Thailand | 55.8 | 62.6 | |
| Gender, % | Male | 29.8 | 42.3 | .013a |
| | Female | 70.2 | 57.7 | |
| IELTS | <i>M(SD)</i> a | 5.45 (.48) | 5.34 (.52) | .043b |
| GPA | <i>M(SD)</i> b | 2.69 (.57) | 2.5 (.63) | .004b |

Note. a – significance testing conducted with χ^2 test of independence.

b – significance testing conducted with independent samples t-test.

Moreover, the descriptive statistics from the GSC cohorts were compared to the existing studies in the Japanese literature to evaluate their representation in the Japanese undergraduate population. The comparison of the sample with the existing studies is listed in Table 3.2 and 3.3.

Based on the comparison in these tables, the GSC sample was determined as representative of Japanese undergraduate students in terms of age, gender, and English proficiency.

First, GSC students' age was comparable to other existing studies. GSC students' average age at the time of departure was 19.26 years old. Yokota et al. (2018) sampled Japanese study abroad students in different age groups. Within the age groups, the sample of outbound Japanese undergraduate students' age at the time of departure between 18 to 23 years old was approximately 90%. In Yokota et al.'s study (2018), outbound undergraduate study abroad students were defined as study abroad participants who participate in the programs at their partner universities as a part of their home university degree programs in Japan. Another study for an age comparison is a study by Hanada (2015). Although Hanada (2015) does not indicate a specific age group, he described his sample as equivalent to the traditional Japanese undergraduate students in studying abroad programs (Hanada, Personal communication, 2020).

Second, gender distribution was also similar across all existing studies in Japan. Overall, female students made up a greater proportion than male students in all samples. The 2015 GSC cohort included even more female students than the 2016 GSC cohort and the other existing studies. The gender imbalance in the 2015 cohort was important consideration when further analysis was conducted. One exception was Ward et al. (1998) which included only a slightly higher proportion of male students than female students.

Table 3.2

Comparison of Descriptive Statistics among the Existing Studies in Japan

| Study Names (n) | Age (at the time of departure/arrival in the destination countries) | Gender (%) | |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| | | <u>Male students</u> | <u>Female students</u> |
| The 2015 GSC Cohort (n = 181) | 19.2 | 29.8 | 70.2 |
| The 2016 GSC Cohort (n = 183) | 19.3 | 42.3 | 57.7 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|------|------|
| Hanada (2015, 2019) ($n = 303$) | Traditional student age between 18 and 21* | 37.5 | 62.5 |
| Ward et al. (1998) ($n = 35$) | 18.6 | 51 | 49 |
| JASSO (2018) | | 37 | 62 |
| Kawai Juku (2018) ($n = 801$) | | 41 | 58 |

Note. *The author confirmed this age description (Hanada, Personal communication, 2020).

Third, the GSC students' English language proficiency in IELTS score (academic) averaged 5.39. The score came from GSC students' best results from one of the two IELTS scores. These GSC students took two official IELTS exams before applying to their required study abroad programs at GSC partner universities in Malaysia and Thailand. The average scores in the GSC cohorts were slightly lower than the two official categories given in IELTS data which included nationality (Japanese) and first language (Japanese).

Table 3.3

IELTS Scores (Academic band) Comparison

| Group | Score |
|--|-------|
| The 2015 Cohort | 5.45 |
| The 2016 Cohort | 5.34 |
| IELTS (2018)(Nationality: Japanese) | 5.83 |
| IELTS (2018)(The first language: Japanese) | 5.79 |

Note. The data was extracted from the official IELTS website (<https://www.ielts.org/teaching-andresearch/test-taker-performance>).

3.2.3 Qualitative Data Description

This study examined students' narratives that described thoughts and feelings about their intercultural experience before and after studying abroad in Malaysia and Thailand. The secondary data were collected from a free writing text in the same survey instrument. The free writing text box in both surveys asked the following question:

今回の留学に当たって、あなたはどのようなことをお感じですか。どんな些細なことでも結構ですので

、お書きください。(How do you feel about studying abroad now? Could you please add any minor thoughts and feelings you have in the below space [translated by the author]). Not all students filled the textbox in both surveys. Unfortunately, due to administrative challenges at the beginning of the data collection in the pre-departure phase in 2015, only ten students filled out the comment box. Therefore, certain limitations are found in the qualitative analysis. However, these qualitative data contributed to further uncovering the GSC students' changes in intercultural competence from the quantitative analysis. The qualitative data was quantified in order to integrate these two data sets for further interpretation.

Publicly available GSC documents, including the department websites, catalogs, and handbooks, provided further context for the analysis of the qualitative data. These are available in print and digital formats at GSC.

3.3 Instrumentation

The GSC project required an instrument that could examine the changes in Japanese students' intercultural competence in the behavioral domain as a result of their academic and social experience in the destination countries. Out of instrumental options in the literature and the industry, researchers are best advised to choose instruments suitable for researchers' conceptual and methodological needs with available resources. All available valid and reliable instruments measure some parts of cognitive, affective, or behavioral constructs. Some researchers are only familiar with one domain over another domain. Some researchers are also only familiar with a particular methodology over another methodology. In addition, some instruments are publicly available while other instruments require licensing and user fees. After taking all these options and limitations into considerations, the GSC researchers had limited options because of its unsuccessful in securing external funding through the Inter-University

Exchange Project in 2012. Due to its limited resources, the department could only select an instrument that was free and publicly available.

This GSC study applied the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) (Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward et al., 1998) to produce survey data about changes in the GSC undergraduate students' intercultural development. Although the instrument is more than 20 years old, SCAS was selected for this GSC project for several reasons. It is a publicly available instrument, flexible as described by the designers, has been tested for Japanese samples, and has a social behavioral focus to measure intercultural competence scales. These four criteria were important for choosing SCAS for the GSC study especially after reviewing a variety of English-language instruments, some of which were available in Japanese for a fee (i.e., Fantini, 2009b; Hanada, 2015; Paige & Stallman, 2007). As Wilson (2013) noted, more than 100 studies had been conducted using SCAS by 2012, and this wide acceptance allowed the GSC research team to determine SCAS to be the most appropriate instrument for the GSC study.

The Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) was initially designed as an instrument to evaluate intercultural competence with a behavioral emphasis. Ward and Kennedy (1999) expanded the instrument to include items related to cognitive areas in the latest version. The available instrument included 41 items (Ward & Kennedy, 1999, p.663), and is presented in Table 3.4. According to these designers, the SCAS scale is designed to require participants to respond to the level of difficulty in a five-point scale (no difficulty/slight difficulty/moderate difficulty/great difficulty/extreme difficulty). These designers also explained that the SCAS scale is flexible and adaptable to fit the sample characteristics. Although most studies included 20 to 23 SCAS items, the authors claimed that most items are applicable to diverse groups. In order to support their claim, Ward and Kennedy (1999) analyzed SCAS's validity and reliability across 16 studies in their meta-analysis. These authors concluded that the SCAS's construct validity in

the metadata is evident in the consistent significant correlation (range 0.20-0.62, $M = 0.38$) between the SCAS scores and the Zung Self-rating Depression Scale scores (Zung, 1965; cited in Ward & Kennedy, 1999, p.667). Furthermore, these authors examined SCAS's reliability by reporting Cronbach's alpha in their metadata (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Sixteen (16) studies in the meta-study indicated reliability indices ranging from 0.75 to 0.91 ($M = 0.85$) including Cronbach's alpha of 20-item SCAS in Japanese students in New Zealand ($n = 35$) as 0.88. Although conducting exploratory factor analysis and result comparison with the previous studies was necessary for this study, the available results indicated that SCAS would be a valid and reliable instrument applicable to a diverse sample group including the Japanese sample as these designers claimed in their study (Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

Moreover, Ward and Kennedy (1999) explored the SCAS structure by conducting factor analysis using one of their studies on Singaporean students abroad ($n = 108$). After deleting nine items (i.e., transport, climate, accommodations, and shopping) out of 29 items at the 0.70 criterion, these authors conducted a forced two factor analysis by using oblique rotation; the study explained that the first factor (eigenvalue = 6.4) accounted for 32% of the variance and the second factor (eigenvalue = 1.7) accounted for 8.7% of the variance. These two factors were described as "moderately highly related" (Ward & Kennedy, 1999, p.669). These authors labeled the first factor "Cultural Empathy and Relatedness" and the second factor "Impersonal Endeavors and Perils" (p. 670). Comparing the existing factor analysis results with this study further confirmed the SCAS instrumental validity and reliability for the GSC sample.

The GSC study devised a short form to include 25 items from the original 41 SCAS items. The Japanese translation (the GSC version) is included in Table 3.4. Based on the original item list (Ward & Kennedy, 1999), the GSC short form included a Likert Scale between one (1) to five (5) (難しくない [no difficulty]/あまり難しくない[slight difficulty]/そこそこ難しい[moderate

difficulty]/非常に難しい[*great difficulty*]/極めて難しい[*extreme difficulty*]) for the quantitative data collection. Although the instrument was applied to the Japanese sample (Ward et al., 1998), the original instrument was only available in English without the Japanese translation in the original publication. Therefore, the GSC study members translated SCAS from English to Japanese. The translation team included one Japanese speaker, two bilingual speakers, and one external Japanese speaker; these members translated SCAS based on the TRAPD model team-based translation (Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pretesting, and Documentation) (Mohler, Dorer, Jong, & Hu, 2016). The instrument was piloted in 2016 before the full rollout. After the pilot study showed a normal distribution of student responses, the GSC research team approved the full rollout of the instrument.

Table 3.4

SCAS English-Japanese Translation Chart

| English | Japanese |
|--|-----------------------------|
| (1) Making friends | 友達を作る |
| (3) Making yourself understood | 自分の意思を理解してもらう |
| (8) Talking about yourself with others | 自分を表現する |
| (9) Understanding jokes and humor | ジョークやユーモアを理解する |
| (10) Dealing with someone who is unpleasant/cross/aggressive | 不快な行動をとるような人に対処する |
| (13) Dealing with people in authority | 権威のある地位にいる人たちに対処する |
| (14) Dealing with the bureaucracy | お役所的な応対に対処する |
| (17) Communicating with people of a different ethnic group | 異なった民族グループの人たちとコミュニケーションをとる |
| (18) Relating to members of the opposite sex | 異性の人たちに共感する |
| (19) Dealing with unsatisfactory services | 大学・公共機関での満足のいかないサービスに対処する |
| (22) Dealing with people staring at you | 物珍しげな視線に対処する |
| (24) Understanding the local accent/language | 現地特有のアクセント・言語を理解する |

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| (28) Relating to older people | 年長の人たちに共感する |
| (29) Dealing with people of higher status | 社会的な地位が高い人たちに対処する |
| (30) Understanding what is required of you at university | 何が大学で要求されているか理解する |
| (31) Coping with academic work | 学業をこなす |
| (32) Dealing with foreign staff at the university | 現地の大学のスタッフと意思疎通をはかる |
| (33) Expressing your ideas in class | 授業で意見を述べる |
| (35) Accepting/understanding the local political system | 現地の政治システムを受け入れる・理解する |
| (36) Understanding the locals' world view | 現地の人たちの世界観を理解する |
| (37) Taking a local perspective on the culture | 現地の人たちと同じ文化的視点をもつ |
| (38) Understanding the local value system | 現地の価値観を理解する |
| (39) Seeing things from the locals' point of view | 現地の人たちの視点で物事をみる |
| (40) Understanding "Cultural Differences" | 「文化の違い」を理解する |
| (41) Being able to see two sides of an intercultural issue | 異文化問題を両側面からみる |

Note. () indicates the item number in the original SCAS list (Ward & Kennedy, 1999, p.663).

An application of survey instruments like the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) often comes with some instrumental challenges. This GSC study was no exception. The GSC study considered the possibility of instrumental ceiling effects. According to Salkind (2010), ceiling effect is a limitation on measurement instrument on the upper score threshold. Respondents scoring the highest or close to the highest score on an instrument decreases the likelihood of measurement accuracy on the intended domain. For an instrument with a Likert scale like the GSC version of SCAS, an inaccurate measurement between the pre-departure and the post-return phase could be possible. For example, if a respondent gives a response on the pre-departure survey that is rather inflated toward the higher end of the Likert scale, that same respondent might have little room to record a higher response on the post-return survey. Several remedies are available to respond to the instrumental ceiling effect. One approach is a longitudinal design by increasing a number of data collection times. Another approach is to

diversify data types for enriching interpretation by including in-person interviews. Although the GSC did not incorporate these remedies into its study, the qualitative analysis of the comment section in both phases could help supplement what the quantitative analysis might miss.

3.3.1 Preliminary Analysis Two: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with Polychoric Correlation

Procedure. The first phase of this preliminary analysis focused on investigating the psychometric properties of the Intercultural Competence (ICC) scale for the GSC, AGU. The first step in this preliminary analysis phase explored the ICC scale in terms of stability of the psychometric properties within and across the two cohorts (2015 and 2016). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and analysis of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) were used to examine the stability of the SCAS instrument in this phase. EFA was based on the matrix of polychoric correlations, since the items in the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) were measured on an ordinal 5-point Likert scale. Principal axis extraction method and promax oblique rotation were used as the EFA settings. For this preliminary analysis, STATA (ver. 16.1) was used to perform EFA with polychoric correlation.

EFA was used to investigate whether the short form of SCAS measures a unidimensional construct or whether multiple subscales can be assumed. Separate analyses were performed for pre- and post- questionnaires for the 2015 and 2016 cohorts of respondents.

Result: Exploratory Factor Analysis with Polychoric Correlation. The initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA) examined the dimensionality of the 25-item SCAS short-form based on the pre-departure score in the 2015 cohort. The initial EFA solution extracted four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (12.92, 2.26, 1.47, and 1.07), which explained 73.7% of the variance in the data. Among these four factors, the three factors were moderately to highly correlated in the correlation matrix; correlation coefficients ranged between .40 and .63. The correlation coefficients from these three factors suggested a potential one-factor structure of the

instrument. Examining a potential one-factor structure of this instrument required my analysis to proceed to the next EFA by enforcing one factor solution in my EFA procedure.

The second EFA analysis was performed with an enforced unidimensional solution. The single-factor solution explained 53.2% of the variance in the data. The factor loading for the items ranged between .58 and .82. The internal consistency of the unidimensional solution was confirmed by a high internal consistency index (Cronbach's alpha = .94).

Table 3.5

Summary of Items and Factor Loadings for Principal Axis Extraction Method with Promax Oblique Rotation

| Item | Factor Loading | Communality |
|--|----------------|-------------|
| (1) Making friends | .62 | .38 |
| (2) Making yourself understood | .69 | .48 |
| (8) Talking about yourself with others | .68 | .47 |
| (9) Understanding jokes and humor | .61 | .38 |
| (10) Dealing with someone who is unpleasant/cross/aggressive | .60 | .35 |
| (13) Dealing with people in authority | .59 | .35 |
| (14) Dealing with the bureaucracy | .60 | .36 |
| (17) Communicating with people of a different ethnic group | .68 | .46 |
| (18) Relating to members of the opposite sex | .66 | .44 |
| (19) Dealing with unsatisfactory services | .67 | .45 |
| (22) Dealing with people staring at you | .50 | .25 |
| (24) Understanding the local accent/language | .60 | .36 |
| (28) Relating to older people | .64 | .40 |
| (29) Dealing with people of higher status | .66 | .44 |
| (30) Understanding what is required of you at university | .67 | .45 |
| (31) Coping with academic work | .61 | .38 |
| (32) Dealing with foreign staff at the university | .71 | .50 |
| (33) Expressing your ideas in class | .63 | .40 |
| (35) Accepting/understanding the local political system | .71 | .52 |
| (36) Understanding the locals' world view | .81 | .66 |
| (37) Taking a local perspective on the culture | .81 | .67 |
| (38) Understanding the local value system | .81 | .67 |

| | | |
|--|-------|-----|
| (39) Seeing things from the locals' point of view | .72 | .52 |
| (40) Understanding "Cultural Differences" | .69 | .49 |
| (41) Being able to see two sides of an intercultural issue | .70 | .49 |
| Eigenvalue | 11.32 | |
| % of variance | 70.53 | |

Note. () indicates the item number in the original SCAS list (Ward & Kennedy, 1999, p.663).

Result: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the SCAS Short Form Stability Across Time and Cohorts. To explore whether the one-factor structure also holds for post-survey in the 2015 cohort and pre- and post- surveys in the 2016 cohort, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed. For this analysis, STATA (ver. 16.1) was used to perform CFA with polychoric correlation. Although the first run of CFA showed less than satisfactory model fit as measured by RMSEA, CFI, and TLI indices, the exploration of suggested modification indices in CFA output showed that introducing error covariances between the items would improve model fit. Once these indices were implemented, the CFA model showed a sufficient model fit in each of the datasets (RMSEA<.05, CFI>.95, and TLI>.95). The internal consistency indices were high in the post-survey 2015, pre-survey and post-survey 2016 datasets (.92, .94, and .92 correspondingly).

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

This study involved a two-step data collection procedure: data collection at GSC and data transfer from GSC to this study. First, data collection at GSC was done at the mandatory pre-departure and post-return departmental orientations by a department administrative staff member responsible for the study abroad program management. The staff member was supervised by a faculty member from the GSC international exchange committee, who was the primary contact regarding the original data at GSC for this study.

Because there were two groups of GSC students in each cohort, with different departure and post-return orientations, there were two separate data collection schedules. Table 3.6 describes these data collection schedules during these orientations for the two cohorts.

Table 3.6*Data Collection Schedules*

| Cohort | Pre-departure data | Post-return data |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 2015 Group 1 | June 2016 | January 2017 |
| 2015 Group 2 | December 2017 | September 2018 |
| 2016 Group 1 | June 2017 | January 2018 |
| 2016 Group 2 | December 2018 | September 2019 |

During these orientations, the GSC students were given the SCAS survey on Scantron forms and asked to complete the Scantrons before the orientations. The students were also instructed to fill out the free text box in the SCAS survey. Once completed, the administrative staff collected the forms and delivered them to the faculty member. The faculty member scanned the scantrons form using the scantron reader to generate data in an Excel form. At the same time, the faculty member also used the Google Voice Recognition software to transcribe the students' texts into typed data. Lastly, the faculty member asked the GSC administrative unit to provide student demographic data stored in the university database. Once the demographic data was obtained, the data was combined with the SCAS scores from the Scantron forms. The original data was stored in the GSC Research Institute under this faculty member's supervision.

Second, the original data had to be transferred from the GSC to this study. The actual transfer was a part of the U of T ethics review. The detailed explanation for the secondary data transfer between GSC and this study is included in the ethics protocol and procedure section at the end of this chapter.

3.5 Institutional Research Ethics Protocols and Procedures

Two ethics protocols were necessary for my study: the GSC permission review and the U of T official ethics review. First, the GSC required me to file two forms: the Data Use Request form (Appendix A) and the Secondary Data Use Agreement form (Appendix B). These

documents were signed and submitted for approval at the GSC on October 18th, 2016. The permission was granted on October 20th, 2016, by the GSC executive administrative committee under the GSC dean's supervision. An institution-wide ethics review is not customary at Japanese universities, and the review mechanism is left up to the individual departments at AGU. Therefore, the GSC approval by the dean was sufficient for this study.

Once the GSC dean approved my request for the GSC data access and use, I proceeded to apply for the U of T ethics review for this study. The U of T institutional Ethics Review involved two separate but interrelated protocols: a Data Transfer Agreement and the university ethics review. First, a Data Transfer Agreement (DTA) was necessary for my study as this study required the GSC secondary data to be used. For a smooth transition of the agreement, I translated the DTA into Japanese as a reference for the GSC dean, while the original English form retained its legal authority for this study. The DTA was approved by the GSC's dean for AGU and by the director of partnership at the Research and Innovation Office for U of T. Also, the thesis supervisor was required to sign the agreement. All parties signed and officially approved the agreement on December 4th, 2018 (Appendix C).

Second, the university ethics review was submitted online on December 7, 2018, including all necessary documents such as DTA and the GSC permission forms. All GSC documents in Japanese were translated into English by the author while the original documents in Japanese were attached as references. The U of T ethics application for this study included all ethical considerations and risks involved in this study in accordance with the university ethics codes for secondary data use in the Education and Social Sciences studies. The approval was granted on January 14th, 2019 (Appendix D).

3.6 Data Analysis Plan

Table 3.7 illustrates the main analytical strategies for this study. Before addressing the

main research questions, the preliminary analyses were conducted to establish the psychometric properties of the SCAS and describe the demographic samples including changes in the SCAS scores before and after study abroad programs.

Table 3.7*Data Analysis Plan*

| Research Questions | Operationalized Questions | Variables and Their Types | Analytical Approaches | Note |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | Preliminary Analysis One. What are the demographic characteristics of the sample? | Demographics: English Proficiency (Scale), Academic Performance (Scale), Destination Countries (Category), Cohort Year (Category), and Gender (Category) | Descriptive statistics | Descriptive for scale variables, frequency tables for categorical variables |
| | Preliminary Analysis Two. What are the psychometric properties of Intercultural Competence (ICC) Scale in the Japanese sample of undergraduate students? | Items on Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) (Scale) | Exploratory Factor Analysis for 2015 cohort at Pre, followed by Internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's alpha) Confirmatory Factor Analyses for 2015 cohort at Post and 2016 cohort at Pre and Post to investigate the scale stability, followed by internal consistency analysis | In order to create scale (or subscale scores), Cronbach's alpha should be >0.7 Compute total scale scores at Pre and Post |
| RQ1. What is the distribution of Japanese students' ICC scores including sub-group differences in the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase? | Q1. What is the distribution of Japanese students' ICC scores in the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase? | SCAS scores (Scale) at Pre and Post | ***Run separately for each cohort. Descriptive statistics Paired-samples t-test to establish mean differences Correlation and scatter plot to establish variation in change between individuals | Mean, SD, Min & Max, Skewness and Kurtosis |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p>RQ2. What is revealed through the comparison of ICC change scores between the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase? Are there sub group differences between these phases?</p> | <p>Q2. Are ICC scores of Japanese students' pre-departure phase and the post-return phase related to student demographics?</p> <p>Q3. Is there a change in the ICC scores between the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase?</p> <p>Q4. Which factors (demographics, cohort year, academic performance, destination countries) contribute to a larger change as a result of study abroad experience?</p> | <p>1. Predictors: English Proficiency (Scale), Academic Performance (Scale)</p> <p>Outcomes: SCAS (Scale)</p> <p>2. Predictors: Gender (Category), Destination Countries (Category)</p> <p>Outcomes: SCAS (Scale)</p> <p>Predictor: Cohort</p> <p>Outcomes: SCAS factors (Scale) at two time points</p> <p>Create change scores Post-Pre, develop "No change criteria", say change within 0.5SD or 1SD, isolate groups of positive and negative change (exclude no change cases from the analysis) and compare these groups on demographics.</p> <p>DV: 2 categorical variables</p> <p>Predictors: English Proficiency (Scale), Academic Performance (Scale), Destination Countries (Category), and Gender (Category).</p> <p>Control: SCAS pre-departure score (Scale)</p> <p>Outcomes: SCAS factors (Scale) at two time points</p> | <p>Correlations</p> <p>Independent-samples t-tests/ANOVAs depending on the number of categories</p> <p>ANCOVA</p> <p>Chi-square test of independence for categorical demographics</p> <p>Independent-samples t-test for continuous demographics</p> <p>Logistic regression with 2 categories of change scores as DV and demographics as IVs.</p> | <p>Pearson correlations if scale variables are normally distributed, Spearman correlations if scale variables are skewed</p> |
|---|--|--|--|--|

RQ3. What can be learned from the narratives included by Japanese undergraduate students in the survey, describing their experience before and after studying in Thailand and Malaysia, that illustrates these students' gains in intercultural competence?

Correlational Analysis
 Predictors: SCAS (Scale)
 Outcomes: Pre-Departure
 Comments (Ordinal), Post-Return
 Comments (Ordinal)

Quantifying the qualitative data
 by coding -1, 0, +1

Qualitative Content Analysis from
 the survey text answers

Integrating qualitative data by
 quantifying it in order to conduct
 a correlation analysis.

Qualitative Content Analysis of
 the GSC publications

Qualitative analysis strategies for
 case study suggested by Yin
 (2014), Creswell (2014), and
 Creswell & Pinto-Clark (2011):
 Manually coded but aided by
 NVivo.

Qualitative Validity Strategies:
 Methodological and Data
 Triangulations and Peer
 Debriefing.

3.6.1 Qualitative Data Analysis Strategies

Although the quantitative analysis was the dominant data analysis approach, this study included analyzing student comments as qualitative data. The qualitative analysis extended the research design. This qualitative data analysis section follows an analytical framework of a case study approach in a mixed-method design (i.e., Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Pinto-Clark, 2011; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) explained that one way to conduct qualitative data analysis relies on theoretical propositions among several available approaches. My analytical approach applied theoretical pattern matching (Yin, 2014) based on my study's proposed theories. My analytical focus was identifying themes (or patterns) related to a kind of specific criteria derived from a combination of intercultural competence theories (i.e., Deardorff, 2004; Fantini, 2000; Ward, 2004). By applying a combination of the theories proposed in my review, my qualitative analysis focused on extracting themes and thematic relationships to interpret meaning out of these relationships. My reliance on the proposed theories was a suitable approach since one of my research goals was to apply social psychological theories to my study's theoretical framework and methodological design.

A guiding analytical framework specific to this qualitative section was cultural learning theory (Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). Cultural learning theory was the main guiding analytical framework for working through students' comments before their departure and after their return. While the cultural learning theory was dominant in my analysis, additional concepts, including those found in Deardorff (2004), Fantini (2001), and Stewart (1995), allowed for the inclusion of additional intercultural competence themes including cultural self-awareness, which supplemented the primary analytical framework.

The GSC qualitative data were organized in the following steps. First, the data was separated by departure points across the cohorts to generate themes related to their departure and

return. Second, common themes from students' text data were extracted to organize what is called open themes. These open themes were grouped into categories to generate sub-themes, a combination of various open themes. Once sub-themes were established, my analysis generated what I defined as major themes: a synthesis of these sub-themes. In addition, my analysis returned to the proposed theories to develop meaningful relationships among these major themes since establishing thematic relationships among the major themes is a critical step in the qualitative analysis. As a result of my analytical process, my qualitative analysis synthesized the proposed theories of intercultural competence.

Because any qualitative data analysis relies on individual researchers as an integral part of the process and is therefore subject to validity and reliability limitations, my analysis made sure to employ the recommended validity and reliability approaches (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014) throughout the phase. My qualitative analysis relied on the available validity strategies such as bias clarification, periodical peer debriefing with the GSC faculty, and external auditing by the thesis committee members. All responses were in Japanese; the Japanese responses were translated into English during this analysis phase. Microsoft Excel (Ver. 16, 2020) was used to organize and generate themes for this study.

3.6.2 Data Integration Strategies

Two data integration strategies were performed for this study. The first data integration strategy included quantifying qualitative data. Student comments in the survey were quantified by assigning three numeric codes: Minus one (-1) for a negative response, zero (0) for a neutral (no) response, and plus one (+1) for a positive response. Even though all provided comments could be interpreted differently depending on contexts, my coding prioritized assigning an appropriate code based on the text expression. Even though some comments included both positive and negative expressions in Japanese, a decision was made to force an ordinal coding.

The second data integration strategy was examining extreme cases with the most increased and decreased ICC scores. There are 21 cases with the ICC score increase above .9 or more, and 14 cases where the ICC score decrease by -.9 or more. This integration strategy attempted to examine student comments among these extreme cases to clarify their reasons for indicating such responses to the SCAS scores. Examining these unique cases could shed light on the overall quantitative results and the qualitative findings in this study.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an explanation of this study's research method design. This study's quantitative and qualitative approaches and all relevant information has been included in the chapter: case description (a definition, boundaries, and selection), the GSC sample and data description (quantitative and qualitative data), instrumentation, the data collection procedure, institutional review, and methodological limitations. This section also included preliminary analysis results for GSC demographic characteristics and instrument psychometric properties. The chapter has described the study's methodological procedures to share these for replication and accountability purposes.

Chapter 4

Quantitative Results

This chapter presents the results obtained from the proposed analytical strategy plan. Specifically, this chapter focuses on the results for the first two research questions that deal with the quantitative analyses. The results obtained describe Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence (ICC) as learning outcomes of their study abroad programs in Malaysia and Thailand. Learning outcomes of these students' study abroad participation in the two countries are seen through a distribution of Japanese students' ICC scores, including sub-group differences in the pre-departure and post-return phases, and a relationship between these Japanese students' pre-departure and post-return ICC scores and their demographics. This section also identifies change in these students' ICC scores between the pre-departure and the post-return phases and factors that contributed to a larger change as a result of study abroad participation. Moreover, these Japanese students' narratives have been integrated into the quantitative results by quantifying qualitative data for further analysis.

4.1 The Distribution of Japanese Students' ICC Score including Sub-group Differences in the Pre and Post Phases

4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics of Japanese Students' ICC Score at the Two Phases

Descriptive statistics were applied to illustrate the ICC score distributions by the GSC student groups. Table 4.1. shows means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*), minimum (*Min*), maximum (*Max*), skewness, and kurtosis of the ICC pre-departure and post-return scores by the two cohorts. These descriptive statistics were relatively similar for the two cohorts. However, several characteristics emerged from the results of these descriptive statistics. First, the 2016 cohort had a higher post-return ICC score than the 2015 cohort. Second, both cohorts were characterized by a noticeable variability in the pre-departure and post-return scores. Third, the

variabilities in both cohorts decreased when the post-return scores were compared to the pre-departure scores.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics of the Japanese Students' ICC Score Distribution

| | | | | | | <u>Skewness</u> | | <u>Kurtosis</u> | |
|------|-------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Min</i> | <i>Max</i> | <i>stat</i> | <i>std. error</i> | <i>stat</i> | <i>std. error</i> |
| 2015 | Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.58 | .67 | 1.76 | 5.00 | .07 | .18 | .01 | .36 |
| | Post-Return ICC Score | 3.62 | .56 | 2.12 | 5.00 | .15 | .18 | -.02 | .36 |
| 2016 | Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.55 | .55 | 1.88 | 4.92 | .15 | .18 | .01 | .36 |
| | Post-Return ICC Score | 3.71 | .51 | 2.6 | 5.00 | .05 | .18 | -.34 | .36 |

Note. *stat.* = Statistics, *std. error* = Standard Error

A paired samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether Japanese students' ICC scores between the pre-departure phase and post-return phase were different from each other.

For the 2015 cohort, the result indicated that the mean difference between the two phases was not significant, $M = 3.71$, $SD = .5$, $t(180) = -1.12$ $p = .26$. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference between the two scales was $-.13$ to $.03$. The standardized effect size index, d , was $.08$, which indicated a small effect.

For the 2016 cohort, the result indicated that the mean difference between the two phases was significant, $M = 3.62$, $SD = .51$, $t(181) = -4.43$ $p < .01$. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference between the two scales was $-.22$ to $.08$. The standardized effect size index, d , was 0.29 , which indicated a small effect.

A bivariate correlation was performed to evaluate a relationship between the pre-departure and post-return ICC scores. A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to establish variations in change between individuals.

For the 2015 cohort, the two ICC scores' correlation was statistically significant. These scores were equal to .574 at the .01 level. For the 2016 cohort, the two ICC scores' correlation was statistically significant. These scores were equal to .625 at the .01 level.

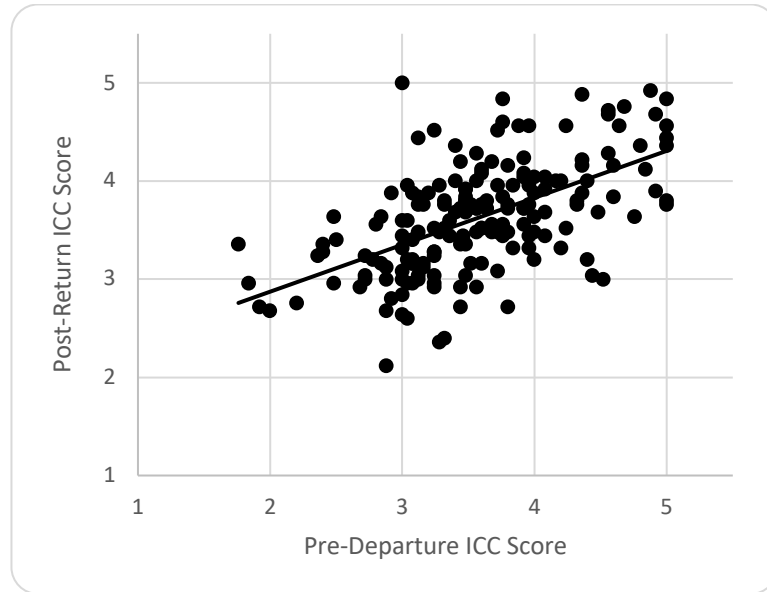


Figure 4.1 Scatterplot depicting the relationship between the pre-departure and the post-return ICC scores in the 2015 cohort.

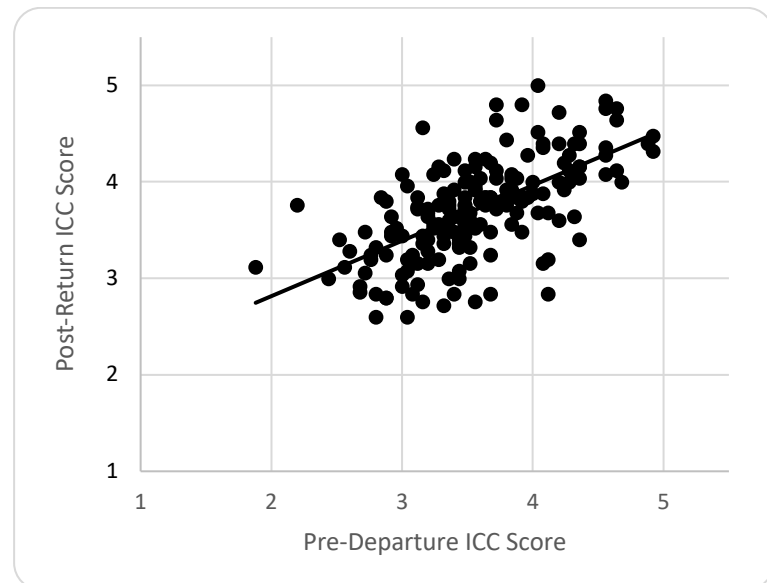


Figure 4.2 Scatterplot depicting the relationship between the pre-departure and the post-return ICC scores in the 2016 cohort.

4.1.2 Japanese Students' Pre-departure and Post-return ICC Scores in Relation to Their Demographics

First, a Pearson correlation was performed to evaluate relationships among four scale variables. For the 2015 cohort, the results of the correlational analyses are presented in Table 4.5. The results showed that language proficiency was positively correlated with the pre-departure phase (.19) and the post-return phase (.18) at the .01 level. For the 2016 cohort, the language proficiency was positively correlated with the pre-total ICC score (.13) at the .05 level.

Table 4.2

Mean (M), Standard Deviations (SD), and Intercorrelations for the Demographic Variables and the two ICC Scores in the 2015 Cohort

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|------|-------|---|
| 1. IELTS | 5.5 | .47 | – | | | |
| 2. GPA | 2.69 | .57 | .25** | – | | |
| 3. Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.58 | .67 | .20** | -.11 | – | |
| 4. Post-Return ICC Score | 3.62 | .56 | .21** | .04 | .57** | – |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.3

Mean (M), Standard Deviations (SD), and Intercorrelations for the Demographic Variables and the two ICC Scores in the 2016 Cohort

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|------|------|-------|---|
| 1. IELTS | 5.34 | .52 | – | | | |
| 2. GPA | 2.5 | .63 | .19* | – | | |
| 3. Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.56 | .55 | .17* | .07 | – | |
| 4. Post-Return ICC Score | 3.71 | .50 | .03 | -.01 | .63** | – |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Second, independent samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate a relationship between destination countries (Malaysia and Thailand) and the ICC scores at the pre-departure and the post-return phase for the 2015 and 2016 cohorts.

For the 2015 cohort, the test result for the pre-departure phase was not statistically significant, $t(179) = -1.25, p = .19$. The pre-departure ICC score for the Japanese undergraduate students going to Thailand ($M = 3.63, SD = .73$) on average was higher than the Japanese undergraduate students going to Malaysia ($M = 3.51, SD = .59$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.32$ to $.07$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.19$, which indicated a small effect size.

The test result for the post-return phase was also not statistically significant, $t(169) = -1.46, p = .14$. The post-return ICC score for the Japanese undergraduate students returned from Thailand ($M = 3.68, SD = .56$) on average was higher than the Japanese undergraduate students returned from Malaysia ($M = 3.56, SD = .56$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.32$ to $.07$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.22$, which indicated a small effect size.

For the 2016 cohort group, the test result for the pre-departure phase was not statistically significant, $t(127) = -.73, p = .47$. The pre-departure ICC score for the Japanese undergraduate students going to Thailand ($M = 3.74, SD = .48$) was higher than the pre-departure ICC score for the Japanese undergraduate students going to Malaysia ($M = 3.52, SD = .59$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.29$ to $.04$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.11$, which indicated a small effect size.

The test result for the post-return phase was also not statistically significant, $t(148) = .67, p = .50$. The post-return ICC score for the Japanese undergraduate students returned from Malaysia ($M = 3.74, SD = .48$) was greater than the Japanese undergraduate students returned

from Thailand ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .52$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.29$ to $.04$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.10$, which indicated a small effect size.

Table 4.4

Differences in Japanese Students' Pre-departure and Post-return ICC Scores between Destination Countries

| | | <u>Malaysia</u> | | <u>Thailand</u> | | <i>df</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>d</i> |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | | | | |
| 2015 | Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.51 | .59 | 3.63 | .73 | 179 | -1.25 | .214 | .19 |
| | Post-Return ICC Score | 3.56 | .56 | 3.68 | .56 | 169 | -1.46 | .147 | .22 |
| 2016 | Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.52 | .59 | 3.74 | .48 | 127 | -.75 | .455 | .11 |
| | Post-Return ICC Score | 3.74 | .48 | 3.69 | .52 | 148 | .67 | .508 | .10 |

Note. *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation, *df* = the degrees of freedom, *t* = t-statistic, *p* = *p*-value, *d* = Cohen's *d*

Another set of independent samples t-tests was conducted to evaluate a relationship between gender (male and female students) and the ICC scores at the pre-departure and the post-return phase for the 2015 and 2016 cohorts.

For the 2015 cohort, the test result for the pre-departure phase was not statistically significant, $t(103) = .91$, $p = .372$. The pre-departure ICC score for the male students ($M = 3.65$, $SD = .68$) was greater than for the female students ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .68$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.12$ to $.31$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.15$, which indicated a small effect size.

The test result for the post-return phase was also not statistically significant, $t(105) = -.25$, $p = .808$. The post-return ICC score for the female students ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .57$) was greater than for the male students ($M = 3.61$, $SD = .54$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.2$ to $.16$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.04$, which indicated a small effect size.

For the 2016 cohort group, the test result for the pre-departure phase was not statistically significant, $t(162) = -.14, p = .885$. The pre-departure ICC score for the female students ($M = 3.56, SD = .54$) was greater than for the male students ($M = 3.55, SD = .56$). The confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.18$ to $.15$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.02$, which indicated a small effect size.

The test result for the post-return phase was also not statistically significant, $t(139) = -1.22, p = .222$. The post-return ICC score for the female students ($M = 3.75, SD = .45$) was greater than for the male students ($M = 3.65, SD = .57$). The confidence interval for the difference of the means ranged from $-.25$ to $.06$. The effect size, Cohen's d , was $.19$, which indicated a small effect size.

Table 4.5

Differences in Japanese Students' Pre-departure and Post-return ICC Scores between Male and Female Students

| | | <u>Male</u> <u>students</u> | | <u>Female</u> <u>students</u> | | <i>df</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>d</i> |
|------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | | | | |
| 2015 | Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.65 | .66 | 3.55 | .68 | 103 | .91 | .372 | .15 |
| | Post-Return ICC Score | 3.61 | .54 | 3.63 | .57 | 105 | -.25 | .808 | .04 |
| 2016 | Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.55 | .56 | 3.56 | .54 | 162 | -.14 | .885 | .02 |
| | Post-Return ICC Score | 3.65 | .57 | 3.75 | .45 | 139 | -.12 | .222 | .19 |

Note. *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation, *df* = the degrees of freedom, *t* = t-statistic, *p* = *p*-value, *d* = Cohen's *d*

Third, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well the Japanese undergraduate students' demographic information and the pre-departure ICC score predicted the post-return ICC score in the 2015 cohort. In this procedure, the students' demographics (language proficiency, academic performance, destination countries, and gender) and the pre-departure ICC score were the predictor variables, while the post-return ICC score was the

outcome variable. The results are described in Table 4.6. For the 2015 cohort, this model was statistically significant, $F(5, 176) = 18.5, p < .000$, with an R^2 of .35. The pre-ICC score made a significant contribution to the model ($t = 8.95, p < .000$).

Table 4.6

Regression Analysis Summary for the 2015 Cohort

| Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|----------|----------|
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | .47 | .05 | .57 | 8.94 | .000 |
| IELTS | .1 | .08 | .08 | 1.17 | .242 |
| GPA | .06 | .07 | .06 | .94 | .346 |
| Country | -.002 | .08 | -.002 | -.03 | .976 |
| Gender | .07 | .08 | .05 | .82 | .411 |

Note. *B* = the unstandardized beta, *SE B* = the standard error for the unstandardized beta, β = beta coefficient, *SD* = Standard Deviation, *df* = the degrees of freedom, *t* = t-statistic, *p* = *p*-value

Another multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well the Japanese undergraduate students' demographic information and the pre-departure ICC score predicted the post-return ICC score in the 2016 cohort. In this procedure, the student demographics (language proficiency, academic performance, destination countries, and gender) and the pre-departure ICC score were the predictor variables, while the post-return ICC score was the outcome variable. The results were described in Table 4.7. For the 2016 cohort, this model was statistically significant, $F(5, 176) = 24.91, p < .000$, with an R^2 of .41. The pre-ICC score ($t = 10.96, p < .000$) and gender ($t = 1.98, p = .049$) made a significant contribution to the model.

Table 4.7

Regression Analysis Summary for the 2016 Cohort

| Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|----------|----------|
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | .59 | .05 | .64 | 10.96 | .000 |

| | | | | | |
|---------|------|-----|------|-------|------|
| IELTS | -.06 | .06 | -.06 | -1.02 | .309 |
| GPA | -.06 | .05 | -.08 | -1.16 | .246 |
| Country | -.06 | .06 | -.06 | -.98 | .327 |
| Gender | .13 | .06 | .12 | 1.98 | .049 |

Note. B = the Unstandardized Beta, $SE B$ = the Standard error for the unstandardized beta, β = beta coefficient, SD = Standard Deviation, df = the degrees of freedom, t = t-statistic, p = p -value

4.2 The Comparison of ICC Scores between the Pre-departure Phase and the Post-return Phase including Sub-group Differences between These Phases

4.2.1 A Change in the ICC Scores between the Two Phases

First, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was attempted to evaluate a change in the ICC score between the pre- and post- phases. However, the homogeneity of slope assumption was violated when this assumption was evaluated before conducting ANCOVA. Instead, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate whether there is a statistical difference between the two GSC cohort groups on the post-return ICC score and the ICC rate of change score, after controlling for the pre-departure ICC score. The results are described in the tables below (Table 4.8 and 4.9).

In this first analysis, the cohort group variable was a predictor while the ICC post-return score was an outcome, after controlling for the pre-departure ICC score. In the first step of this multiple regression, only the pre-ICC score was entered. This model was statistically significant, $F(1, 361) = 194.42, p < .000$, with an R^2 of .35. The pre-ICC score made a significant contribution to the model ($t = 13.94, p < .000$). After entering a cohort group in the second step, the total variance explained by the model was 35.8%, $F(2, 360) = 100.19, p < .000$. The cohort group was statistically significant ($\beta = .09, p = .041$). In addition, the significance of the F-test for change in R^2 was statistically significant, $F(1, 360) = 4.23, p = .041$.

Another multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate whether there is a statistical difference between the two GSC cohort groups on the ICC rate of change score, after

controlling for the pre-departure ICC score. In this analysis, the cohort group was a predictor while the ICC change score was the outcome variable. In the first step of this multiple regression analysis, only the pre-ICC score was entered. This model was statistically significant, $F(1, 361) = 171.33, p < .000$, with an R^2 of .32. The pre-ICC score made a significant contribution to the model ($t = -13.09, p < .000$). After entering the cohort group in the second step, the total variance explained by the model was 33% ($F = 2, 360) = 88.5, p < .000$. The cohort group was statistically significant ($\beta = .09, p = .042$). In addition, the F-test for change in R^2 was statistically significant ($1, 360) = 4.17, p = .042$.

Table 4.8

Regression Analysis Summary for the Cohort Variable Predicting the Post-return ICC Score

| | <i>R</i> | <i>R</i> ² | <i>R</i> ² Change | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | β | <i>t</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|
| Step 1 | .59 | .35*** | .35 | | | | |
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | | | | .52 | .04 | .59*** | 13.94 |
| Step 2 | .60 | .36*** | .008* | | | | |
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | | | | .52 | .04 | .59*** | 14.04 |
| Cohort | | | | .09 | .05 | .09* | 2.06 |

Note. Statistical significance: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$, R^2 = R-Squared, *B* = the Unstandardized Beta, *SE* = the Standard Error, β = Beta Coefficient, *t* = t-statistic

Table 4.9

Regression Analysis Summary for the Cohort Variable Predicting the ICC Change Score

| | <i>R</i> | <i>R</i> ² | <i>R</i> ² Change | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | β | <i>t</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|
| Step 1 | .56 | .32*** | .32 | | | | |
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | | | | -.48 | .04 | -.57*** | -13.1 |
| Step 2 | .57 | .33*** | .008* | | | | |
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | | | | -.48 | .04 | -.57*** | -13.1 |
| Cohort | | | | .09 | .05 | .09* | 2.04 |

Note. Statistical significance: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$, R^2 = R-Squared, B = the Unstandardized Beta, SE = the Standard Error, β = Beta Coefficient, t = t-statistic

4.2.2 Factor Contribution (Demographics, Academic Performance, Destination Countries) to a Larger Change as a Result of Study Abroad Experience

For the categorical variable, chi-square tests of independence were performed to evaluate whether destination countries and gender contribute to a more significant change in Japanese students' ICC score. The two independent variables were destination countries and gender, while the dependent variable was the change score groups. The GSC students with their increased ICC score were categorized as the ICC Up group. The GSC students with their decreased ICC score were categorized as the ICC Down group.

For the 2015 cohort group, destination countries were not statistically significant, Pearson $\chi^2(1, n = 107) = 1.75, p = .187$, Cramer's $V = .13$. Gender was also not statistically significant, Pearson $\chi^2(1, n = 107) = 3.07, p = 0.080$, Cramer's $V = .169$. For the 2016 cohort group, destination countries were not statistically significant, Pearson $\chi^2(1, n = 97) = 1.91, p = .167$, Cramer's $V = .14$. Gender was also not significant, Pearson $\chi^2(1, n = 97) = .11, p = .736$ Cramer's $V = .03$.

For scale variables, an independent samples t-test was performed to evaluate a group difference between the GSC student groups in students' language proficiency and academic performance. The GSC students with their increased ICC score were categorized as the ICC Up group. The GSC students with their decreased ICC score were categorized as the ICC Down group.

For the 2015 Cohort group, the test for language proficiency was not significant, $t(105) = 1.38, p = .169$. The ICC Down group ($M = 5.52, SD = .51$) on average had a higher IELTS score than the ICC Up group ($M = 5.39, SD = .45$). The 95% confidence interval for the mean

difference was between -.06 and .32. The effect size, Cohen's d , was .27, which indicated a small effect.

The test for academic performance was also not statistically significant, $t(105) = -1.6, p = .120$. On average, the ICC Up-group ($M = 2.73, SD = .53$) had a higher GPA than the ICC Down group ($M = 2.55, SD = .66$). The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference was between -.42 and .05. The effect size, Cohen's d , was .31, which indicated a moderate effect.

For the 2016 Cohort group, language proficiency was found to be statistically significant, $t(95) = 2.38, p = .019$. The students in the ICC Down group ($M = 5.44, SD = .55$) on average had a higher IELTS score than the ICC UP group ($M = 5.19, SD = .47$). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means was between .04 and .46. The effect size, Cohen's d , was .48, which indicated a moderate effect.

Academic performance was not statistically significant, $t(95) = 1.59, p = .115$. The students in the ICC Down group ($M = 2.60, SD = .56$) on average had a greater GPA than the ICC Up group ($M = 2.40, SD = .62$). The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranged from -.05 to .44. The effect size, Cohen's d , was .33, which indicated the moderate effect.

Table 4.10

Contribution of Destination Countries to ICC Change Score Categories

| | <u>Malaysia</u> | | <u>Thailand</u> | | $\chi^2 (1)$ | p |
|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|--------------|-----|
| | n | % | n | % | | |
| 2015 | 46 | 43 | 61 | 59.7 | .16 | .69 |
| 2016 | 40 | 41.2 | 57 | 58.8 | 1.33 | .70 |

Note. χ^2 = Chi-Squared, p = p -value

Table 4.11

Contribution of Gender to ICC Score Change Categories

| | <u>Male students</u> | | <u>Female students</u> | | $\chi^2 (1)$ | <i>p</i> |
|------|----------------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------|----------|
| | <i>n</i> | % | <i>n</i> | % | | |
| 2015 | 29 | 31.9 | 78 | 75.1 | .93 | .33 |
| 2016 | 42 | 43.3 | 55 | 56.7 | .08 | .77 |

Note. χ^2 = Chi-Squared, *p* = *p*-value

Table 4.12

Contributions of IELTS and GPA to ICC Score Change Categories

| | | <u>ICC Down</u> | | <u>ICC Up</u> | | <i>df</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>d</i> |
|------|-------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | | | | |
| 2015 | IELTS | 5.51 | .52 | 5.4 | .45 | 105 | 1.38 | .169 | .27 |
| | GPA | 2.54 | .65 | 2.7 | .52 | 105 | -1.56 | .120 | .30 |
| 2016 | IELTS | 5.44 | .55 | 5.1 | .48 | 95 | 2.38 | .019 | .48 |
| | GPA | 2.6 | .56 | 2.4 | .62 | 95 | 1.59 | .110 | .32 |

Note. *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation, *df* = the degrees of freedom, *t* = *t*-statistic, *p* = *p*-value, *d* = Cohen's *d*.

Binary logistic regression was performed to evaluate the effects of language proficiency, academic performance, destination countries, and gender on Japanese students' ICC score change as a result of their study abroad experience. The results were shown in the table below.

For the 2015 Cohort group, the logistic regression model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(5) = 6.09, p = .298$. The model also had weak predictive power, as measured by Nagelkerke R^2 (.045). The model correctly classified 60.8% of the students in the sample, which is about a 1.7% increase compared to the null model. No predictor was statistically significant in the model. GPA was statistically significant, $Exp[B] = .53, p = .038$; the effect size for this predictor was large. For this cohort, one additional unit increase (0.1) in GPA is related to 1.9 times a decrease in the odds of the Japanese students being in the ICC Up Group.

For the 2016 Cohort group, the logistic regression model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(5) = 2.52, p = .773$. The model also had weak predictive power, as measured by Nagelkerke R^2

(.02). The model correctly classified 60.8% of the students in the sample, which is about a 1.1% increase compared to the null model. No predictor was statistically significant in the model.

Table 4.13

Logistic Regression Analysis Summary for Demographic Variables Predicting an ICC Score Change Categories in the 2015 Cohort

| | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>Exp(B)</i> | 95% CI | Wald statistic | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|-------------|----------------|----------|
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | .09 | .24 | 1.09 | [.68, 1.75] | .14 | .709 |
| IELTS | .23 | .39 | 1.26 | [.60, 2.65] | .38 | .537 |
| GPA | -.65 | .31 | .53 | [.29, .97] | 4.29 | .038 |
| Country | -.21 | .35 | .81 | [.41, 1.61] | .36 | .549 |
| Gender | -.52 | .35 | .59 | [.30, 1.18] | 2.21 | .137 |

Note. *B* = the Unstandardized Beta, *SE* = the Standard Error, *Exp (B)* = the exponentiation of the B coefficient, *p* = *p*-value

Table 4.14

Logistic Regression Analysis Summary for Demographic Variables Predicting an ICC Score Change Categories in the 2016 Cohort

| | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>Exp(B)</i> | 95% CI | Wald statistic | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| Pre-Departure ICC Score | -.09 | .28 | .91 | [.53 1.57] | .11 | .737 |
| IELTS | -.28 | .30 | .75 | [.42, 1.36] | .88 | .348 |
| GPA | .03 | .27 | 1.03 | [.61, .1.74] | .01 | .908 |
| Country | .30 | .32 | 1.35 | [.72, 2.54] | .85 | .356 |
| Gender | .06 | .33 | 1.06 | [.56, 2.01] | .85 | .850 |

Note. *B* = the Unstandardized Beta, *SE* = the Standard Error, *Exp (B)* = the exponentiation of the B coefficient, *p* = *p*-value

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results from the execution of the data analysis plan in the previous chapter. The data analysis plan described a series of quantitative analytical procedures to generate results that corresponded with the first two research questions and sub questions. The first research question asked about the distribution of the Japanese students' intercultural competence scores including subgroup differences in the pre-departure and post-return phases. The second research question focused on the comparison of ICC change scores between the two

phases including some subgroup differences. Because this study was designed with a quantitative study as the dominant approach, presenting the answers to the first two questions were the main purpose of this section, while the answers to the third question will be presented in a separate chapter. In the next chapter, my interpretation will respond to the first two research questions.

Chapter 5

Discussion: Interpretation of Quantitative Results

This study was my attempt to answer questions related to Japanese students' intercultural competence (ICC) as the learning outcomes of their study programs in Malaysia and Thailand. The School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU), launched AGU's first undergraduate unit with a study abroad requirement in 2015. Within the context of the internationalization of higher education globally and of Japanese universities specifically, this study reviewed the current discourse related to these issues. The previous sections presented results from my data analysis as a basis for my interpretation of responses to this study's three main research questions and the sub-questions associated with them. This study design included quantitative and qualitative analyses. The main goal of this chapter is to answer the first two research questions. The discussion drawn from the quantitative results was more nuanced than my original expectation when the study compared the 2015 cohort and the 2016 cohort results. Therefore, this quantitative discussion chapter focuses on interpreting data, and connecting it to the existing studies on the post-secondary students' gains in intercultural competence in the non-Japanese and Japanese literature. What emerged as a gap in my quantitative analysis directed my attention to the qualitative results, which are dealt with in the next chapter and which address certain gap in the quantitative results.

5.1 The Distribution of Japanese Students' Intercultural Competence (ICC) Scores including Sub-group Differences in the Pre-departure and the Post-return Phases

5.1.1 The Distribution of Japanese Students' ICC Scores in the Two Phases

Describing the distribution of Japanese students' ICC scores in the two phases would respond to the first research question in this study. The first part of this research question asked about the distribution of Japanese students' ICC scores before and after their study abroad participation, these scores' mean differences, and correlations to visualize their scores. My

results suggested that these students' pre-departure ICC scores were positively correlated to their post-return ICC scores because both cohorts' correlation results showed statistically significant relationships with large effect sizes: .574 at the .01 level for the 2015 cohort and .625 at the .01 level for the 2016 cohort. These results indicated both statistical and practical significance in the relationship between these Japanese students' intercultural competence development and their study abroad participation in this study.

While the above correlational results revealed convergence in this study, where my analysis diverged was in identifying results in these students' ICC mean differences between the two cohorts. Only the 2016 cohort showed a statistically significant mean difference with a small effect size ($d = .29$) between the pre- and post- ICC score; the same analysis in the 2015 cohort resulted in no statistical significance with a small effect size ($d = .08$). My initial reaction to this finding was surprise, since the original expectation was that there would be similar results from both cohorts, especially since a positive correlation of the two ICC scores showed statistical significance with medium effect sizes. A possible explanation for this result might be the differences in the cohort characteristics. The descriptive statistics of the GSC sample showed the statistical difference of English proficiency, GPA, and gender between the two cohorts as described in the Method section. These divergent results in this first research question suggested the need for a more careful interpretation of Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence due to their study abroad participation in this study.

My conflicting results posed several questions for the existing discourse in the academic literature, which underscored the need to build further consensus by improving evidence and methods. On the one hand, the 2016 cohort result supported several major U.S. studies (i.e., Vande Berg et al., 2009; Vande Berg et al., 2012; Sutton & Ruben, 2015) and Burrow's meta-analysis (2019). On the other hand, the 2015 cohort showed a non-statistical significance similar

to Keefe (2008). When examined carefully, the 2016 cohort with a small effect size ($d = 0.28$) is smaller than the effect size ($g = .38$) from Burrow's meta-analysis (2019). Providing this comparison through an effect size was a distinctive feature of this study, especially when no other direct comparison with U.S. studies in the literature was possible without effect size inclusion, given that other major U.S. studies applied the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), while this study utilized the Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS). Having no effect size in these major U.S. studies posed evidence and methodological challenges that requires effect sizes to compare results in the current literature.

While this divergent outcome between the two cohorts corresponds to the existing U.S. studies, direct comparisons between this study and other U.S. studies were neither ideal nor practical for a contextual reason. The contextual difference restricted precise comparison because the U.S. studies were based on American samples in the U.S. post-secondary context. This contextual difference needed to be taken into consideration. A more precise discussion required this study to have a contextual alignment with other Japanese studies.

Although the current shortage of evidence among Japanese research studies has remained problematic, a limited number of studies were available to make direct comparisons with this study. The 2016 cohort result supported Hanada (2015) and Ujitani (2015), while the 2015 cohort diverged from these two studies. What differentiated this study from other studies in the current Japanese literature was the inclusion of evidence with statistical significance and effect sizes. Neither Hanada's nor Ujitani's study examined an effect size, which indicated the magnitude or strength of a statistical significance. Only if an effect size has been included in Hanada (2015) and Ujitani (2015) could a better comparison be made quantitatively based on the magnitude or strength of statistical significance. All three studies used different instruments: the SCAS in this study, the IDI in Hanada's study (2015), and the Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Inventory (CCAI) in Ujitani's study (2015). Since the application of an existing instrument was only a partial success, the results from this study further attested to a need for evidence and methodological improvement to build a consensus in the Japanese literature. Furthermore, the inclusion of effect size in future studies leaves a potential for future meta-analysis projects. Accumulating evidence with research design that includes effect sizes would fill an urgent gap in the Japanese literature.

Although both cohorts showed a relationship between the pre-departure ICC score and the post-return ICC score, only one of the two cohorts showed a significant mean difference with a notable effect size. Because of effect sizes being excluded from the previous studies, no direct comparison across different instruments among the U.S. and Japanese studies was possible. Further examination of this nuanced result might yield a benefit, especially when the data integration could reveal a few individual cases with lower pre-departure ICC scores at the later stage.

5.1.2 The Relationship between Japanese Students' Pre-departure and Post-return ICC Scores and Their Demographics

The second part of the first research question asked to evaluate the relationship between Japanese students' ICC scores at both phases and their demographic variables. The included predictors were language proficiency, academic performance, destination countries, and gender. The outcome was the post-ICC score. Despite my initial expectation, no predictor was related to Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence. GSC students' pre-ICC scores were the only predictor with statistical significance and a large effect size in both cohorts. Combined with the correlational result in the previous section, no independent variable other than these Japanese students' pre-ICC score was a predictor of their post-ICC score. As a part of a series of analyses, IELTS was statistically correlated to Japanese students' ICC scores in both phases in the two cohorts; however, small effect sizes indicated the lack of significance in these results. Gender

also showed a statistical significance in the 2016 cohort in the regression analysis, but the effect size was small compared to the pre ICC score so gender was determined practically insignificant in the result. Thus, the relationship between Japanese students' ICC scores in the two phases was more meaningful than other demographic information.

Although contextual differences between my study and other non-Japanese studies pose comparison challenges, a comparison with the available U.S. studies places my research within the current discourse. My results were contrary to the existing discourse in the non-Japanese literature. The current major U.S. studies found that target language and gender were related to students' gains in intercultural competence. Prior target language, target language instruction in content courses, and target language courses in study abroad programs were statistically significant (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Burrow (2019) also concluded that target language instruction had a practical significance with a medium effect size, although no statistical significance was found in his meta-analysis. Similarly, female students were found to gain more intercultural competence during their study abroad compared to their male counterparts (Vande Berg, 2009). Burrow (2019) also found a medium effect size between the gender differences, although no statistical significance was found in his meta-analysis. A high female student enrolment plays a significant role in the discourse of study abroad programs in the United States (Gore, 2005); however, my research posed a question about the role of gender in students' gains in intercultural competence. Future studies of intercultural competence in study abroad learning outcomes need to be done if more results are to be found on target language and gender.

Exclusion of academic performance and destination countries in the U.S. studies were limitations when comparing this study with the existing literature. Sutton and Rubin (2004) examined the role of GPA with its effect size in their research. Still, the comparison was inadequate since the study included learning outcomes other than ICC. Unfortunately, no other

research in the U.S. examined the academic performance and destination countries' role in students' gain in their intercultural competence. Vande Berg et al. (2009) and Burrow (2019) had no GPA in their studies. Destination countries were also excluded from these U.S. studies, such as Burrow (2019) and Vande Berg et al. (2009). Even though Vande Berg et al. (2009) found statistical and practical significance on perceived cultural similarity/dissimilarity, conceptual differences between this variable and destination countries posed a comparison challenge. One study included a group of American students in France (Vande Berg et al. 2012), but the destination country was not the authors' independent variable. The inclusion of academic performance and destination countries in my study was a distinctive contribution to the existing evidence and methodological challenges of non-Japanese studies, especially because these two variables were often critical considerations for study abroad administrators and prospective students. Inclusion of academic performance and destination country in future U.S. studies could be a potential contribution to the literature.

A comparison with an existing Japanese study gave better explanations of a relationship between Japanese students' gains in their intercultural competence and their study abroad participation. My research posed questions on the role of English proficiency raised by Hanada (2015, 2019), who found a statistically significant result in his study. Two considerations could explain the possible divergence between this study and Hanada's studies (2015, 2019). First, the target language variable was measured in different instruments: TOEIC (Hanada, 2015, 2019) and IELTS. Although a conversion chart is available online in Japan, the chart is unofficial, with no endorsement from any testing organizations (Hanada, 2015). The instrumental difference cannot be ignored for this result. Second, with regard to English proficiency, the stakes were high for Japanese students in Hanada's studies (2015, 2019) compared with this study. English was the target language for these Japanese students in the U.S. and Canada, where English was

both the language of instruction and of daily living. In this study, English was the language of instruction for these GSC students, while the respective local languages (i.e., Malay, Chinese, Thai, and possibly other local languages) were their languages of daily operations in this study. The role of language proficiency, both English and local languages, in the Japanese literature requires additional examination in future studies. Furthermore, qualitative analysis in this study might provide some detailed accounts of the role of various language proficiencies.

The role of gender deserved attention in this evaluation study of Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence due to their study abroad participation. Different results emerged between U.S. studies and Japanese studies. The role of gender in three U.S. studies (Burrow, 2019; Roxeisen et al. 2008; Vande Berg, et al., 2009) was mixed and inconclusive at this point. In contrast, this study supported Hanada (2015, 2019), which found no statistically significant relationship between gender and Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence in study abroad programs. However, in their impact study on study abroad alumni in Japan, Yokota et al. (2018) concluded that the Japanese female samples had reported lower earnings than Japanese male samples over their careers. Yokoyama (2011) also found work satisfaction to be a predictor of her samples among Japanese employees in the United Nations and other international organizations. A gap in evidence on the role of gender in Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence, career development, and work choices over time still needs to be met. This gap on the role of gender is critical, especially because Japanese experts on policy regarding skill in the 21-century encourage Japanese university students to study overseas.

5.2 The Comparison of ICC Score Changes between the Pre-departure Phase and the Post-return Phase including Sub-group Differences between These Phases

5.2.1 A Change in Japanese Students' ICC Scores in the Two Phases

One explanation for this result might be the demographic differences between the two cohorts. The 2015 cohort showed a statistically significant difference in IELTS, GPA, and

gender compared to the 2016 cohort while the 2015 group had higher IELTS, GPA, and gender enrollment rates than the 2016 group. These demographic differences could be a partial explanation of the result in my analysis in this section.

Another explanation could be the distribution difference of these cohorts' ICC scores. As illustrated in Figures 4.1 and 4.2, the ICC distribution showed the mean score of the 2015 cohort to be slightly higher than that of 2016 cohort. This descriptive statistics result could be an indication that the 2015 cohort result had suffered from the instrumental ceiling effect compared to the 2016 cohort, especially since the effect size in this analysis was small enough to be negligible. The instrument's failure to capture the change in ICC scores in the 2015 cohort could result from the ceiling effects, as was flagged as a potential concern in the previous method section. The possibility of instrumental ceiling effects in the 2015 cohort in this study poses a question about the appropriateness of over-reliance on self-administered surveys like SCAS in studies related to intercultural competence in study abroad research. Some academic researchers shared this concern in Deardorff's study (2004, 2006). Other researchers (i.e., Deardorff, 2015; Kealey, 2001, 2015; Perry & Southwell, 2011) shared their concerns conceptually and methodologically. Kealey (2001) found that an evaluation of his samples' intercultural effectiveness by the local counterparts showed greater accuracy than self-administered surveys; he recommended incorporating such an approach in future studies. These researchers in this subject area recommended avoiding over-reliance on these kinds of instruments. Possible remedies could be incorporating a research design such as longitudinal studies to avoid the instrumental ceiling effects and employing additional methods such as collecting qualitative data through field observations or interviews by the local counterparts when designing future studies.

Both demographic differences and instrumental shortcomings could be possible explanations for the cohort differences in this result. While further interpretation is a challenge at

this point, an in-depth analysis of these students' narratives might contribute to elucidating the areas where the quantitative data is silent.

5.2.2 Factors Contributing to a Larger Change as a Result of Study Abroad Experience

The second part of the second research question asked about specific factors that would contribute to Japanese students' extent of change in their intercultural competence due to their study abroad participation. The predictor variables were language proficiency, academic performance, destination countries, and gender. The outcome variable was an ICC change category (0=ICC down-group, 1=ICC up-group) while the pre ICC score was controlled. While no predictor showed statistical significance in the 2016 cohort, the result of GPA in the 2015 cohort found a statistically and practically significant relationship between a GPA unit increase and a decrease in the odds of being in the ICC up-group. One study which included GPA, Sutton and Rubin (2004), concluded that cultural sensitivity (the closest variable to intercultural competence in my study) found a statistically significant difference with a large effect size ($p > .002$, $\eta^2 = .23$) after controlling GPA. While their conclusion claimed an actual effect of study abroad participation between the two groups, my study's directionality is against Sutton and Rubin (2004). Since no other studies in my review (i.e. Burrow, 2019; Vande Berg et al., 2009; Vande Berg et al., 2012) included GPA, this result which extends our understanding of GPA in students' extent of change in their intercultural competence through study abroad programs was a distinction to be noted. An evidence gap regarding the role of GPA in research on U.S. undergraduate students' intercultural competence in study abroad programs needs to be addressed in future studies, as discussed in considering the previous research question.

A comparison with another Japanese study on the extent of change in intercultural competence among Japanese students in study abroad programs would have been beneficial despite the recognized limitations. Unfortunately, no direct comparison of the role of GPA was

possible between this study and Hanada's studies (2015, 2019) since GPA was omitted from Hanada's studies. More importantly, this study's result showed a new interpretation of Japanese students' extent of change in ICC and GPA. The odds of GSC students being in the ICC up-group decreases as these students' GPA increases by one unit. My past administrative practice often observed that students with a higher GPA would have been perceived to have more success than students with a lower GPA. Their study abroad programs' current GSC placement procedure ranks its students based on several criteria, including GPA. Since a unit increase of GPA decreased the odds of GSC students' belonging to the ICC up-group, our thinking about the role of GPA in the placement process might need re-evaluation. There remains a great need for improved evidence and further consensus in the Japanese literature.

5.3 Conclusion

After presenting the quantitative data analysis in the previous chapter, a discussion of the results was a focus of the present chapter. My approach was to interpret the results in conversation with the existing studies in the non-Japanese and Japanese literature. This section focused on two major pieces of evidence from the quantitative analysis: the role of GPA in Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence in the 2015 cohort, a correlation between the pre-departure response and the pre-ICC score from the 2016 cohort, and a correlation between the pre-departure response and the post-ICC score. Although these results are more nuanced than originally expected, these results provided evidence for further exploration in these areas. Responding to the first two research questions, I identified my study's contributions through illustrations of shortcomings and limitations in the current discourse on Japanese students' intercultural competence through study abroad participation. A need for further clarifications emerged once the quantitative data was integrated into the qualitative data. Where the quantitative results fell silent, the qualitative analysis may be able to uncover a much-needed

and more nuanced interpretation in this section. The qualitative discussion in the next chapter could unveil the limitations and shortcomings of the present chapter by describing the narratives from the Japanese students' experience in study abroad programs in their target countries.

Chapter 6

Qualitative Findings and Interpretation:

Analysis of Narratives Included by Japanese Undergraduate Students to Describe Their Experience before and after Studying in Malaysia and Thailand that Illustrated These Students' Gains in Intercultural Competence

This study's goal was to bridge a gap in both the existing evidence and the methodological practices of past studies. For this reason, the inclusion of qualitative analysis played an essential role. The previous chapter left a few questions unanswered; this qualitative analysis uncovered a series of themes and relationships between these themes to describe meaning by contextualizing these Japanese students' narratives of their experience in Malaysia and Thailand. My study accomplished this goal by applying existing theories.

Descriptions of GSC students' experience in the target countries contributed to building explanations of what occurred between the pre-departure and post-return phases, especially when the quantitative data only illustrated snapshots before their departure and after their return. This qualitative analysis' significant contribution was the revelation of a set of reasonable expectations, concerns, and excitements of these Japanese students before their departure. More importantly, their post-return narratives illustrated their perceived learning experiences due to study abroad participation. While I recognized some limitations to my qualitative analysis in this section, my findings extended the existing theory of intercultural competence that could remedy some of the existing theoretical challenges that non-Japanese and Japanese literature faced.

6.1 GSC Students' Pre-departure Themes

6.1.1 Distinctive Groups: Critical, Concerned, a Mix of Concerned and Excited, and Excited

The narratives of GSC students facing the reality of going to Malaysia and Thailand described their complicated and mixed expectations, and a set of themes emerged. There were four main views expressed: critical, concerned, a mix of concerned and excited, and excited. The

narratives of GSC students preparing for less common study abroad destinations in Malaysia and Thailand were similar to those of Japanese students embarking on new journeys. Examples for these groups included the following (translated with certain adjustments made by the author):

I hope both [students and GSC] will gain acceptable outcomes especially since [GSC] forces [the students] to participate in the study abroad programs when the programs are almost like a vacation

[押し付けのような留学制度で留学生の実態はバカンスこの先この学部の留学がより実のあり両者間の納得が得られるものになるように願っています] (case #309 categorized as critical)

[I am concerned about] my physical health and conditioning

[体調や健康不安に思っています] (case #303 categorized as concerned)

[I only] have concerns now, but [I would like to] have fulfilling time as this is a rare opportunity [今は不安しかないがなかなかない機会なので充実した生活を送りたい](case #94 categorized as a mix of concerned and excited)

[I] want to have fulfilling experiences that [I] cannot have in Japan, and would like to feel a sense of accomplishment about [my] study abroad after four months

[日本ではできない経験をたくさんして4ヶ月後には留学に行ってよかったと思えるよう絶対に有意義なものにしたい](case #126 categorized as excited)

Some students conveyed their concerns about logistic issues like health and wellness and under-preparedness (both academic and personal). However, more importantly, these students also

revealed their concerns about building new relationships with members of the local community and accepting cultural differences.

As shown in these narratives, some students reflected on their concerns and excitement in face of unknown cultures. However, excitement was more frequent than concerns when referring to the specific themes of cultural differences. Upon more careful examination, I found that some students shared their concerns and excitement about exploring unknown cultures. For example, one student shared, “[I am] uncertain about my ability to accept cultural differences honestly [文化の違いを素直に受け入れるか心配]” (case #92). Another student also voiced, “[I am concerned about] being subjected to prejudice toward me as a Japanese person [日本人と分かると軽視されそう]”(case #305). There were some positive expressions, such as “[I am excited about] knowing more about Malaysia for the first time [マレーシアについて初めて知るので楽しみです](case #101)” and “[I think this is] a positive opportunity to be able to understand a culture other than my own [他文化を理解できる良い機会だと考える]” (case #146).

These four main themes or views included a set of sub-themes that explained these GSC students’ more specific expectations. Although these themes were organized from the qualitative data in the 2016 cohort due to the data collection limitation in the original dataset, students voiced stories familiar to many higher education administrators, study abroad advisors, and faculty members, including myself. Had the data been available in the 2015 cohort, I have no doubt that similar voices would surely have been present. These major themes or views and sub-themes are illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1*A Summary of Major Themes and Sub-Themes from the 2016 Cohort Pre-Departure Phase*

| Major Themes | Sub Themes | Open Themes |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Critical | | Setting up immunizations, Course availability at AGU after returning, Being forced to study abroad, Accommodation, Japanese student concentration, Program length being too short, Job hunting after return, Overwhelming schedules after returning. |
| Concerned | Moving and Logistics | One's own health condition, Local hygiene in destination countries, Leaving one's residence, Safety, Food/water, Insects, Climate/weather, Leaving Japan, Accommodation, Expenses/Finance, Leaving friends in Japan. |
| | Moving to a new unknown country | Worry about going, Studying in a new destination country/culture for the first time, Not grasping the reality of one's own departure, First time going to Southeast Asia/destination/developing countries. |
| | Insufficient language proficiency | Not being proficient in a local language, One's proficiency in English in one's destination country. |
| | Academic under-preparation | Whether being able to earn academic credits/studying courses (at a host university), Being able to complete a field study (assignment by AGU), Not having a clear purpose to take advantage of one's study abroad. |
| | Building new interpersonal relations | Not being able to communicate with local people, Communicating in English with local people. |
| | Bridging cultural differences | Being able to accept cultural differences sincerely/honestly, Knowing one's own challenges, Being a target of prejudice as a Japanese, Differences in living conditions between Japan and destination countries, Homesickness. |
| A mix of concerned and excited | Concerned and excited | Being torn between excitement and concern, Expecting to have tough experience as opportunities for growth, Reflecting on and processing one's concerns and excitement, Reflecting on individual characters and ethnicity. |
| Excited | Growing and developing oneself | Looking forward to having a variety of new stimuli, Putting one's best effort during one's study abroad programs, Taking advantage of rare opportunities outside of Japan, Making meaningful experience in one's program overseas, An opportunity to grow, A program that is more than language studies. |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Moving to a new unknown country | Studying in a new destination country/culture, Going to a country where student's family used to live, Excited to go abroad, Going to a new destination for the first time, Feeling like going on a vacation. |
| Improving language proficiency | Improving one's proficiency in a local language, Improving one's proficiency in English. |
| Building new interpersonal relations | Meeting an old friend, Learning by interacting with specific groups of people in a destination, Making new friends in one's destination country, Willingness to communicate with students and residents in the destination countries. |
| Bridging cultural differences | Accepting cultural differences, Understanding a culture other than one's own outside of Japan/destination countries, Improving empathy, Studying about ethnic and political issues in a destination country, Personal interests/experience in a destination country/culture, Understanding a new value, Improving cultural self-awareness as a Japanese person. |

6.1.2 Uncovering a Complicated Thematic Relationship: Mixed Expectations toward the Unknown

What became distinctive in my analysis was the organization of these themes onto a continuum. This continuum represented GSC students' complicated narratives in their expectations toward destination countries as unknown places during the pre-departure phase. This continuum could also serve as a foundation for assessing GSC students' preparedness for their departure as these pre-departure narratives described GSC students' concerns and expectations toward the unknown destinations as their needs. A pre-departure orientation with an intercultural preparation focus has been argued to be an essential intervention for students' success in study abroad programs. However, little evidence was provided in the literature until now. Kealey (2001) found that having a positive outlook contributed to success overseas among Canadian technical advisors. Hanada (2015, 2019) found pre-departure orientation to have one of the most significant impacts on the extent of students' change in intercultural competence through study abroad participation. Developing and implementing pre-departure interventions could improve GSC students' expectations, pushing them toward the excitement part of the continuum, while the orientation could reduce their concerns. Knowing these pre-departure needs can help study abroad organizers develop pre-departure interventions at the program and the curriculum levels. Figure 6.1 illustrates the pre-departure continuum.

Figure 6.1

GSC Student Pre-departure Preparedness Continuum

| | | | | | | |
|----------|--|-----------|--|-------|--|---------|
| Critical | | Concerned | | Mixed | | Excited |
|----------|--|-----------|--|-------|--|---------|

When they responded to the survey, one most dominant expectation seems to have been expressed. These students in the pre-departure phase shared a combination of concern and excitement for their new journey to the unknown; in fact, a few students spoke of their difficulty

grasping the reality before them. One student wrote, “[a thought of going to study abroad] went around two or three times in my mind, and [I] no longer know my true feeling [自分の中で2~3周ぐらいしたので、もはやよくわからなくなりました]” (case #252). Although most students expressed their concern or excitement in their responses, I believe the reality would have been that these students most likely felt just as this student shared: mixed expectations of both concern and excitement. This continuum was also unique because of the way it figured among these students’ expectations. Although these students voiced one expectation or another, I believe the reality would be a mix of all four themes (criticism, concerns, a mix of concerns and excitement, and excitement). One student revealed, “[I have] many concerns, but [I hope] I will have a variety of experiences. [不安な要素も多いですが色々な経験を積めたらと思います]” (case #141).

One finding that requires attention in these pre-departure themes was a group of students who were identified as critical. These students appeared to be distinct from the other three groups. These critical voices targeted their expectations primarily toward GSC’s programmatic areas such as study abroad requirements and scheduling. These students voiced their criticisms of the study abroad requirements. These students’ criticism, particularly the characterization of the study abroad requirement as forced participation without students’ choice, sounded an alarm in my analysis. The department was explicit in many different ways that students were required to study in their partner institutions in Malaysia and Thailand in order for them to earn a degree. Since GSC’s study abroad requirement was emphasized as an essential component of its undergraduate curriculum, such criticism is perplexing because a failure of GSC to notify students of its study abroad requirement seemed unimaginable. Without context, my qualitative analysis is limited. However, my impression from these critical narratives was that something other than their actual dissatisfaction was feeding their criticisms. These students’ critical narratives illustrated something other than the substance of study abroad programs as they

showed their dissatisfaction toward the department without hesitation. Identifying these students' sources of dissatisfaction before their departure and devising interventions specific to this group is essential for GSC to maintain the program quality and administration.

6.2 Perceived Learning Outcomes from GSC Students' Voices

6.2.1 Four Distinctive Learning Outcome Themes: Critical, Negative, Mixed, and Positive

GSC students' narratives after returning from Malaysia and Thailand were very diverse. Some students conveyed their positive gains while others voiced their negative outcomes because of their particular challenges. These narratives symbolized what GSC students perceived as their learning outcomes in the target cultures, including the negative ones. Uncovering consistent messages from these diverse narratives was challenging, but the difficulties were overcome by identifying sub-themes. Once sub-themes were organized, these sub-themes contributed to formulating four major themes: Critical, negative, mixed, and positive. Similar to the pre-departure narratives, the students' post-return narratives were grouped into four categories of their perceived learning outcomes. The selected examples below characterized the themes that were reported within one month after their return to Japan:

“[I faced] several inconvenient problems in my study abroad program...Also [I am not sure why] Pixel [a mobile phone] was recommended...buying one in a destination would have been convenient

[まだ制度やシステムがしっかりしてなく不便に感じることも多々あった後 Pixel を勧める理由がわからない現地で買った方が便利]” (case #27, categorized as critical)

“[I would] never go to Thailand again

[タイには2度と行かなくて良いと思った]” (case #346, categorized as negative)

“[I learned] Thai people’s kindness as I was able to enjoy [this aspect of] cultural differences; however, sometimes, differences in the time concept and attitudes toward lectures posed challenges to understand

[タイの方に優しさを知ることができ文化の違いを楽しめたが時に日本人との時間の感覚や授業への意識が違いなんか苦労したことがある]” (case #191, categorized as mixed)

“Learning about Islam as a fascinating religion was a good outcome [for me] in Malaysia as one of the largest Islamic countries in the world since Islam is often characterized as scary and

fearsome[イスラム教徒の多いマレーシアに留学でき怖いという印象を持たれがちなイスラム教がとても興味深い宗教であることを知ることができたことがとても良かったと思います]” (case #199, categorized as positive)

These four themes were oriented toward directions between positive and negative as illustrated by these students' voices. Some conveyed their experience related to specific local cultures while other students found benefits and challenges in building new interpersonal relationships across cultural differences. As well, many simply expressed their satisfaction with their experience in their destination countries without any further descriptions. These student experiences were interpreted to be their learning outcomes from their cultural experience in Malaysia and Thailand. Although these were just a few examples identified from themes organized from the GSC students’ narratives in the post-return survey, the list of major themes and related sub-themes is presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2.*A Summary of Major Themes and Sub-Themes from the 2016 Cohort Pre-Departure Phase*

| Major Themes | Sub-Themes | Open Themes |
|--------------|---|--|
| Critical | Negative effects of GSC student Concentration | Too many GSC students in one program/university, Interacting with Japanese people |
| | Other Critiques | Program needs improvement, Accommodation, Conditioning, Program too long, Inadequate academic quality in a destination country, Program requirement, Fieldwork and study at universities, Insufficient safety information |
| Negative | Failure to make cultural adjustments | Unable to eat local food, Unable to deal with unexpected events |
| | Failure to bridge cultural differences | Reinforcing one's own stereotypes about people in target cultures, living in a developing country |
| | Rejection of study abroad experience | Never returning to Thailand, Never leaving Japan |
| | Personal challenges | Coping with overwhelming stress, Coping with homesickness, needing to be alone |
| | Failure to improve language proficiency | Unable to improve English proficiency, Unable to learn Malay |
| Positive | Raising cultural self-awareness | Reflecting on one's own culture/Japanese culture, Recognizing one's own prejudices toward destination culture/country, Changes in one's worldviews, A third culture perspective, Understanding perceptions of Japanese from local people |
| | Recognizing cultural diversity in destination culture/country | Different kinds of English in a destination culture/country, International settings, diversity of people, Understanding cultural diversity, Linguistic diversity, Diversity of values, Diversity of ways of thinking, Understanding cultural differences, Extend one's value beyond Japanese culture, A challenge of bridging cultural differences |
| | Improving language proficiency | Improving one's English proficiency, Improving local languages, Successful experience of speaking English in destination countries, Realizing one's need for English proficiency, Realizing one's need for local language proficiency, The challenge of using English in a destination country, The challenge of using a local language in a destination country/culture |
| | Understanding of local culture | Learning about Islam, Learning about local religions, New understanding about the destination culture/countries, Local infrastructure, politics, Poverty, Appreciating rural settings |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Bridging cultural differences | Accepting cultural differences, Understanding a culture other than one's own outside of Japan/destination countries, Improving empathy, Studying ethnic and political issues in a destination country, Personal interests/experience in a destination country/culture, Understanding about a new value, Improving cultural self-awareness as a Japanese person |
| Building new interpersonal relations | Having made new friends, Appreciation toward local people and their kindness, Interacting with local people, Meeting supportive Japanese people in a destination country, Interacting with international students in destination countries/cultures, Recognizing the importance of networking, Establishing relationships, Limited interactions with local students, Expressing oneself to people in destination culture/country, Successful experience of communication across cultures, Being able to understand non-verbal communication/collaboration/strategies. |
| Personal Growth | Awareness of oneself, Patience, Being independent, Ability to think critically, Risk-taking, Being flexible, Positive thinking, Being proactive, Being empathetic, One's ability to respond to unfamiliar situations, Understanding new rules, Adjusting to new living, Thinking about opportunities in the future/overseas |
| Simple Positive Responses | Valuable experience, Very stimulating experience, Beneficial fieldwork |

Among these four major themes, a few findings distinguish this study. First, a recognizable number of GSC students' voices simply stated their satisfaction with their experience in their destination cultures without further explanation: “[I] enjoyed [the experience] [楽しかったです]” (case #192) and “[The experience] was very beneficial for me [とても自分のためになる留学になったと思います]” (Case #58). Although interpreting these student voices articulately posed a challenge without contexts and further details, some interpretations were possible. One explanation could be that these students might not have had enough time to reflect on their experiences after returning from their destination countries. For example, this particular student's comment characterized this interpretation; “[I become] confused about how to articulate my reason for studying abroad when someone asks me, but [I am sure that] my study abroad experience will influence my future decisions [何のために留学に行ったのか聞かれるといつも困惑してしまうが自分の中で今回の留学経験が自分のこれからの人生に大きな影響を与えたことは確信している]” (case #327). Reflection takes time and some students may benefit from guidance. Some students might not have had sufficient opportunities to reflect when they filled the post-return surveys. This lack of reflection opportunities and time after returning from their target countries could have contributed to their lack of comments in their post-return survey responses.

Another interpretation could be that these students were satisfied with their study abroad participation, but had no particular impression or experience strong enough to share in their comments. A lack of specific experience in the narratives might have come from these students' insufficient interaction with members of the target cultures due to a lack of opportunities or withdrawal from the given opportunities. This interpretation might also mean that these students encountered something new and enjoyable to enjoy their studies in the target destinations, but did not have enough impression to generate learning from their experience. Their enjoyable but

less impactful experience could have resulted in only a few words in their comments; these comments stating only satisfaction without impactful impression perhaps corresponded with little or no change in their ICC scores. When reflecting on the quantitative results in the previous chapter which showed the little or no changes in many students, this explanation also could be particularly fitting. Little or no learning perhaps because they enjoyed their time in their destination cultures but gained little from their relationships with members of the local community.

Focusing on a few students with reflective comments could provide better clues to uncovering these GSC students' perceived learning and explanations under this study since in-depth interviews were unavailable. Upon further examination of some comments, it became clear that some students showed a set of patterns that were reflective, constructive, and self-aware. These students were able to interpret their intercultural experience as constructive to their growth by reflecting on their prior shortcomings or bias for studying abroad. One student expressed their growth as a person by stating, “[I should have realized] the importance of the Thai language [タイ語の必要性にもっと早く気づくべきだった]” (case #4). Another student shared, “Prior to studying abroad, I had a bit of a prejudice against Southeast Asia, but once [I] lived there [I realized that my destination country] was very hopeful [especially when I learned that] the infrastructure was well established and the political system was stable [留学前は東南アジアに対する偏見が少しあったが実際に生活してみるとすごく希望のある国だと思ったインフラの整備されているし政治体制もしっかりしていた]” (case #16). These students had been able to interpret their intercultural experience constructively to integrate their experience into their growth by self-actualization or recognition and acceptance of their own negative stereotypes and shortcomings. Perhaps one key consideration is an individual ability to recognize one's lack of self-awareness through one's intercultural experience. Another key consideration is

students' preparedness to accept intercultural experience. These students' voices provide evidence for the importance of developing their abilities to learn from intercultural experience.

Second, a small but distinctive group of students showed unusual responses in their survey comments that deserve consideration. These students' comments indicated that they had taken a third-culture position as a result of intercultural experience as Stewart et al. (1969) recommended. These students' comments often included not only the members of local cultures but also the members of non-local and non-Japanese cultures such as other international students in the target programs. For example, one student shared, "[I had relationships with] not only students in [my] destination country but also international students from other countries, so [I thought about] not only good parts but also bad parts about Japan a lot

[留学先の国だけでなく他の国からの留学生もいたので俯瞰で日本の良いところ残念なところ色々思うことがあった]" (case #14). Another student commented that speaking English with both local students and international students from other countries was beneficial. "Learning English in Thailand was a wonderful situation because [I found] not only Thai students but also international students from other countries

[タイはタイ人だけでなく各国からの留学生が多いので英語を学ぶにはとても良い環境であった]" (case #312). The third student was able to contrast the destination culture with Japanese and Mongolian cultures by stating, "[I benefited from] being able to experience a culture other than that of either Japanese or Mongolia, my home country.

[日本と母国モンゴルとも違う文化に触れて良かったと思います]" (case #308). Although these expressions constituted a minority, they suggest valuable experience to that of the majority of students.

Third, not all perceived learning outcomes from study abroad participation were positive for these GSC students. Although the students' comments indicated positive learning outcomes

overall, some students voiced comments that could be interpreted as reinforcing negative stereotypes, biases, or prejudices. Interestingly, these students' ICC scores showed little or no decline in the quantitative results. Stewart et al. (1969) warned that intercultural experience through cross-cultural training interventions required what they called trainees' readiness to take advantage of such encounters. There might be a possibility of some of these students' lack of readiness for intercultural encounters in destination countries. For example, one student said, "My host university traditionally enrolled many Chinese [heritage] students and [there I found] many stray dogs [on the streets;] places where many Chinese people live have many stray dogs. [留学先の大学は伝統的に中華系が多く野良犬も多かったなぜか中華系の多いところは野良犬も多い]" (case #169). This student's comment could be interpreted as a negative stereotype against Chinese people as places with stray dogs could have been connected to low living standards as perceived by this student. This response was perplexing, especially when such observation was illogical and had very little to do with their academic or social interactions with the local members in this student's target country. Another student shared, "[I] sensed [a reality of] a developing country [発展途上国を感じた]" (case #299). This student could have meant a variety of different things. However, this comment could be interpreted as this student's discomfort with living in a destination country that was less economically developed than Japan. The student who appeared in the earlier example also simply thought they never to go back to Thailand after this study abroad program (case #346). These students' voices provided evidence that some students might be unable to increase their awareness or gain benefits from their intercultural experience in their destination countries. Should these students with negative interpretations of intercultural experience be evidence for students' inability to take advantage of their study abroad participation, then a need for preparation of these students is a critical issue for GSC. Even though this negative outcome is a part of the reality of study abroad programs, reinforcing

participants' negative stereotypes, biases, or prejudices toward the members of the destination cultures defeats the purpose. This finding could be evidence that intercultural experience through study abroad programs by itself might be insufficient to improve these students' intercultural competence. This finding is also evidence that students may require assistance to be able to interpret their learning experience positively.

Fourth, as noted in the pre-departure findings, some students voiced their criticism toward the department and its study abroad programs. One of the most frequent comments shared by some GSC students in the critical outcome group was that there were too many GSC students in the same program, making this part of the GSC program ineffective. Kealey (2001) explained an expatriate ghetto's role as a barrier for his samples in the study of successful technical transfer overseas. While active engagement in the local communities played an essential role in the success of technical transfer missions overseas, many Canadian advisors gave up because such active engagements were difficult to achieve (Kealey, 2001).

6.2.2 Uncovering a Complicated Thematic Relationship: Mixed Outcomes after Returning Home

Similar to the pre-departure qualitative findings, the post-return findings can be divided into four categories that formulated an overview of student learning outcomes due to their experience in the destination countries. From my interpretations of these student narratives, many students seemed to have gained both positive and negative experiences as some students illustrated both positive and negative experiences. For example, one student shared, "[I became used to] living with individuals from different cultures, but [I feel] my language proficiency remained the same [文化の違った人たちと生活することには慣れたけど語学力が上がったかと言うとあまり変わらなかった]" (case #7). Another student also mentioned, "[I had both] good and bad experiences, but [I have] no regrets about participating in my study abroad program. Thank you [for providing me this opportunity] [良い面も悪い面もたくさんありますが留学に行ったことを後悔し

ていませんありがとうございました]” (Case #269). Some students expressed both experiences, while others are still in the process of interpreting their experience to make some sense. These students’ positive and negative learning outcomes together could be illustration of study abroad experience as a holistic outcome instead of a binary outcome. Making sense of these students’ positive and negative intercultural experience holistically could benefit from intentional instructions of self-reflection in a space and time.

When all student narratives were taken into account, it became clear that these major themes could be organized in relationship to each other on a continuum depicting the orientation of students’ learning outcomes from critical to positive. Students are placed on the continuum according to the most dominant orientation of their response. Figure 6.2 is a visual representation of this GSC continuum.

Figure 6.2

GSC Student Learning Outcome Continuum

| | | | |
|----------|----------|-------|----------|
| Critical | Negative | Mixed | Positive |
|----------|----------|-------|----------|

Combined with the pre-departure continuum, this continuum could be used to assess students’ cultural learning during their study abroad participation. Like the pre-departure continuum, these learning outcome findings could assist these students with intended learning outcomes both before departure and after returning from their study abroad programs. An advantage of this continuum is that it is grounded in GSC students’ voices as opposed to possible theories and instruments dominant in the literature that were initially formulated and designed based on non-Japanese participants and application to the Japanese samples was implemented afterward. Although articulating these themes and thematic relations could be improved further, these thematic relations extended our understanding of Japanese students’ gains in intercultural

competence beyond quantitative results. This contextual articulation of a thematic relationship distinguishes my study from others in the non-Japanese and Japanese literature.

6.3 Theoretical Significance

In addition to the above described qualitative findings in GSC students' narratives in their pre-departure and post-return phases, this qualitative analysis generated possible extensions to the theory of intercultural competence. One possibility was extending the theory by integrating cultural self-awareness and developmental traits into the cultural learning theory. Another possibility was expanding the cultural learning theory and Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) by providing additional themes for consideration. These two extensions could be a distinctive theoretical contribution of this study to the more significant discussion of intercultural competence in the non-Japanese and Japanese literature.

6.3.1 Integrating Cultural Self-awareness into the ICC Theories

Cultural self-awareness was one of the most frequently expressed positive outcomes by GSC students regardless of destination country. Stewart (1995) explained that this view of one's own culture from inside out is the first step toward building effective interpersonal and intercultural relations. For example, one student shared his experience by stating, "Because [I] went to study abroad, facing communication challenges, [I] realized how difficult [it is to be Japanese] once I learned about non-Japanese people's thoughts about Japanese people overseas. This was a very valuable experience

[実際に留学に行きコミュニケーションの難しさや日本人が海外の人からどう思われているかを知り甘くはないなと痛感したいい経験になったと思う]" (case #54). Another student appreciated this realization of cultural self-awareness by sharing the following comment, "[I realized that] people with different cultures and values are living in the larger world, and [I also realized] the beauty of Japan's social environment and infrastructure

[様々な文化や価値観を持っている人が広い世界には多くいるのだと感じた改めて日本の環境や設備の素晴らしさを実感することができた]” (Case #102). Another student shared realization of unpleasant aspects about Japan, “[I found out about] Japan’s negative aspects [after this study abroad][日本の良くないところが見えてきました]” (Case #196). As these were just a few examples of GSC students’ cultural self-awareness resulting from their study abroad participation, a theoretical integration of the concept into the cultural learning theory in the ABC model is needed. Moreover, theories by Deardorff (2004, 2006) and Fantini (2000) included awareness as a dimension of their intercultural competence theories, my study contributed by clarifying a type of awareness they claim in their theories. Through qualitative evidence from the comment section, this study affirmed cultural self-awareness (Stewart, 1995) as an integral dimension of the intercultural competence theories (Deardorff, 2004, 2006; Fantini, 2000; Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). This theoretical extension is one possible solution to the current lack of integration of cultural self-awareness in the intercultural competence literature in the non-Japanese discourse. Moreover, although my review of literature written in Japanese is not exhaustive, among the works reviewed, no literature written in Japanese on intercultural competence in study abroad research provided evidence for cultural self-awareness as a part of intercultural competence in study abroad learning outcome studies. This study could be the first project dealing with this on Japanese students.

Because SCAS overlooked cultural self-awareness, these responses might not have been reflected in the quantitative results. This could suggest the need to revise SCAS or to develop a new instrument based on these qualitative findings.

6.3.2 Integrating the Role of Young Adulthood as Individual Development into the ICC Theories

The second possible extension of the cultural learning theory is a consideration of the role of individual development. Although the role of individual characteristics has been discussed in

the literature, this scholarly discourse has been unsuccessful in building a consensus (i.e., Berry et al., 2011; Kealey, 2015; Ward, 1996). Qualitative findings like being patient, flexible, and independent could be framed as a part of identity formation within the domain of emerging adulthood, as articulated by developmental psychology theories (Arnett, 2000, 2015). This new developmental psychology area is also applicable to the Japanese university population as reviewed by a team of U.S. American, Lithuanian, and Japanese researchers (Arnett, Žukauskienė, & Sugimura, 2014). In this case, identity formation as personality development during young adulthood could be a part of the cognitive domain in the ABC model that included cultural identity development (Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001). However, others (i.e., Kealey, 2001, Kealey & Ruben, 1979, Vulpe et al., 2000) included these terms in the behavioral domain as a set of interpersonal skills; Lee (2019) also defined this area as a part of non-cognitive skills. In this case, these behavioral skills could also fit well with cultural learning theory (Ward, 2004; Ward et al., 2001); simply, these qualitative findings can extend or revise the theory. More studies are needed in order for researchers to establish a consensus on intercultural competence theory.

Among 13 personality traits/behavioral characteristics that emerged from my qualitative analysis, proactivity and patience were the two most frequently expressed by the GSC students. For example, one student described proactiveness by sharing, “proactiveness with being brave to attend events and other activities will be an important consideration in the future [イベントなど様々なものに参加する勇気と行動力これらがこれからにおいても重要になってくると思う]” (case #106). Another student explained about patience by stating, “Because [I] was able to accept cultural difference, [I] was able to live comfortably and gained patience [文化の違いを受け入れることで快適に生活することができた忍耐力がついた]” (case #144). These expressions provided evidence for additional considerations in future studies about integrating

these personal traits/behavioral characteristics into the existing theories of intercultural competence. However, evidence from this study, unfortunately, provided no solution to fill a divide between interpersonal and intercultural relations. More recently, Kealey (2015) argued that intercultural relations are a special kind of interpersonal relations based on his observation in the field for 25 years. He also argued that the most appropriate measurement available is in the behavioral-based approaches. Berry et al. (2011) suggested several conceptual challenges of measuring the role of personality in intercultural relations studies. This area needs further studies to build a consensus, a process that would benefit from applying more social psychological theories into future study designs to focus on intercultural competence within interpersonal relations studies.

6.4 Conclusion

One of the most challenging obstacles in this qualitative analysis was to organize diverse impressions among the students into meaningful themes. Even comments about duration and destination country were divergent. Some students felt the duration was too short to gain something from their experience while other students simply felt the program required them to study for too long in their destination countries. Another divergent theme was their experience of English proficiency in Malaysia and Thailand. Some students thought speaking English to non-dominant English speakers contributed to their proficiency improvement, while others felt their proficiency declined on speaking with non-dominant English speakers.

This qualitative discussion section was an opportunity for data integration at the interpretation stage. This data integration approach aimed to uncover a gap or a limitation in the quantitative results and discussion. Organizing themes and thematic relationships based on theoretical frameworks allowed this section's findings to provide possible explanations of the quantitative results. These qualitative findings contributed to revealing a group of students who

expressed four different types of expectations and outcomes. In addition, this qualitative discussion contributed to identifying two theoretical areas of extension for intercultural competence: cultural self-awareness and the role of personality traits in the cultural learning theory. The next section will discuss this study's research limitations, policy recommendations, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 7

Data Integration: Results and Interpretation

The previous two chapters illustrated my interpretation of the quantitative results and the qualitative findings regarding GSC students' gain in their intercultural competence as a result of studying in Malaysia and Thailand. The quantitative analysis was able to provide results that responded to the first two research questions, while the qualitative analysis uncovered themes and thematic relationships that the GSC students described as a result of their study abroad participation in their destination countries. Although the results and findings from the two independent analyses provided evidence to answer my research questions, a few theoretical and methodological questions remain unanswered. This chapter will respond to the last part of the third research question using a data integration approach: a correlational analysis between ICC scores and student comments and an examination of student comments from unique cases with high intercultural competence (ICC) score increases and decreases.

7.1 A Correlational Analysis between ICC Scores and Student Comments

7.1.1 A Relationship between GSC Students' ICC Scores and Their Comments at the Two Phases

Answering the third research question involved evaluating Japanese students' characteristics through their written comments in the two phases of the study. A data integration strategy for combining the quantitative and qualitative data was employed, which included coding GSC students' comments to numeric values. The qualitative data was quantified to be an ordinal scale (-1 = negative comment, 0 = no comment, and 1 = positive comment) to prepare for a correlation analysis. Because the 2015 cohort only provided minimal comments in the pre-departure phase, my analysis primarily evaluated the 2016 cohort.

Results. Spearman's rho correlation was performed to evaluate relationships among ICC scale variables and coded comments from the pre-departure and post-return phases. The results

of the correlational analyses are presented in tables 4.15 and 4.16. For the 2015 cohort, the results showed that the ICC change score variable was positively correlated with the post-return response phase (.22) at the .05 level. For the 2016 cohort, the pre-departure response was positively correlated with the pre-departure ICC score (.18) at the .05 level. The pre-departure comment was also positively correlated to the post-return ICC score (.16) at the .05 level.

Table 7.15

Intercorrelations for the ICC Scores and Comments in the two phases in the 2015 Cohort

| Variable | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|---|---|
| 1. Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.58 | .67 | – | | | | |
| 2. Post-Return ICC Score | 3.63 | .56 | .58** | – | | | |
| 3. ICC Change Score | .05 | .58 | -.58** | .26** | – | | |
| 4. Pre-Departure Comments | . | . | . | . | . | – | |
| 5. Post-Return Comments | .43 | .72 | -.11 | -.01 | .22** | . | – |

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Note. The sample (*n*) in the pre-departure comments: Negative (-1) = 0, absent (0) = 181, and positive (+1) = 0

The sample (*n*) in the post-return comments: Negative (-1) = 25, absent (0) = 54, and positive (+1) = 102

Table 7.16

Intercorrelations for the ICC Scores and Comments in the Two Phases in the 2016 Cohort

| Variable | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|--------|-------|------|------|---|
| 1. Pre-Departure ICC Score | 3.56 | .55 | – | | | | |
| 2. Post-Return ICC Score | 3.71 | .50 | .64** | – | | | |
| 3. ICC Change Score | .15 | .46 | -.46** | .30** | – | | |
| 4. Pre-Departure Comments | .08 | .72 | .18* | .16* | -.04 | – | |
| 5. Post-Return Comments | .39 | .66 | -.06 | -.09 | -.05 | -.04 | – |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note. The sample (*n*) in the pre-departure comments: Negative (-1) = 41, absent (0) = 86, and positive (+1) = 55

The sample (*n*) in the post-return comments: Negative (-1) = 18, absent (0) = 75, and positive (+1) = 89

Discussion. My results on the positive monotonic correlation between the pre-departure comments and the pre-ICC scores and the pre-departure comments and the post-ICC scores could indicate active and thoughtful engagement. First, a certain number of students opted to be present and to respond in the comments section when other students were absent in terms of responding to the comment sections. Second, among those who responded, more students were positive than negative in their survey responses. Combined with the result for the 2016 cohort, which meant that the pre-departure ICC score is positively related to the post-return ICC score, Japanese students' positive presence before their departure could be related to their pre-departure ICC score. Also, the positive pre-departure comments could be related to their post-return ICC score. Although the effect sizes were small, these results extended our understanding of relationships between the Japanese students' qualitative themes in terms of engagement and their ICC scores in the pre-departure and the post-return phases.

It was difficult to draw comparisons to this positive correlation between Japanese students' narratives and their ICC scores in the two phases within the literature since only limited numbers of mixed methods approaches were available. Although my U.S. literature review included several existing mixed methods studies in study abroad publications (i.e. Bloom & Miranda, 2015; Demetry & Vaz, 2017; Keefe, 2008), these studies only performed their data integration at the interpretation stage. These studies supplemented their non-statistical results by illustrating common themes of students' learning outcomes. My data integration also provided evidence for further methodological significance that the two kinds of the data were integrated into conducting the quantitative analysis when compared to the previous literature in Japanese publications. My results aligned with Hanada's studies (2015) in which the author integrated his qualitative data by quantifying it, although his research and this study were dissimilar. Once quantified for his analysis, Hanada (2015) concluded that his students with pre-departure

orientation enrollment provided more profound reflections about cultural differences than the students without the pre-departure orientation. Even though there remains a gap between Hanada's (2015) study and my study, a possible contribution could be that students' positive projection of their experience before their departure could contribute to their ICC scores in the pre-departure and post-return phases. This study's and Hanada's conclusions could justify higher education administrators' long-held value on the contribution of pre-departure orientations to improving study abroad students' positive experience in target countries among higher education administrators.

Moreover, my study was devoted to illustrating a possible methodological extension of a mixed-methods approach in study abroad research projects by providing an integration strategy for quantifying qualitative evidence. In non-Japanese literature, the studies in my review (Bloom & Miranda, 2015; Demetry & Vaz, 2017; Keefe, 2008) all conducted their data integration in their interpretation stages. This study was closer to Hanada's study (2015) which quantified qualitative data using frequency analysis. This study's methodological contribution extended a data integration approach by coding qualitative data into an ordinal variable. This methodological procedure allowed my study to perform the correlational analysis with a more precise integration of two kinds of data.

7.2 An Examination of Student Comments from Unique Cases with High ICC Score Increases and Decreases

7.2.1 Methodological Contribution: Identifying a Need for Improving the Accuracy of An Instrument like SCAS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, over-reliance on an instrument like SCAS is a concern for intercultural competence studies in study abroad research. Uncovering possible explanations of instrumental and methodological challenges by examining unique student cases is the focus of this section.

On the one hand, looking into some unique cases and their comments provided insights into possible reasons for their increases. 21 students showed almost one-unit increases or large changes from their pre-departure ICC scores to their post-return ICC scores. These students marked their pre-departure SCAS scores just below three (3) out of five (5) ($n = 21$, $M = 2.86$, $SD = .5$). When they returned, these students reported scores with a one-unit increase ($n = 21$, $M = 4.03$, $SD = .61$). Examining these unique student cases with large ICC score increases seemed to be found in the two cohorts. For example, one student (Case # 98) mentioned doubts about whether this student's English proficiency would be sufficient in their destination country: “自分の英語スキルが現地で使えるかが不安 ([I am] concerned about [my] English proficiency in the destination). Although this student included no comment in the post-return survey, this student responded by increasing the 1.08 score when they returned. Clarifying the reasons for this increase would require an in-person interview with the student, but an increase of 1.08 could mean that this student's English proficiency was affirmed once they participated in a host university. Another student (Case # 352) reported by a one-point increase in the ICC score. This student reported, “すごく楽しみにしています大変かもしれないけれど頑張りたいです ([I am] looking forward to having this opportunity...even though the experience might be challenging, doing my best). Although the student did not provide a comment after returning from overseas, their reported ICC score increase could mean that the student's positive outlook gave them a sense of growth. One student (Case # 362) who provided comments in both phases might give a bit more depth to my study's interpretation. This student scored 2.2. in the pre-departure ICC score. This student reported a 1.56 increase by scoring 3.76 in the post-ICC score after returning from overseas. This student also stated that having a lack of clear goals for studying abroad might be inefficient in this student's program:

“何か目標ややりたいことがはっきりと決まっていないまま留学先に入って充実できない気がする留学前

半組と就活に差が出そうで怖い ([I am] concerned about going to study abroad without having a clear goal for going overseas; [I am] also concerned about having a gap between [myself] and other classmates (group) who leave earlier). The same student explained, “学んだというよりも現地でしかできない体験を満喫したという気分 (Instead of [having] learned something, [I] savored my experience in my destination). This case might explain that overseas experience could contribute to this student’s positive gain even despite a lack of clear goals in study abroad programs. More importantly, this case might be an example of a student with a concern who ended up scoring low but showed an increase in his/her ICC score. Further analysis of these unique cases could provide better pictures of students' self-perceived increase in the SCAS scale.

On the other hand, articulating reasons among unique cases with ICC score decreases was difficult. While no students articulated reasons for a decrease in their intercultural competence in the comments, when the qualitative responses of those whose quantitative scores indicated decrease were examined, it was possible to imagine the reasons for the decline. Students in this group scored the highest or close to the highest scores in the ICC scores in the pre-departure surveys. They also scored the lowest score in the post-return surveys. While no articulation of these students’ reasons was possible for their pre ICC scores because they provided no comments, their post-return ICC comments explained some insights into their reasons for these score declines. For example, one student changed by -1.52, but stated, “For good or bad, [I thought] Japan is an advanced economic country [日本は先進国だなと感じた良い意味でも悪い意味でも]” (case #184). This comment could suggest this student’s disappointment with Japan after gaining new cultural self-awareness because of this student’s study abroad participation. This realization could have been translated into this student’s negative score change. Another student also changed by -1.40, but explained, “[My]

worldview had expanded, and [I] am able to select a variety of communication methods because [I] experienced many different languages

[世界観が広がったたくさんの言語に触れたことで多種多様なコミュニケーション方法を選択できるようになった]” (case #71). This student might have reduced his rating in the post-return survey

because this student could have realized his inflated score in the pre-departure survey. This type of change in a student’s score was an instrumental concern in my methodology. One of the three cases that included comments in both phases was revealing. The difference in this student’s ICC

score was -.91; this student commented in the pre-departure phase, “[I am] filled with excitement [楽しみがいっぱいで興奮しています],” while the post-return phase comment stated, “[I learned

about] interpersonal relationships among Japanese people from this opportunity

[日本人同士での人間関係とかを学べた機会だった](case #351). What could be interpreted from

these comments was that this student had learned something different from what this student originally expected. Perhaps as other students expected, this student expected to learn from the

local community members. However, instead of learning from the local culture, his most

memorable insights were in fact about Japanese interpersonal relationships. This student’s

negative rating could make sense as a reflection of disappointment. Although further

interpretations were impossible in this study, these comments could represent these students’

decreases in ICC due to their own shortcoming or the negative changes could simply be due to inflated scores in the pre-departure phase.

Inflated scores in the pre-departure phase maybe due to 1) some students responding to the surveys by answering items without care, and without true reflection, or 2) students coming in with full over-estimation or full confidence of having the highest or close to the highest score. When these students responded to the post-return phase surveys, these students could put more thought into their ICC scores, yielding a more correct rating that was lower than what they

previously thought about themselves. These explanations are just possibilities, and difficult to articulate from the data. These possibilities are another set of challenges in addition to the instrumental ceiling effect suggested in the previous chapter. What became clear from this data integration approach is that self-assessment is a challenging task, and a single use of an instrument like SCAS is hardly sufficient to evaluate these students' ICC changes as a result of their study abroad participation. There is a need for methodological and instrumental improvement of the existing ICC evaluative research. As some researchers (i.e., Deardorff, 2015; Perry & Southwell, 2011) suggested, diversifying and applying various quantitative and qualitative instruments and methodologies is needed to further articulate students' ICC changes in study abroad learning outcomes research.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter intended to answer the third question through the application of a mixed-method approach. The data analysis in this chapter included two methods. First, the qualitative data in the form of student comments were quantified by coding the comments into an ordinal variable. The correlational analysis was performed to examine a relationship between the ICC scores and comments in the two phases. Although the data were limited, the results suggested the role of students' positive projections related to their ICC scores at the two phases. This result could justify a long-held belief in the value of the role of pre-departure orientations for improving study abroad students' positive experience in their destination countries. Second, the qualitative data was integrated into the quantitative data by analyzing two unique groups. One group of the students reported their ICC score increases by .9. Another group of students reported their ICC score decreases by .9. While the students with the ICC score increase illustrated more straightforward explanations, the students with the ICC score decrease expressed a more complicated picture. The qualitative integration showed a limitation of over-reliance on

an instrument like the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) to measure students' changes in their ICC scores as a result of their study abroad participation. As some experts in the field of international higher education suggested, diversifying methodologies by applying both quantitative and qualitative instruments and methods could make possible more articulate measurement of ICC in study abroad learning outcomes research. The next chapter will bring all results and discussions together to make recommendations relating to administration, research, and policy for both the School of Global Studies and Collaboration at Aoyama Gakuin University and other Japanese researchers and policymakers.

Chapter 8

Conclusion:

Limitations, Implications, and Recommendations

This study's vision was to respond to the existing limitations and shortcomings of research on intercultural competence as a study abroad learning outcome. As a researcher and administrator of higher education institutions in four different countries, my observation of academic and professional practices prompted me to look for evidence. When my review showed gaps in evidence and methods in both non-Japanese and Japanese literature, my intention was to design a theory-driven research project that would integrate social scientific approaches to accomplish a complex but dynamic research design. This evaluative case study required my interpretation to address nuances between the quantitative and the qualitative results. One specific piece of evidence on the role of academic performance in one of the two cohorts from the quantitative results showed promise; my study also contributed to identifying the existing methodological limitations of current research and directions for future research improvement. Notably, a data integration approach shed light on innovative possibilities for future mixed methods approaches while posing several questions about over-reliance on instruments like self-administered surveys for intercultural competence research. Equally significantly, my qualitative findings pointed to possible extensions of theoretical frameworks on intercultural competence through social-psychological conceptual applications.

Although the evidence from this evaluative case study most directly addressed the GSC needs, my interpretation of one piece of evidence in this study built an argument applicable to the wider academic discourse within both the non-Japanese and Japanese literature. More importantly, this case study is my first step toward providing evidence that may be applicable for other Japanese universities that engage in outbound study abroad programs. Although my

research is a case study, and is most relevant to GSC, the evidence from this mixed-method approach to evaluate GSC students in non-traditional destinations posed relevant questions to administrators, faculty, and staff members among other Japanese universities. While the current academic and policy discourse in Japan requires more evidence on Japanese students' intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes, my study aligned with the new directions that have begun to acknowledge the importance of evidence-informed approaches to evaluating Japan's outbound mobility policies. As universities' core mission is research, teaching, and social services, these Japanese institutions need to play more significant roles in research in order to be able to inform Japanese Higher Education policy and practices.

The goal of this chapter is to summarize the main research questions, acknowledge limitations, illustrate implications, and provide recommendations for GSC, AGU, and other stakeholders in Japan.

8.1 Responses to the Three Research Questions

Three research questions provided at the beginning of this thesis guided my research. The first questions examined the distribution of Japanese students' intercultural competence scores including sub-group differences at the pre-departure and the post-return phase. The second question evaluated these Japanese students' intercultural competence scores including the sub-group differences between the two phases. The third question attempted to uncover these students' perceived learning from their intercultural experience by assessing their narratives. The quantitative approach addressed the first two questions while the qualitative and data integration approaches addressed the third question.

The results from the quantitative analysis for the first two questions led this study to conclude that more studies are necessary to examine relationships between Japanese students' characteristics and the ICC Scores. Such factors as language proficiency levels, academic

performance, destination countries, and gender differences showed no statistical and practical relationships with the ICC scores in this study of students' intercultural learning changes. This result suggested that more evidence is needed to explore relationships between student characteristics and the ICC scores of Japanese undergraduate students studying abroad.

My qualitative findings for the third research question were more intriguing than the quantitative results. First, the qualitative findings uncovered the reality that every student interpreted their intercultural experience in unique ways as their narratives were diverse. This study's findings formulated a continuum of students' perceived expectations from the pre-departure phase and their perceived learning outcomes from the post-return phase. From this study's findings, future studies need to pay close attention to a mix of expectations and excitement before their departure as well as negative and positive learning outcomes after their return. These qualitative findings further affirmed two theoretical concepts, cultural self-awareness and young adulthood, which are integral to the current ICC theories.

Furthermore, the data integration results addressed what was previously challenging to analyze through the existing methods in response to the third research question. First, the data integration results provided evidence for possible explanations of Japanese students' changes in their ICC scores by investigating unique cases in the Japanese sample. The narratives from these unique cases provided narrative explanations for their large increase or decrease in their ICC scores. This data integration approach contributed to a methodological innovation for future study abroad research that was previously difficult to uncover.

8.2 Limitations

As with any academic research project, no single design would be free of limitation; several challenges in both quantitative and qualitative approaches became evident. This section

serves as an acknowledgment of the limitations of three methods: the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches.

8.2.1 Quantitative Limitations

My study recognized the following methodological limitations in the quantitative approach: working entirely with secondary data analysis, dealing with missing data in the existing dataset, translating an instrument, and my analytical competence as a researcher.

First, working with the secondary data for this study was a limitation as matching this study's purposes with the existing data posed a challenge. Although I was a member of the original design team, this limitation of working with the secondary data, as pointed out by Pienta, McFarland-O'Rourke, and Franks (2011), required efforts to overcome it by adjusting my research purpose and methodological design. Fortunately, a faculty member in the original team was designated as a contact for this study. I was able to correspond with him when I needed clarifications about the data. This limitation was minimized by a contribution from this Aoyama faculty member.

Second, dealing with missing data in the secondary dataset posed a limitation. Handling missing data in the existing dataset (McKnight & McKnight, 2011) was a challenge because the designated Aoyama faculty member conducted this study's data collection at the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC). After consultations with the dissertation committee members, the OISE research consultant, and the designated Aoyama faculty member, a decision was made to carry out several data management strategies listed in the methods chapter. These strategies allowed me to manage missing data in this study.

Third, as is a common limitation for cross-cultural studies, using a translated instrument (Van de Vliert, 2011) was a shortcoming in this study. For example, some students in the pilot study expressed their difficulty understanding some questions in the GSC short form of the

Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS). Overcoming this limitation required a team translation strategy available by Mohler and others (2016). This translation strategy contributed to overcoming the instrument translation limitation.

Further, I had to become familiar with quantitative and qualitative skills to analyze data because I was applying both analytical approaches (Creswell & Pinto-Clark, 2011). My methodological training in several courses at OISE before this study prepared me to be proficient in the quantitative method. Simultaneously, my applied research and evaluation in the last 17 years allowed me to perform qualitative analysis at a sufficient level. The above steps that I took were fruitful for reducing the effects of the existing limitations that emerged in this study.

8.2.2 Qualitative Limitations

Among several qualitative limitations in this study, two limitations need to be noted in the limitation section: The missing data in the 2015 pre-departure comments, and a lack of access to cases beyond the comments. These limitations posed a challenge for maintaining the analytical validity of my qualitative approach; the remedies described below overcame these limitations to ensure analytical validity.

First, missing data from the 2015 cohort in the pre-departure comments limited this study's qualitative findings. Although this absence of data was disappointing, enough information was provided from the 2016 cohort that allowed this study to focus on one of the two cohorts in the pre-departure comment analysis. In the post-return analysis, my qualitative findings were based on the combined cohorts as both the 2015 and 2016 cohorts provided enough comments to generate patterns and thematic relationships. The available comment data were sufficient to generate the qualitative findings even though the 2015 pre-departure comments could have reduced this qualitative limitation.

Second, a lack of access to individual cases beyond the comments they provided hindered me from articulating their narratives beyond the survey comments. Although a strength of qualitative analysis comes from its in-depth access to individual cases, this study only had access to comments in their survey responses. These survey responses lacked detail and this posed challenges for uncovering nuances in these texts. Even though these narratives missed any nuances that could have been provided beyond the written texts, this limitation provided another approach to analyzing data: data integration at the interpretation stage. By looking at specific cases with the most substantial extent of change in these cases' ICC scores, my qualitative analysis could interpret specific patterns from these cases. This triangulation with the quantitative results allowed this study to supplement this methodological shortcoming.

8.2.3 Data integration limitations

As listed in the qualitative data limitation, missing comments in the pre-departure phase in the 2015 cohort further limited the data integration in this study. Should this study have had the qualitative data from this group, my data integration could have been enriched by comparing the two cohorts thoroughly. Future studies at GSC could improve this limitation by making sure that students' comments were collected in both phases.

8.3 Implications and Recommendations

The previous two discussion sections placed the results in a kind of conversation with the discourse found in the academic literature, questioned them, and identified significance. These discussion topics allowed my study to consider further implications and recommendations that would benefit stakeholders within the field of study abroad programs inside and outside of Japan. This section is intended to contribute to the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC),

Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU), and faculty and staff at other universities, researchers, and policymakers in Japan.

8.3.1 The School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU)

First and foremost, this study was my contribution to GSC as a former assistant professor and a steering committee member. As GSC was the first AGU department with a study abroad requirement, the department is an experiment at AGU and in Japanese higher education. GSC is also a unique academic experiment since the department is most likely one of only a few units with this requirement to study in Malaysia and Thailand. This study's implications and recommendations are most beneficial to GSC: Specifically, for student admission reconsideration, pre-departure preparation, and program evaluation institutionalization.

Student Admission Criteria Reconsideration. My analysis of the factors that might contribute to the extent of change in students' ICC scores before and after study abroad provided evidence for posing a question about the relationship between academic performance, as measured by GPA, and ICC. GSC screens its students based on traditional indicators by testing prospective students' academic performance; however, the current admission procedure might be inadequate to accept students suitable for the department since low GPA students showed an high odds of being in the ICC up-group rather than the down group in the 2015 cohort. Notably, the qualitative findings (i.e., proactivity and patience) identified by this study outside of the quantitative ICC results could be applied as additional screening indicators for future departmental admission criteria. For example, GSC could consider admitting a group of students who are excited about going to Malaysia and Thailand even if their GPA is lower than others. Such implementation requires the department to commit to students' academic and social success. While reliance on students' academic performance on admission tests would be difficult to change, including additional considerations in the existing screening process would contribute

to prospective students' success in the departmental study abroad program and avoid a mismatch of student expectations and the department's educational goals.

Student Pre-departure Preparation Enhancement. Enhancing departmental student pre-departure preparation is the second recommendation for GSC because my study provided evidence for a long-standing argument on the importance of pre-departure orientation by researchers and administrators of study abroad programs. The data integration result showed that since all students receive pre-departure orientation, more positive responses had been present than negative responses in both students' pre-departure comments and post-return comments. Thematic relationships from the qualitative findings could be applied as a basis for enhancing students' sense of excitement and reducing their concerns in order to promote their positive orientation toward the study abroad programs.

Although the department currently provides pre-departure preparations through a series of academic courses, these courses could benefit from improvement in their content and pedagogy to address the results and findings from this study. For example, developing a third culture position before departure is recommended in the literature. Among many intercultural simulations and educational tools available, one of the most effective pre-departure interventions to achieve this goal is the Contrast Culture Method (CCM) (Stewart et al., 1969; Stewart, 1995). CCM has a precedent in Japan and has been widely considered the gold standard in Intercultural Education. CCM could provide this much-needed intervention for GSC students in their pre-departure phase. Another intervention includes a project-based course taken by a mix of local and international students to learn the reality of managing intercultural relations. Such a course could mirror relationships that GSC students would encounter in their destination countries. A critical consideration is the availability of an instructor to perform a facilitator role and manage such relationships in the project-based course. Although these were just a few examples, the key

is to improve these GSC students' positive outlook toward the destination countries while reducing their concerns about interpersonal relationships with the members of the local community.

Program Evaluation Institutionalization. Institutionalizing a program evaluation is the third recommendation from this study. This recommendation attempts to address a need for building evidence in intercultural competence through research and evaluation of study abroad learning outcome research in Japan. This recommendation is critical for the Japanese literature because the limitations of studies with methodological shortcomings remain a consistent challenge. Remediating the challenge involves three specific considerations.

First, institutionalization of program evaluation would allow GSC to make their administrative decisions based on evidence. As more cohorts participate in GSC's study abroad programs, these departmental programs continue to build data for analysis and dissemination. Evidence from the departmental program evaluation could improve GSC's resource-intensive study abroad operation and shed light on the internationalization of this one Japanese university department. These operational improvements could be connected to GSC's admission, student preparation, curriculum design, and other departmental policies. Institutionalizing program evaluation could contribute to the continuous improvement of GSC. Because GSC is the first and only AGU department to require study abroad, evaluation of the GSC program would not only contribute to GSC but also AGU as a whole and other Japanese universities.

Second, institutional program evaluation contributes to building a database for future research to remedy the existing limitations and shortcomings of research on study abroad learning outcomes in Japan. For example, one of this study's results found the existing instrument (SCAS) possibly insufficient for researching intercultural competence. GSC is in a position to remedy the existing methodological challenges by designing and testing a new

instrument that could improve theories and methodologies relating to intercultural competence through its database. The GSC's future studies could also explore the influence of student characteristics (i.e., local languages, age, country of origin, prior living/education experience abroad) omitted from this study. Moreover, GSC could design new research projects by adopting a panel design to follow up with its alumni and to examine their changes over time. Since limited evidence, methodological diversity, destination variations, and theoretical frameworks remain as challenges, this institutional database would provide ample opportunities for a systematic inquiry to build a much-needed consensus in the Japanese literature.

Third, GSC's institutional program evaluation could benefit Japanese universities through capacity building and knowledge mobilization. GSC's unique trial of a study abroad requirement in less common destinations could provide lessons learned from its achievements and challenges. For example, hosting capacity-building initiatives with Malaysian and Thai partner universities could develop more seamless administrative strategies among these universities. These initiatives could also be shared with other Japanese universities to build their capacity for research on study abroad learning outcomes. These capacity-building initiatives could contribute to prioritizing producing evidence for study abroad learning outcomes inside and outside of Japan.

8.3.2 Implications and Recommendations for Faculty, Administrators, and Staff of Study Abroad Programs in Japan

The above recommendations for GSC are applicable to faculty, administrators, and staff at other Japanese universities. Faculty, administrators, and staff at other Japanese universities are advised to implement student selection, pre-departure intercultural preparation, and institutional program evaluation. The below recommendations also apply specifically to these university stakeholders in Japan.

Evidence-Informed Practice for Study Abroad Advising. Incorporating evidence-informed practice into advising is the first recommendation for faculty, administrators, and staff

in advising capacities. As mentioned above, the role of GPA in students' extent of change in their intercultural competence was a significant result of this study. Keeping this piece of evidence in mind, faculty, administrators, and staff are encouraged to identify more inclusive ways to select students to study abroad. Because my professional observation found that many faculty, administrators, and staff often had little evidence on which to rely in their advising functions, their advising could benefit from applying this piece of knowledge in their related functions.

8.3.3 Recommendations for Researchers of Comparative Higher Education in Japan: Implementing Theory-driven and Methodologically Diverse Research Projects in the Future

A need for evidence on Japanese students' gain in their intercultural competence through study abroad programs is recognized as a significant challenge in Japan in this study. This study encourages researchers in Japan to improve the current evidence shortage and methodological skew by conducting more research activities on intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes. For example, this study suffered from the instrumental ceiling effect due to the pre-post design. However, the GSC department was hesitant to collect data beyond their pre-departure and post-return orientations because the faculty members were concerned about overburdening students with surveys. Should more academic researchers consider Japanese students' gains in intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes research, then the current shortage of theory-driven and methodologically diverse research could be improved. Academic researchers in Japan could design a longitudinal design by integrating pre-, post-, and follow-up data collection points to remedy the instrumental ceiling effect. New program designs on Japanese undergraduate students' intercultural competence would further contribute to the future academic discourse on building evidence of study abroad learning outcomes in Japan.

Second, including effect sizes in the quantitative methods increases opportunities to compare studies across different instruments; the lack of effect sizes in the existing studies

prevents the comparison of the magnitude of results across instruments. These new measures would be the first step toward more robust theory-driven and methodologically diverse research efforts among the researchers and policymakers on this subject in Japan.

Third, involving local community members in destination countries to help collect data for future ICC studies could avoid the existing methodological challenges. As became evident, this study suffered from the instrumental ceiling effect. As Kealey (2015) pointed out, self-assessment bias and socially desirable responses continue to be a problem in intercultural competence studies. While developing more accurate theoretical models and instruments to evaluate Japanese students' gain in intercultural competence is desirable, perhaps a recommendation is to have local community members evaluate students' performance during their study abroad programs. By collaborating with faculty and administrators in partner universities, these local members could evaluate Japanese students in their destination countries in ways that avoid self-assessment bias and socially desirable responses. This methodological adjustment is also proposed by Kealey (2001). As the current methodological and instrumental limitations remain challenges, this methodological adjustment could be one of the desirable considerations for the future research data collection. In order to accomplish this methodological adjustment, developing a strategic alliance by establishing collaborative research teams among partner universities and these researchers could overcome the current methodological and instrumental limitations.

8.3.4 Recommendations for Policymakers and Researchers of International Higher Education: Contributing to Evidence-Informed Approach for Japan's Policy on a 21st Century Model of Global Professionals

Led by the Prime Minister's Cabinet Office, the Japanese government places a strategic policy emphasis on preparing a next generation of Japanese professionals who can demonstrate intercultural competence. The current Japanese administration believes that preparing 21st-

century global professionals is needed to maintain Japan's economic competitiveness and diplomatic influence. While this policy emphasis brings experts in these areas to the Prime Minister's committee, little sign was shown in these experts' recommendations of being grounded in evidence. For example, this silence of evidence in the policy discourse was apparent when this study reviewed Japan's government publications. Instead, much policy discourse focused on increasing the number of study abroad participants and helping them improve their language proficiency. Because only a minimal number of studies with empirical evidence are currently available, this policy formation process must have faced difficulty in trying to make evidence-informed recommendations. Japan's policy on the model of 21st-century global professionals could be improved if more evidence were established to explain Japanese students' gain in their intercultural competence through outbound student mobility.

Evidence-informed approach is needed for the future success of outbound student mobility policies in Japan. Several recommendations based on my research are available to Japanese policymakers and researchers to establish more evidence on students' learning outcomes from the existing study abroad programs. One recommendation could be to establish a robust evaluation mechanism to investigate intercultural competence assessment among Japanese students as a part of evidence-informed policy formation. For example, the current funding program, Leap Japan, only has a response survey to collect descriptive data from participants after their return from overseas. The Japanese policymakers could establish an evaluation mechanism with proper social scientific methods with instruments and approaches to assess Japanese students' intercultural competence development over time. Academic researchers with evaluation knowledge and skills could contribute to building such an evaluation mechanism. The evaluation mechanism could be another systematic step to contribute to building evidence on study abroad learning outcomes through intercultural competence assessments.

Another recommendation could be to establish collaborative relationships between policymakers and researchers to engage in evidence-informed policy formation. For example, research experts could address policymakers' needs by collaborating together to co-design and co-implement evaluation projects on study abroad learning outcomes. When co-designing evaluation projects, an important consideration is to incorporate methodological designs with common instruments and approaches to investigate Japanese students' intercultural learning and development from a holistic perspective. These collaborative relationships could encourage the policymakers to integrate more evidence in their policy formation while researchers to encourage existing evidence that aligns with policymakers' needs. Having collaborative relationships between the two stakeholders complement each other's work.

Since the policy of outbound student mobility is strategically placed under the Prime Minister's Office, with funding dedicated, the current Japanese policy on the 21st-century model of global professionals would benefit from evidence-informed approaches to policy formation. An increased body of evidence as the result of collaborative contributions from researchers and policymakers through a robust evaluation mechanism would provide the basis for evidence-informed outbound student mobility policymaking.

8.4 Final Thoughts

Discrepancies between research/policy discourse and practice in study abroad programs at universities in four countries had been a concern of mine for many years as I worked in positions where I was responsible for designing, managing, and researching outbound and inbound international programs. My professional observation identified a gap in evidence, methodological diversity, destination variety, and theoretical foundation in Japanese academic and policy discourse on international programs. My review also identified similar gaps in the non-Japanese literature, even though some researchers and governments had better syntheses

than Japan. These gaps provided an opportunity to pursue my professional responses to the current issues in this subject area. This tendency of insufficient evidence on intercultural competence as study abroad learning outcomes was more serious in the Japanese literature than non-Japanese literature; a need for a further study focusing on a case in Japan became inevitable. At the same time, this study could be my contribution to the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), the department which allowed me to be part of their attempt to internationalize an academic curriculum with required study abroad programs in non-traditional destinations.

I came away from this study with more concern about these issues, but I continue to firmly value the positive influence of intercultural experience to equip university students with an ability to bridge cultural differences with individuals from cultures other than their own. This evaluative case study was a contribution to building evidence in the Japanese literature, especially because this research limitation became evident in the literature review. More importantly, this study was an opportunity to respond to my deep-rooted inquiry related to developing students' ability to bridge cultural differences with individuals from cultures other than their own. Even though this study yielded more questions than it did answers to my inquiry, evidence from this study has built a foundation for future studies that may answer these questions.

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Appendices

Appendix A: GSC Data Use Request Form

2018年10月14日

青山学院大学地球社会共生学部
学部長 平澤 典生 殿

個票データ利用申請書

| | |
|--|--|
| 利用申請するデータ | 地球社会共生学部留学効果測定データ GSC Study Abroad Learning Outcome Data |
| 利用目的 (いずれかに○印) | (○) 研究 [論文執筆、学会発表等] Research (Publication/Presentation) () 教育 [授業等における材料として利用] () その他 [] |
| 利用期間* (1年以下。延長可能) Use Period (Less than one year. Can be extended.) | 2019年1月 ~ 2019年12月 YYYY/MM/DD - YYYY/MM/DD |

* 地球社会共生学部の共同研究員の場合は、その任期を利用期間とする。

* For GSC appointed external researchers, the use period depends on his/her period.

上記データの利用を、誓約書を添えて申請します。

I make the above data request use by attaching it to the agreement form.

申請者氏名：平 塚 広 義 Hiroyoshi Hiratsuka



申請者所属・職位：トロント大学生 オンタリオ教育研究大学院 博士課程

Doctoral Candidate, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education,
University of Toronto

連絡先住所：34 Sussex Ave. Toronto ON M5S1J7Canada

連絡先メールアドレス：hiroyoshi.hiratsuka@mail.utoronto.ca

Appendix B: Secondary Data Use Agreement Form

誓約書

青山学院大学地球社会共生学部
学部長 平澤 典生 殿

1. 提供された個票データは学術目的での二次分析にのみ利用します。個別データの秘密保護を図り、個々の調査対象を特定する分析は行いません。提供された個票データは、本利用申請書に署名した者だけが利用し、第三者には再提供しません。
2. 二次分析の結果を発表する際には、個票データについて以下の文を付すことにより、個票データの出典を明記します。

二次分析に当たり、青山学院大学地球社会共生学部から留学効果測定調査（2016-2018年実施）の個票データの提供を受けました。

The data for this secondary analysis, "GSC Study Abroad Learning Outcome Study (2016-2018)" was provided by School of Global Studies and Collaborations, Aoyama Gakuin University.

3. 個票データ利用期限までに利用申請の内容について変更が生じた場合は、速やかに青山学院大学地球社会共生学部へその旨を届け出ます。
4. 利用期限終了後は、個票データを消去して、利用報告書を青山学院大学地球社会共生学部へ提出します。その際、論文等を発表していれば、1部を同封します。
5. その他、青山学院大学地球社会共生学部の指示に従います。
6. 提供された個票データ等の利用により何らかの不利益を被ったとしても、青山学院大学地球社会共生学部の責任は一切問いません。

2018年10月14日

申請者所属・職位 トロント大学オンタリオ教育研究大学院 博士課程

Doctoral Candidate, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

University of Toronto

申請者署名: 平塚 広義 Hiroyoshi Hiratsuka



誓約書

Secondary Data Use Agreement Form

青山学院大学地球社会共生学部
学部長 平澤 典男 殿

Prof. Norio Hirasawa
Dean, School of Global Studies and Collaboration Aoyama Gakuin University

1. 提供された個票データは学術目的での二次分析にのみ利用します。個別データの秘密保護を図り、個々の調査対象を特定する分析は行いません。提供された個票データは、本利用申請書に署名した者だけが利用し、第三者には再提供しません。 **The user agrees that data provided by School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC) only be used for secondary data analysis purposes. The user agrees to make his/her best effort to protect data privacy, and will not target research that discloses identities in the data. The user agrees that he/she is the only person having access to the data, and will not provide the data to the third person.**

2. 二次分析の結果を発表する際には、個票データについて以下の文を付すことにより、個票データの出典を明記します。

When the user publishes findings from the secondary data, the user agrees to include the below sentences for his/her reference purposes.

二次分析に当たり、青山学院大学地球社会共生学部から●●調査(20●●年実施)の個票データの提供を受けました。

"The data for this secondary analysis, "GSC Study Abroad Learning Outcome Study (2016-2018)" was provided by the School of Global Studies and Collaboration, Aoyama Gakuin University."

3. 個票データ利用期限までに利用申請の内容について変更が生じた場合は、速やかに青山学院大学地球社会共生学部はその旨を届け出ます。

When his/her purposes of the secondary data use during the requested period, the user requests GSC, Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU), his/her changes in a written form.

4. 利用期限終了後は、個票データを消去して、利用報告書を青山学院大学地球社会共生学部へ提出します。その際、論文等を発表していれば、1部を同封します。 **The user agrees to delete the data after the request period ends. The user agrees to submit a report regarding the secondary data use to GSC at AGU.**
5. その他、青山学院大学地球社会共生学部の指示に従います。
When appropriate, the user agrees to follow the secondary data use instructions by GSC at AGU.
6. 提供された個票データ等の利用により何らかの不利益を被ったとしても、青山学院大学地球社会共生学部の責任は一切問いません。

The user agrees that GSC/AGU will not be responsible for any personal, professional, and/or academic repercussions.

20 年 月 日

YYYY/MM/DD

申請者所屬・職位/Academic Appointment・Title

申請者署名/Signature: 印

Appendix C: Data Transfer Agreement (DTA)

DATA TRANSFER AGREEMENT

This Agreement is made between

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
(the “**University**”)

- and -

AOYAMA GAKUIN UNIVERSITY,
SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES AND COLLABORATION
(the “**Provider**”)

effective the last date of execution below (the “**Effective Date**”).

WHEREAS the University intends to perform a research project entitled “**A case study of Japanese undergraduate students’ intercultural competence development in Thailand and Malaysia**” as generally described in Appendix “A” (the “**Project**”), to be conducted under the direction of Professor Ruth Hayhoe, the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (the “**Principal Investigator**”);

AND WHEREAS the University requires certain information as more fully described in Appendix “B” (the “**Data**”) that is owned by, or under the control of the Provider, for use in performance of the Project;

AND WHEREAS the Provider wishes to assist the University by providing the Data to the University for use on the Project;

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree as follows:

1. **Data Provided.** The Provider shall provide the Data to the University at such time or times, and by such means, as may be agreed to by the Parties.
2. **Purpose.** The University shall use the Data only for the purposes of the Project, or such other purposes as may be agreed from time to time by the parties.
3. **Acknowledgement.** The University agrees to acknowledge the source of the Data in any publications resulting from the use of the Data.
4. **Review of University Publications.** The University agrees that it will forward any proposed publications on the Project, to the Provider, fourteen (14) days in advance of the proposed publication date. The Provider shall have the right to review and make comments on the proposed publication to the University. The Provider will not restrict publication by the University in any manner whatsoever.

5. **Further Distribution.** The University will not distribute the Data received from the Provider to third parties without the Provider's written consent, and shall refer any request for the Data to the Provider.
6. **Copies.** The University shall only make such copies of the Data as is necessary for the purposes described in this Agreement. Unless otherwise agreed by the Provider, all such copies shall, upon request, be promptly returned to the Provider with the original or destroyed upon termination or expiration of this Agreement.
7. **Term and Termination.** This Agreement shall enter into force as of the Effective Date and shall terminate on **August, 31 2020**, unless extended or sooner terminated upon the written agreement of the parties.
8. **Independent Parties.** The parties are independent parties and nothing in this Agreement shall constitute either party as the employer, principal or partner of or joint venture with the other party. Neither party has any authority to assume or create any obligation or liability, either expressed or implied, on behalf of the other.
9. **Governing Law.** This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Canada and the laws of the Province of Ontario applicable therein.
10. **Entire Agreement.** This Agreement is the entire agreement of the parties and no change or modification shall be valid unless it is in writing and signed by both parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the authorised representatives of the parties have executed this agreement in two original counterparts as of the Effective Date.

**THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

AOYAMA GAKUIN UNIVERSITY

.....
 NAM Tina Coccia
 E:
 TITL Director, Partnerships
 E: Innovations & Partnerships Office,
 University of Toronto
 DAT
 E:

.....
 NAM Norio Hirasawa
 E:
 TITL Dean
 E: School of Global Studies and
 Collaboration
 DAT
 E:

Acknowledgement:

I, the Principal Investigator, having read this Agreement, hereby agree to act in accordance with all the terms and conditions herein and applicable University policies, and further agree to ensure that all University participants are informed of their obligations under such terms and conditions.

NAM Ruth Hayhoe

E:

DAT

E:

Project Summary

A case study of Japanese undergraduate students' intercultural competence development in Thailand and Malaysia

Principal Investigator: Dr. Ruth Hayhoe, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, M5S 1V6, ruth-hayhoe@sympatico.ca, 416-978-1213

Scope of Work: The proposed project will investigate Japanese undergraduate students' perceived intercultural competence development as learning outcomes of study abroad in Thailand and Malaysia. The proposed project will consist of secondary data of a group of Japanese undergraduate students who are studying abroad as a graduation requirement for an undergraduate degree at the School of Global Studies and Collaboration (GSC), Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU). The proposed project will consider whether GSC's study abroad programs in Thailand and Malaysia influence changes in these students' perceived intercultural competence. Included in the study will be the following metrics: demographic data (i.e., academic performance, English proficiency, destination country) and survey data (scores from the Socio-Cultural Adjustment Survey [SCAS]).

Results will be presented on the following bases: In the form of a doctoral dissertation at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Furthermore, the same results would be used for presentations at academic and professional conferences in Canada, Japan, and the United States.

Activities within the Scope of the Analysis: The quantitative analysis examines 1) relationships between demographics and SCAS scores, 2) a change between pre- and post- scores of SCAS 3) The qualitative content analysis is based on students' comments in one section of the survey document and GSC public documents.

Activities outside of the Scope of the Analysis: No interviews will be done with GSC students, faculty members, administrative staff or parents in Japan or in Thailand/Malaysia. There will also be no interviews with host university students, faculty members, administrative staff in Thailand and Malaysia.

Products of the Evaluation:

- A doctoral dissertation at OISE, University of Toronto.

- An academic paper suitable for publication in a scholarly journal, such as *the Journal of Studies in International Education*, *the International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, and *the Japan Studies Association Journal*.
- An academic conference manuscript suitable for presentation at a scholarly conference, such as those organized by the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, the Japan Studies Association, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, or the Canadian Bureau of International Education.

2. APPENDIX “B”

Description of Data to be provided by the Provider: GSC study abroad learning outcome study data (2016-2018).

The above data consist of demographic data (i.e., academic performance, English proficiency, destination country). The data also include survey scale collected at the pre-departure phase and the post-return phase (scores from Socio-Cultural Adjustment Survey [SCAS]). Furthermore, the same survey data include students’ comments in one section.

Appendix D: University of Toronto Ethics Review Approval



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT,
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

RIS Protocol
Number: 37085

Approval Date: 14-Jan-19

PI Name: Hiroyoshi Hiratsuka

Division Name:

Dear Hiroyoshi Hiratsuka:

Re: Your research protocol application entitled, "A case study of Japanese undergraduate students' intercultural competence development in Thailand and Malaysia"

The Social Sciences, Humanities & Education REB has conducted a Delegated review of your application and has granted approval to the attached protocol for the period 2019-01-14 to 2019-11-14.

Please note that this approval only applies to the use of human participants. Other approvals may be needed.

Please be reminded of the following points:

- An **Amendment** must be submitted to the REB for any proposed changes to the approved protocol. The amended protocol must be reviewed and approved by the REB prior to implementation of the changes.
- An annual **Renewal** must be submitted for ongoing research. Renewals should be submitted between 15 and 30 days prior to the current expiry date.
- A **Protocol Deviation Report (PDR)** should be submitted when there is any departure from the REB-approved ethics review application form that has occurred without prior approval from the REB (e.g., changes to the study procedures, consent process, data protection measures). The submission of this form does not necessarily indicate wrong-doing; however follow-up procedures may be required.
- An **Adverse Events Report (AER)** must be submitted when adverse or unanticipated events occur to participants in the course of the research process.
- A **Protocol Completion Report (PCR)** is required when research using the protocol has been completed. For ongoing research, a PCR on the protocol will be required after 7 years, (Original and 6 Renewals). A continuation of work beyond 7 years will require the creation of a new protocol.
- If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--|
| Protocol #:12604 | | | |
| Status:Delegated Review App | Version:0001 | Sub Version:0001 | Approved On:14-Jan-19 Expires On:14-Nov-19 Page 11 of 11 |

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS

McMurrich Building, 12 Queen's Park Crescent West, 2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M5S 1S8 Canada

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