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Improving Intercultural Competence in the Classroom: A Reflective Development Model

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To meet the increased demand for international business education that prepares college students for studying, living, or working overseas, I propose a four-stage reflective development model to be used in the traditional classroom context to enhance intercultural competence for undergraduate students. I employ the model in a personal development assignment for a course in international management. The model provides a pedagogical approach for motivating students to engage in intercultural interactions, for helping them learn to make sense of their environment, and for advancing their learning about intercultural interactions. Quantitative and qualitative results support the success of the approach.

Keywords: Intercultural competence, Reflective learning, International education, Business education

1. INTRODUCTION

As globalization increases, business leaders must often interact with people and practices of different countries and unfamiliar cultures (Kedia, Harveston, & Bhagat, 2001). The increasingly diversified workforce and global business outreach heighten the need for students to become intercultural competence (Morris, Savani, & Roberts, 2014). To meet this trend, international business (IB) education has empathized that managers must develop international knowledge, personal leadership skills, and intercultural competence (Aggarwal & Goodell, 2014). However, IB educators have also found it challenging to develop intercultural competence (Aggarwal & Goodell, 2014; Mendenhall, Arnardottir, Oddou, & Burke, 2013). Most IB programs focus on study abroad, but the results have been debatable, especially for short-term visits (Deloach, Saliba, Smith, & Tiemann, 2003; Gullekson, Tucker, Coombs, & Wright, 2011). College students often lack motivation, initiative, or financial support for studying or living abroad. On the other hand, traditional in-classroom education is inadequate for learning about intercultural interactions. To meet the need for IB education to develop future global talent, I suggest a pedagogical approach through integrating reflective learning theory (Boyd & Fales, 1983; Hedberg, 2009; Rodgers, 2002a) with a three-dimensional Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES; Mendenhall,

Oddou, & Osland, 2012). I propose a single-loop reflective model with four developmental stages: awareness, experience, reflection, and assessment. The goal of this study is to apply the reflective development model into the IB curriculum and to examine its potency for enhancing intercultural competence.

I implemented the reflective development model in an International Management undergraduate course. First, I used the reliable IES to assess student competencies in intercultural interactions (Mendenhall et al., 2013; Mendenhall, Stevens, Bird, Oddou, & Osland, 2008). IES measures continuous learning (CL), interpersonal engagement (IE), and hardiness (H)—three essential capabilities for performing well in intercultural environments. Students used their pre-IES results to achieve *awareness* of their weaknesses and strengths for interacting in intercultural environments. I then required students to search for intercultural *experience* in their home environment. To stimulate *reflection*, students then wrote about their personal experience with the concepts introduced in the course (Bain, Ballantyne, Packer, & Mills, 1999; Walker, 1985). At the end of the course, the *assessment* of post-IES and development reports indicated that students significantly improved their overall intercultural competence.

The proposed reflective development model provides students personal experience for learning about international management, developing their reflective learning, and enhancing their intercultural competence. Although the process takes place in a traditional classroom setting, students are motivated and engaged. Consequently, I believe that IB educators can use the model as a practical and feasible way to develop individual intercultural competence from the home environment as a first step for motivating students to pursue further intercultural learning experiences through study abroad. My pedagogical approach aligns with the broader objectives of IB education: to help our students become global citizens and to prepare them for competition in the global marketplace (Aggarwal, 2011).

The article is organized as follows. I first introduce the background for developing intercultural competence in IB education and then propose the reflective development model as a pedagogical approach. Second, I describe the classroom application and provide both quantitative and qualitative analysis of development results to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation. Last, I discuss the implications for IB education and recommend opportunities for future studies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Developing Intercultural Competence in International Business Education

College students must develop international global skill sets to prepare for the complex integration of cultural, political, social, and business processes in today's globalized marketplace (Aggarwal, 2011; Lane, Maznevski, & Mendenhall, 2009). Effective global leadership requires cross-cultural competencies (Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003; Mendenhall et al., 2013) for dealing with ambiguity, stress, frustration, and problem solving in unfamiliar environments—all critical skills if leaders are to compete effectively in the global environment, handle the emotional and psychological stress, and behave appropriately in international assignments (Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). However, to develop intercultural competence, individuals must:

(a) possess a strong personal identity, (b) have knowledge of and facility with the beliefs and values of the culture, (c) display sensitivity to the affective processes of the culture, (d) communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group, (e) perform socially sanctioned behavior, (f) maintain active social relations within the cultural group, and (g) negotiate the institutional structures of that culture. (LaFromboise et al., 1993, p. 396)

Cultural competence thus requires more than the knowledge of different cultures; it requires social and interpersonal skills along with the ability to make sense of problems, and act appropriately in new cultural environments (DeLoach et al., 2003; Earley & Ang, 2003; Mendenhall et al., 2013; Paul & Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

IB educators have found study abroad to be most effective for learning intercultural competencies and global mindsets (Gullekson et al., 2011; Mendenhall et al., 2013). However, college students tend to be ethnocentric, to lack awareness of globalization and intercultural sensitivity (Bhawuk, Sakuda, & Munusamy, 2008; Kedia et al., 2001), and to lack the curiosity to pursue intercultural development opportunities (Gullekson et al., 2011), beyond sightseeing. Even when students participate in self-directed development programs, study-abroad programs often fail to achieve the desired outcomes (Douglas & Jones-Rikkens, 2001; Jin & Bennur, 2012; Mendenhall et al., 2013). Meanwhile, study-abroad programs are financially burdensome for many students, especially for commuters who must balance busy work and study schedules. Consequently, IB educators must find ways to develop intercultural competencies in the traditional classroom setting.

2.2. The Reflective Learning Model of Intercultural Competence Development

Various models have been established for intercultural learning. Livermore (2008) proposed the five-stage model of transformational learning for short-term missionaries. The model nurtures metacognitive cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003) through reflection and contemplation. Bhawuk et al. (2008) proposed the triple-loop intercultural sensitivity learning model through scanning the environment, comparing information, and taking action. Transformational learning and triple-loop development models have a common theme: individuals situated in novel environments must learn, think, and behave in new ways if they are to adapt and survive (Mendenhall et al., 2013). Mendenhall et al. (2013) proposed a four-phased Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT)-based *self-directed* approach to develop intercultural competence without requiring geographic relocation or additional financial resources. The approach strongly focuses on individual accountability rather than on external authority to drive changes. However, knowledge and behavior are insufficient; proficiency requires corrective feedback and self-regulative actions to convert knowledge to performance (Bandura, 2005). Most undergraduate students lack general experience or motivation; they still need guidance through the intercultural development process to make sense of their experience, to convert their experience into learning, and to motivate them to engage in intercultural interactions.

Among learning theories, reflective learning is essential for encouraging self-learning and critical thinking based on personal experience (Baird, Fensham, Gunstone, & White, 1991; Boyd & Fales, 1983; Hedberg, 2009; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Personal experience is the fundamental element of reflective learning and teaching: “transformative growth comes through reflection on experience where such ideas and practices illuminate teachers’ practice rather than usurp it”

(Rodgers, 2002b, p. 232). Reflective learning requires students to continually and purposely describe, analyze, examine, and present their experiences (Rodgers, 2002b). Critical reflection challenges their assumptions, beliefs, and values so that students make better sense of their world and translate their experience to deeper learning for future managerial applications (Hedberg, 2009; Kayes, 2002). Reflection reveals rich and intricate complexities so that students learn to make considered rather than rash responses (Rodgers, 2002b). Learning comes alive through self-understanding, self-awareness, and self-discovery (Hedberg, 2009). Self-reflection is a fundamental for inspiring intentions to bridge cultural differences and willingness to engage in new cultural environments (Bhawuk et al., 2008). Students learn to ask questions to better understand the source of challenges, to investigate the inner self, and to further explore knowledge about other cultures. Therefore, reflection is particularly relevant to drive intercultural interaction learning.

Building on reflective learning theory, I propose a four-stage reflective development model to enhance intercultural competence without leaving familiar home environments.

2.2.1. Stage 1: Awareness

Today's millennial generation has been perceived as knowledgeable, yet needy, entitled, and self-centered (Twenge, 2014). Situated in an information-overloaded era because of technology and social media, millennials can easily obtain information through the Internet but also tend to be less curious about the outside world and less aware of their needs and identities. Developing competency is more effective if it is triggered within individuals' cognitive elements (Mendenhall et al., 2013). Therefore, the *awareness* stage focuses on helping students self-assess weaknesses and strengths in their intercultural competence and sensitivity (Chen & Starosta, 1998; Dearnorff, 2006).

Several well-established intercultural competence measurements can be used to develop awareness—such as the Cultural Intelligence (CQ; Earley & Ang, 2003), the Global Competencies Inventory (GCI; Stevens, Bird, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 2014), and the Global Mindset (Bowen & Inkpen, 2009). I used the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES; Mendenhall et al., 2012), an effective, reliable, and generalizable measurement to evaluate the competencies critical to effective interaction with people from other cultures (Mendenhall et al., 2013; Portalla & Chen, 2010). The IES, provided by the Kozai Group (KozaiGroup.com), is a less complex version of GCI developed to address needs for a less expensive and administratively burdensome assessment tool (Mendenhall et al., 2008). The IES assesses how well individuals work with people who differ, for example, in national culture, gender, generation, ethnic group, and religious affiliation. IES includes three dimensions: continuous learning (CL), interpersonal engagement (IE), and hardiness (H). The three dimensions include subdimensions: CL includes self-awareness (SA) and exploration (EX); IE includes global mindset (GM) and relationship interest (RI); H includes positive regard (PR) and emotional resilience (ER). Table 1 provides a summary of each dimension and subdimension (Mendenhall et al., 2008). Students take a pre-IES survey at the beginning of the development program. Once they complete the pre-IES survey, they receive a detailed 22-page intercultural effectiveness report including an analysis of the dimension scores, explanations of scoring profiles, and information regarding personal development planning. Based on the individual survey results, students submit a one-page personal development plan focusing on their weakness or areas they most want to improve. The Kozai Group provides additional teaching resources for instructors to introduce the survey and conduct the after-survey

TABLE 1
Description of Intercultural Effective Dimensions

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Description</i>
A. Continuous learning (CL)	Indicates the likelihood an individual will learn about activities, behaviors, and events around them. Higher CL indicates greater success in learning about new cultures quickly.
1. Self-awareness (SA)	Measures awareness of personal strengths, weaknesses, personal styles, values, and behaviors. High scorers can learn from their experience and build healthy interpersonal relationships. Low scorers tend to care less about their impact on others and are not motivated by self-discovery.
2. Exploration (EX)	Assesses the desire to seek new experiences that lead to learning or change. Also indicates openness to different ideas, norms, or behaviors and the ability to learn from mistakes. High scorers are curious and open to new ideas and experiences. Low scorers prefer to maintain the status quo and current ways of thinking and are less curious about learning.
B. Interpersonal engagement (IE)	Measures interest in other cultures and developing relationship with people from other cultures. High scorers are likely to perform effectively in intercultural environments.
3. Global mindset (GM)	Measures interest in other cultures and the people who live in them. High scorers can learn to interact more effectively with people from other cultures. They willingly expose themselves to other cultures and expand their ability to adapt. Low scorers tend to exert less effort to learn about other cultures and therefore decrease their opportunities to engage with others.
4. Relationship interest (RI)	Indicates the desire and ability to initiate and maintain relationships with people from different cultures. High scorers enjoy the process and are willing to learn and use foreign languages to develop relationships with people from other cultures. Low scorers tend to put little effort into developing or maintaining friendships with people from other cultures.
C. Hardiness (H)	Assesses the ability to effectively manage thoughts and emotions in intercultural situations, the extent of open-mindedness toward different ideas, behaviors, and norms, and ability to learn from failures and setbacks.
5. Positive regard (PR)	Measures the degree of positive attitudes toward people from other cultures, and the tendency to avoid negative stereotypes. High scorers avoid getting upset, stressed, frustrated, or angry in unfamiliar environments. They assume the best about people and are more accepting of different behaviors. Low scorers tend to hold negative assumptions and stereotypes.
6. Emotional resilience (ER)	Measures emotional strength and ability to cope with challenging emotional experiences. Assesses the capacity to recover quickly from psychologically and emotionally stressful situations and setbacks. High scorers cope well with challenging emotional situations and recover quickly from stressful situations. They are able to continue learning and develop effective intercultural relationships. Low scorers find it difficult to handle challenging experiences, and have limited ability to remain open to others and learn from intercultural experiences.

briefing to help students obtain a better understanding of how to use the survey results for their personal development assignment.

2.2.2. Stage 2: Experience

Reflective learning calls for students to gain personal experience once they have established a level of self-awareness (Boyd & Fales, 1983; Hedberg, 2009; Rodgers, 2002a, 2002b). Intercultural experience typically requires leaving the familiar culture and living in a foreign country (Alred, Byram, & Fleming, 2003). Instead, the *experience* stage allows students to remain in their home environment but requires them to interact with someone who differs in, for example, gender, background, region, or ethnicity, to observe different environments and to collect information from the experience. Seeking intercultural experiences in the home cultural environment challenges students to become more sensitive to and curious about the diversity around them, to try new things and meet new people. Activities such as reading international news, interacting with international students, attending local cultural events, or learning foreign languages can all bring new knowledge of foreign culture.

2.2.3. Stage 3: Reflection

Reflection, the most important while most challenging stage in the development process, helps students compare themselves with others, seek to understand different norms and behaviors, and search for appropriate actions (Morris et al., 2014). Without induced reflection, awareness and experience would fail to reveal the deep learning primary for many self-directed development assignments. Reflection has four components: describe, think, learn, and act (Rodgers, 2002a). Both instructors and students must engage in the reflection process to improve reflective skills. Therefore, the major component of the development assignment is that students reflect on and analyze their performance.

Writing exercises can be applied to foster reflection (Bridges, DiPietro, Ambrose, Lovett, & Norman, 2010; Walker, 1985), to “self-analyze” and externalize thinking (Bain et al., 1999; Walker, 1985). Throughout the semester, students will submit two or more written reports to reflect their activities, personal experiences, feelings, and insights gained from the development progress.

To help students apply reflective learning and reflect their personal experiences in their writing assignments, I adopt Kolb’s (1985) learning guide. Specifically, students answer four questions in their reports (Figure 1):

1. Describe: What have you done to achieve your development goal, especially outside class?
2. Think: How does the experience make you feel emotionally and psychologically?
3. Learn: What did you learn that relates to international management?
4. Act: What will you do in the future to continue improving academically and professionally?

During the *reflection* stage, students are most challenged to be aware of and to question their assumptions about their daily lives. Particularly in intercultural interactions, people tend to have pre-existing stereotypes and unexamined interpretations they believe to be valid without verification (Brookfield, 1995). Therefore, the writing assignment helps students view their attitudes

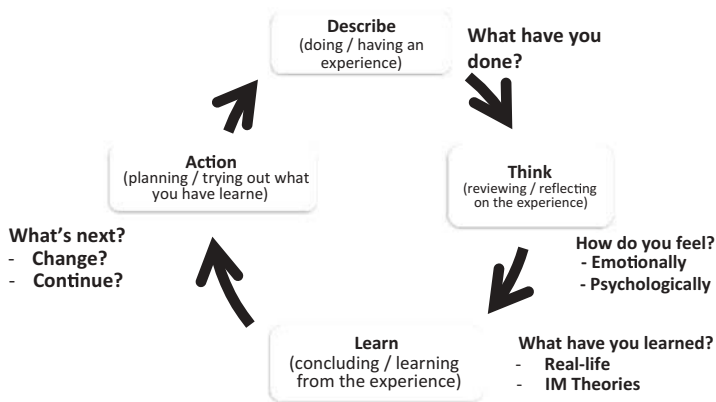


FIGURE 1 Applying Kolb's Learning Cycle for Reflecting on Intercultural Experiences.

from various angles and break old habits by “pointing out what happens when [the old habits are] absent” (Brookfield, 1995, p. 3). By describing what they have done, they identify actions that may have taken them out of their comfort zones. Thinking about their feelings helps them scrutinize and critically analyze their assumptions. Relating their analysis with the course helps them realize that they can apply international management concepts and theories to their daily lives. Last, planning their future actions will help them examine their affirming or inhibiting behaviors and adjust as needed for long-term improvement. Because most college students lack capability for self-directed learning (Brookfield, 1995), instructors' constructive feedback is critical to drive continued actions, especially after the first writing report.

The writing assignment in the *reflection* stage emphasizes challenging assumptions and allows students to make behavioral adjustments to improve their development (Bridges et al., 2010). Reflection is the longest phase throughout the semester. To prevent students from putting the assignment on the back burner, instructors should incorporate various classroom activities such as simulation, role-play, and group discussion to reinforce reflective learning skills (Kember et al., 1996).

2.2.4. Stage 4: Assessment

Assessment, the final phase of the development process, closes the development loop. The assessment stage has the objective of providing student feedback for future academic and professional self-directed development. After completing the development assignment, students take the post-IES survey. Both instructors and students gain valuable feedback by seeing a measure of individual and group progress.

This single-loop four-stage development model is intended to improve students' intercultural competence by enhancing their awareness of self, sensitivity to cultural differences, motivations

to interact with or engage in other cultures, and willingness to adjust their behaviors appropriately. In addition, the model improves learning, develops critical thinking, and enhances reflective learning skills.

3. CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION

I included the personal intercultural competence development assignment as part of the traditional 15-week International Management curriculum in spring 2015. Participation was essential: successful completion of the individual development assignment accounted for as much as 30% of their final grade. At the beginning of the semester, I told students about the purpose of the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) survey and stressed that they would not be graded for their answers on the scale; instead they should answer the questions honestly to derive an accurate picture of their ability to interact with people who are very different from them. The pre-IES survey indicated that 16 of 34 students (47%) had low IES scores. Eight (23%) had moderate scores, and the remaining had high scores (23%). The overall low pre-IES results show that IB education faces significant challenges.

To help students with their written development reports, I introduced reflective learning style and shared the learning model (Figure 1) to show how the four questions are related to reflective learning. After reviewing the development plan and the first written report, I provided individual feedback and class review so that students could modify their behaviors as needed. Reflective skills do not come naturally (Hedberg, 2009), so students must continually practice them. I regularly integrated interactive activities to improve reflective learning and critical thinking. Most students lack working or living experience in multinational contexts, and cross-cultural decision making is extremely complex, so simulation is particularly relevant for creating experience (Farrell, 2005). For example, on the subject of cross-cultural negotiation, students did Alpha Beta negotiation role play (Gladwin & Brett, n.d.) to experience challenges and frustrations of cross-cultural negotiations. To experience advantages and disadvantages of virtual global teams, students conducted the Lego Man exercise (Reddy & Byrnes, 1972) to simulate the complications of communication, collaboration, and knowledge transfer across geographic distances. Those activities improved classroom engagement and fostered collaboration. For each exercise, I reiterated Kolb's learning cycle and required students to "describe, think, learn, and act" through discussion. Such meaning-making exercises can move students to a deeper level of understanding and potentially integrate reflective learning skills as part of their critical thinking processes.

4. EVALUATION OF STUDENT IMPROVEMENT

At the end of the semester, I evaluated student improvement in intercultural competence and the effectiveness of the reflective development model using both quantitative and qualitative methods (Deardorff, 2006; Jin & Bennur, 2012).

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The spring 2015 class consisted of 35 students, but one student missed the pre-IES survey. Therefore, 34 students were included in the analysis. The students are all in their 20s, evenly

divided according to gender, and racially mixed in a way typical to the region: 70% (23 of 34) are Caucasian; the others are Hispanic, South Eastern Asian, and African American; 74% (25 of 34) had no living or traveling experience outside their home countries; 68% (23 of 34) speak only one language fluently.

4.2. Quantitative Analysis of Pre- and Post-IES Scores

I used IES to assess intercultural competence at the beginning (T1) and end (T2) of the development program. A repeated measures analysis of variance, ANOVA, is used to measure within-subjects changes in mean scores over separated time points (Huck & McLean, 1975). Therefore, I conducted ANOVA analysis to evaluate the difference between the pre- and post-IES scores and to assess the development result (Gullekson et al., 2011).

As Table 2 and Figure 2 show, the group achieved significant improvement when overall pre- and post-IES scores are compared (Pre: 3.43, Post: 3.67, $p < .05$). At the dimensional level, continuous learning (Pre: 4.07, Post: 4.35, $p < .01$) and interpersonal engagement (Pre: 3.21, Post: 3.64, $p < .01$) increased significantly. However, hardiness showed no significant improvement. At the subdimensional level, the groups showed improvement in self-awareness (Pre: 3.96, Post: 4.33, $p < .01$) and global mindset (Pre: 2.67, Post: 3.37, $p < .01$). In addition, ANOVA analysis showed no gender differences for each dimension and subdimension of the pre- and post-IES scores, except for positive regard. Women achieved slightly higher positive regard in their post-IES scores ($M: 2.47, F: 2.96, p < .05$). I also looked at how the overall pre- and post- IES scores were distributed at low, medium, or high scales. Table 3, the distribution table, indicates that the group shifted from lower to higher scores. At the aggregated level, eight students moved from low to medium scores, while an additional five students achieved high IES scores at the end of the semester. At the dimensional level, students with low scores for continuous learning and interpersonal engagement were reduced most, by 26 and 35% respectively. At the subdimensional level, the largest improvement was for self-awareness in which 24% more students reached high scores (total 82%); for global mindset, 29% more reached high scores (total 59%). Table 3 indicates a

TABLE 2
ANOVA Analyses for Pre and Post IES Results

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Before</i>		<i>After</i>		<i>Difference</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. Continuous learning	4.07	0.49	4.35	0.38	.28***
1. Self-awareness	3.96	0.51	4.33	0.41	.37***
2. Exploration	4.17	0.55	4.36	0.44	.20
B. Interpersonal engagement	3.21	0.74	3.64	0.55	.42***
3. Global mindset	2.67	0.89	3.37	0.81	.70***
4. Relationship interest	3.75	0.78	3.90	0.64	.15
C. Hardiness	3.00	0.63	3.03	0.66	.03
5. Positive regard	2.74	0.57	2.72	0.71	-.03
6. Emotional resilience	3.26	0.86	3.35	0.82	.09
Overall IES score	3.43	0.49	3.67	0.37	.25**

** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

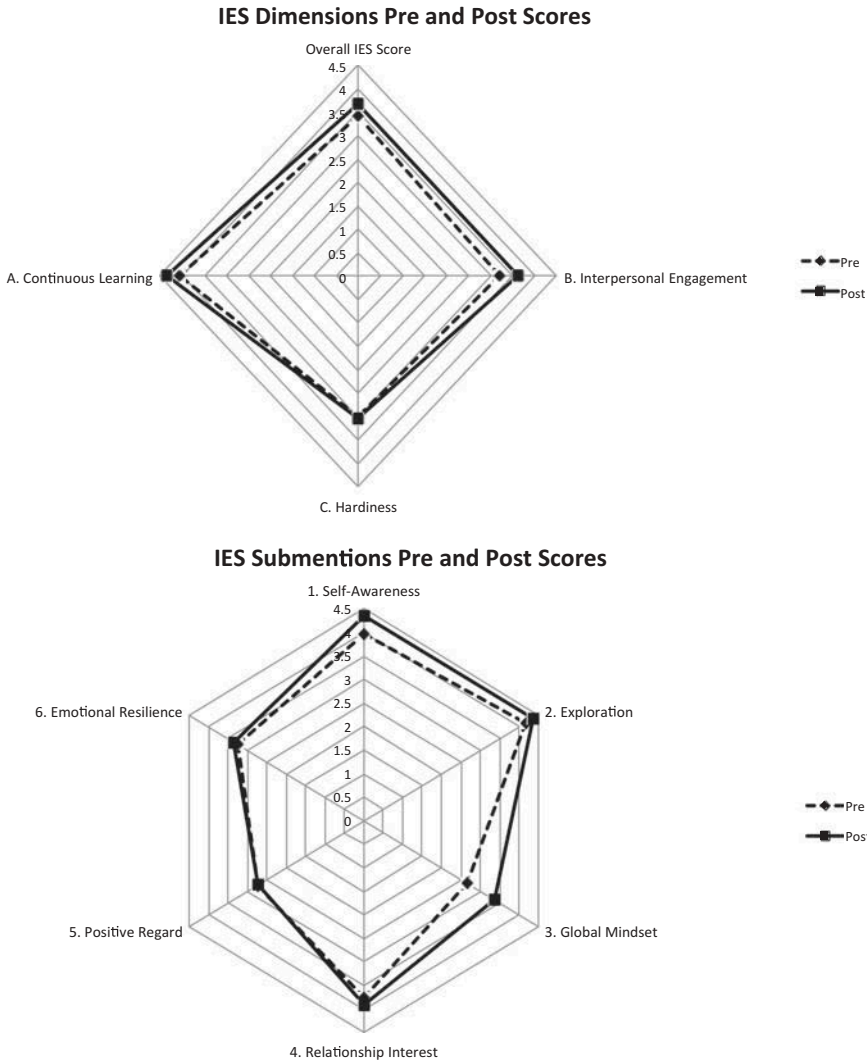


FIGURE 2 IES Intercultural Effectiveness Pre and Post Survey Results.

reduction of 15% for low hardiness, but the high score for hardiness showed little or even negative improvement. Still, a fairly large number (62%) had low positive regard. Using a qualitative data analysis in the following section, I offer an alternative explanation regarding the unimproved hardiness scores.

4.3. Qualitative Analysis of Student Reports

The pre- and post-IES surveys provided objective and quantitative measurements of student improvement. The student reports provided an enriched qualitative source to explore the types

TABLE 3
Pre-Post IES Score Distribution

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Before</i>		<i>After</i>		<i>Difference</i>
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	
A. Continuous learning	Low	12	35%	3	9%	-26%
	Moderate	7	21%	9	26%	6%
	High	15	44%	22	65%	21%
1. Self-awareness	Low	8	24%	1	3%	-21%
	Moderate	6	18%	5	15%	-3%
	High	20	59%	28	82%	24%
2. Exploration	Low	18	53%	9	26%	-26%
	Moderate	3	9%	11	32%	24%
	High	13	38%	14	41%	3%
B. Interpersonal engagement	Low	20	59%	8	24%	-35%
	Moderate	9	26%	16	47%	21%
	High	5	15%	10	29%	15%
3. Global mindset	Low	21	62%	9	26%	-35%
	Moderate	3	9%	5	15%	6%
	High	10	29%	20	59%	29%
4. Relationship interest	Low	18	53%	13	38%	-15%
	Moderate	7	21%	11	32%	12%
	High	9	26%	10	29%	3%
C. Hardiness	Low	17	50%	12	35%	-15%
	Moderate	9	26%	15	44%	18%
	High	8	24%	7	21%	-3%
5. Positive regard	Low	20	59%	21	62%	3%
	Moderate	8	24%	9	26%	3%
	High	6	18%	4	12%	-6%
6. Emotional resilience	Low	13	38%	13	38%	0%
	Moderate	10	29%	8	24%	-6%
	High	11	32%	13	38%	6%
Overall IES score	Low	18	53%	9	26%	-26%
	Moderate	8	24%	12	35%	12%
	High	8	24%	13	38%	15%

of activities students utilized to develop intercultural competence in their home environment and offered insights into the development process and outcomes, beyond the quantitative measurement. Descriptive coding was utilized to meet the exploratory purpose of identifying the focus and action tactics of the initial development plan (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As Table 4 summarized, some students focused on the dimensional level while some focused on the subdimensional level. More than half of the class focused on interpersonal engagement (19/33, 57% percent), which includes global mindset and relationship interest. Students could use multiple actions to complete their assignments. Their initial action plans included watching foreign movies, reading world news, making new friends, or conversing with people from different backgrounds.

Students were allowed to adjust their development actions throughout the semester to maximize their outcomes. Table 5 categorizes the actual development activities based on their second

TABLE 4
IES Development Plan Summary

<i>Items</i>	<i>References</i>
Focus	
Continuous learning	5
Exploration	2
Self-awareness	3
Interpersonal engagement	19
Global mindset	4
Relationship interest	10
Hardiness	7
Emotional resilience	3
Positive regard	4
Action Plan	
Avoid stereotypes & assumptions	1
Be open-minded	4
Engage in communication	3
Consult with different people	7
Exercise	1
Give more positive feedback	1
Imagine how others perceive you	1
Keep a journal	1
Learn other cultures	3
Make friends from different backgrounds	6
Mirror positive traits	2
Listen more	2
Be open to different cultures	3
Read world news	4
Remove from emotional situations	1
Seek feedback	1
Set higher goals	1
Study a new foreign language	3
Study abroad	1
Travel overseas	3
Watch foreign movies	1

reports: 82% of their reports were face-to-face interactions. Students utilized their academic, personal, and professional settings to gain development experience. They also used electronic interactions, such as communicating with friends living overseas through emails or Internet calls.

The qualitative data analysis shows that students achieved their interpersonal engagement or relationship interest by being challenged out of their comfort zones. For example, one student wrote about how she encouraged herself to make new friends at work:

I decided to start at work and create new and strong relationships with my coworkers. I work as a receptionist, which requires only one person per shift. Therefore, I really had to step outside my comfort zone to develop a relationship with coworkers. I summoned the strength to suggest that we all get together outside our workplace. I was pleased that they all responded yes, if reluctantly. Soon

TABLE 5
The Final Development Report Summary

<i>Actions</i>	<i>References</i>	<i>Group %</i>
Electronic interaction	12	35%
Face-to-face interaction	28	82%
Academic setting	15	44%
Personal setting	21	62%
Professional setting	15	44%

after, I invited them all over to my house to hang out for a short period, and then we all had dinner at the Cheesecake Factory. This really helped us grow closer and create a relationship as friends rather than just coworkers. I now text and call my new “friends” every so often to get together and catch up outside work.

The analysis also shows that exploration of a different culture is effective for helping students understand cross-cultural contexts. Some students expanded their learning of new cultures by exploring places that did not interest them in the past. A student wrote about his unusual experience in Chinatown:

It is very difficult for me to see other cultures as legitimate because I am very ethnocentric. My course of action to stop thinking that way is to submerge myself in a culture other than my own. I have never been to China and do not know how Chinatown compares, but I was in an environment that was different from my own and English seemed to be in the minority. This experiment seemed to be a bit of a failure because I got lost. The language barrier between myself and the locals frustrated me, and I walked in circles with my girlfriend until I finally hailed a cab.

The exercise challenged students to question their assumptions. Many students were trying to be more open-minded and less judgmental about others’ behaviors. They became more mindful of the people around them in their daily life. One student wrote:

While trying to keep in mind my “how-to” methods, I realized that I was more mindful of the people around me, in the subway specifically. It was easier for me to identify the times when I could have previously stereotyped someone based on their actions, or just looks. I was able to be more open minded about people I came across along the way and, for a lack of a better term, I gave them the “benefit of the doubt” based on some of their actions, such as rushing inside the train to get a seat, or not stepping aside to let people off the train before boarding it, or simply people who were talking to themselves or others eagerly.

Students became more sensitive to their surroundings and learned to discover the meaning of the world through interactions with people around them in their daily life. One student wrote about how he started to explore the culture of his girlfriend from a different ethnic background and tried to work with her mother, who was against their relationship. A student described a small encounter at his work that might potentially influence how he interacts with people from different cultural backgrounds in the future. He wrote:

I was talking to the head chef of a restaurant where I was working. He is a Mexican and told me stories of his struggle growing up. He grew up in a bad area in Mexico without a father. He was poor

and had a hard time getting an education. He came to this country to work hard and get a better job and ended up being a head chef making a decent salary and providing for his family. He even told me about a bunch of different Mexican dishes I have not heard of and made me one for lunch. I learned a lot from these interesting stories. We even built our business relationship, and I got a tasty meal in the process.

A student who was very quiet in the class wrote about a conversation with an international student in the school cafeteria:

After the conversation I said I had to leave. We exchanged goodbyes and she said, "It's nice to know that there are still nice people in this world." That comment made me happy because I feel I made such a difference in her college experience. I am glad that I was able to make her day better. I allowed her to see that nice people still exist.

Those examples show that the writing assignment helped students capture subtle events relating to intercultural interactions. The guided reflection process allowed them to become more sensitive to their environment, enabled them to engage in reflective observation, and assisted them in achieving intellectual learning. They became more open-minded, respectful, and curious about their otherwise overlooked surroundings. They also became more involved and sensed their roles as part of the environment.

More important, using writing reports as qualitative data captures additional insight into response-shift bias (Howard & Dailey, 1979), a phenomenon frequent in self-reported pre and post measures. Response shift bias could alternatively explain the nonsignificant or even negative improvement result for the dimension of hardiness. As Table 3 indicates, more students had lower scores for positive regard and emotional resilience at the end of the program. However, student feedback and reports provided an alternative account. After the pre-IES survey, one high-performance student expressed his doubts about the measurement. He achieved high scores on every subdimension but scored very low on positive regard. Initially, he was confident about his social skills and doubted the low score. Meanwhile, he expressed extreme frustration with one teammate and asked to switch to another team. His behavior actually showed that he had low positive regard and even low emotional resilience because he preferred not to deal with a teammate who might have different views. Once I pointed out the discrepancy, he realized that he rarely listened to different opinions and decided to change his attitude. In his final report, he wrote about his effort working in a student government meeting:

It was frustrating but I knew part of my IES plan is to open up to new ideas from others without jumping to conclusions. The hardest part of the conference was the resolution meeting. The meeting was very argumentative and filled with opinions. I was very tempted to jump right in to give my proposal and idea right away. However, I decided to wait and listen to other proposals and ideas. This allowed me to listen to their arguments without judgment and also gave me ideas to perfect my proposal. I found it beneficial because sometimes other ideas could spark better ideas in my head. Many instances I totally judged people to be ignorant on the topic. However they had probably some of the best ideas.

The particular student had an overall lower post-IES score, particularly a much lower emotional resilience score (from high to low) and the same low score of positive regard. Nevertheless, his written report indicated that he actually became more positive toward others, listened more, and controlled his emotions during frustrating interpersonal situations. This particular example

implies that college students could overestimate their social skills and ability to handle stressful and emotional situations when they take the first measurement. However, because of improved self-awareness through the exercise, they can gain a better understanding of their capabilities and limitations. When they conduct the post survey, they become more cautious of their self-assessment and rate themselves more realistically and critically. Consequently, they would show no improvement for some dimensions and lower post-IES scores.

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Discussion

This exercise was a tremendous reflective learning experience for me. I learned to be a better teacher through the four steps of the learning cycle by challenging my own assumptions about teaching (Brookfield, 1995). Based on the students' first reports, I adjusted my instructional approach to provide individual reviews, feedback, and clear instructions for writing their second development report. I spent more time for debriefing the in-class exercise to allow students to practice their reflective skills. Personally, I experienced emotional ups and downs when I read about their frustrations, anger, happiness, and satisfaction. Those small but often touching stories revealed the high value of being an educator and having an impact on the life of students.

Overall, the reflective development model showed positive results. Students improved their intercultural competence in their home environment by applying the four-stage development model: awareness, experience, reflection, and assessment. At the beginning of the semester, 47% had a medium or high IES score. At the end of the semester, the percentage rose to 71%. I am not suggesting that we can replace study-abroad programs. Indeed, studying and living overseas is optimal for immersing individuals in novel environments for intercultural learning and development (Aggarwal & Goodell, 2011; Deloach et al., 2003; Douglas & Jones-Rikkens, 2001). Students may need to be in foreign environments to learn how to deal with real intercultural challenges and improve their hardiness, positive regard, and emotional resilience. However, the study shows that we can improve self-awareness and global mindset in the home environment and perhaps motivate students to pursue further improvement of their hardiness and adaptability through actual study-abroad experiences (Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003). The in-class reflective development program should be the first step that improves motivation and metacognition for intercultural interactions (Ang et al., 2007).

Many international education programs provide adequate personal experience but lack necessary self-awareness and reflection for deep learning. The final assessment provides crucial feedback for future growth. Drawing on the reflective learning theory (Boyd & Fales, 1983; Hedberg, 2009; Rodgers, 2002a), this study provides an example of IB education that improves intercultural competence in the home environment. Each phase of the model is essential. Particularly during the reflection stage, students learn to make sense of their environment and translate their personal experience to real world practices. Study-abroad programs should also incorporate such development model to make foreign experiences more meaningful.

5.2. Limitations and Future Studies

This study has some limitations that future studies could address. First, the study includes results from only one implementation. Therefore future efforts can focus on the generalizability of the reflective development model. To meet college goals of preparing students for international opportunities, I am implementing this model in all my sessions of International Management in future semesters. Other instructors should also teach the model to evaluate its reliability. Future studies can compare and contrast multiple implementations to evaluate the effectiveness of the reflective development model and improve the pedagogical framework.

Although this study initially explores and categorizes student development activities, questions remain regarding which activities are more effective for improving specific IES dimensions. For example, reading world news is suggested for improving global mindset (Hedberg, 2009; Mendenhall et al., 2008). However it is unknown whether reading world news affects exploration. Also recall that women students improved their scores on positive regard, but men did not. Future studies can develop relevant research questions and incorporate an appropriate approach of qualitative data analysis for further investigation.

The reflective learning model requires student engagement (Boyd & Fales, 1983; Hedberg, 2009). Ten students (29%) kept their overall low IES scores. Several students failed to engage in the learning process and handed in poorly written reports. They also received lower scores on their multiple-choice mid-term and final exams used to assess knowledge application and critical thinking. Although instructors are always challenged to engage every student, future studies can integrate other theories such as learning styles (Kolb, 1985) and goal orientations (Fisher & Ford, 1998) to further explore how individual learning patterns can influence the effectiveness of reflective learning.

6. CONCLUSION

IB educators are challenged to develop intercultural competence for meeting global challenges. Most business schools use study-abroad programs to achieve the goal, but in-class pedagogies are rare. I integrated reflective learning theory and devised the Intercultural Competence Development Program to enhance intercultural competency our undergraduate students. Results from the proposed four-stage development model indicate that students can improve their intercultural competence within traditional classroom contexts. The key is to learn by reflecting on their personal experiences and reinforcing their reflective learning strategies through interactive class activities. Such a pedagogical approach can improve student engagement in the classroom, foster interest in exploring outside the classroom, and prepare students for further development.

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