

THE ROLE OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN FACILITATING  
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' ACCULTURATION AND SELF-EFFICACY

A Dissertation

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR of EDUCATION

in

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
Corpus Christi, Texas

August 2019

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This dissertation meets the standards for scope and quality of  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and is hereby approved.

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## ABSTRACT

Internationalization and globalization have been a trend of much analysis over the last two decades (Rumbley, Altbach, & Reisberg, 2012). Globalization influences technology, environment, culture, education, medical science, ideology, the economy, and many more fields (Knight, 2015). In education, globalization has profound implications for international education (Myers, 2010). Along with the development of international education in U.S. higher education institutions, the acculturation and self-efficacy challenges that international students encounter have caught the attention of international education leaders. As a direct and essential part in the international education, the International Education Program (IEP) could directly influence international students' acculturation and self-efficacy.

The study was designed to examine the role of the IEP on facilitating international students' acculturation and self-efficacy at an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in South Texas, focusing on the importance of these two constructs and the effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating them. The participants (n = 94) were international students who were enrolled in this institution. A web-based version of a 2-part survey instrument, the International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ), was used for the purpose of data collection, utilizing Qualtrics survey software. A series of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze and report the data. All importance scores were higher than the effectiveness scores. Regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and years of university education, acculturation and self-efficacy were reported to be quite important and the IEP was effective in facilitating both. Importance of acculturation was affected by years of education outside the home country.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Rosie Banda and my methodologist Dr. Kamiar Kouzekanani, whose inspiration and expertise have guided my doctoral educational journey. Dr. Banda inspired me on educational philosophy, encouraged me on innovation practice, and guided me on educational policy learnings through leadership classes and qualitative research classes. Dr. Kouzekanani encouraged me through quantitative learnings real-life practices, which made me got confidence to start and continue my studies. Additionally, I express my sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to my committee members, Dr. Nancy Smith and Dr. Kathleen Lynch-Davis for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research. Your individual servant leadership, coupled with your commitment to higher education, are indispensable to my leadership learning path and my study.

I appreciate all my friends and colleagues who listened to me and offered words of encouragement. I would also like to thank the faculty and staff of the College of Graduate Studies, who provided assistance to my doctoral study.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Office of International Studies and Academic Affairs of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi and countless volunteers who supported my learning in international education in higher education and my research.

I extend my sincere gratitude to my family, especially my father and my husband. I could not have accomplished my educational goal without you believing in me, as I believe in you.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

The increase of international students at U.S. universities has brought cultural diversity and academic prosperity (Campbell, 2015). In the academic year 2016-17, 1,078,822 international students enrolled at U.S. universities; specifically, 62.20% from Asia, 6.40% from Mexico, 4.90% from Saudi Arabia, 2.50% from Canada, and 24.00% from other regions, demonstrating a 3.40% increase from the previous year (Open Doors Report, 2017). This diverse student group possesses global perspectives, cultural and academic knowledge background, particularly in science fields (Sato & Hodge, 2009), and contribute to America's economic strength through academic research, patenting, and creation of knowledge-based products and services (National Science Foundation, 2016).

Although international students enrich American institutions in many fields, studies show that they face certain acculturation and self-efficacy challenges that affect their social well-being and academic success (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Campbell, 2015; Sato & Hodge, 2015). The definition of acculturation has changed along with time. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, acculturation was defined as the phenomena which resulted when groups of people of different cultures experienced subsequent changes in their original culture patterns (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Today, the concept of acculturation is a bi-dimensional and multidimensional concept rather than a linear process (Chun, Organista, & Marin, 2002). Adaptation, change, moderating variables, preferences, desire for ethnic affiliation, and the possibility that the dominant culture may undergo a change process influenced by aspects of the newcomer culture are components of acculturation (Berry, Trimble, & Olmedo, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 2001;

Richman, Gaviria, Flaherty, Birz, & Wintrob, 1987). However, acculturation challenges refer to the cultural and psychological adjustments that an individual or cultural group endures within a new environment (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder 2006). International students, as individuals who have grown up in a different culture, encounter unfamiliar teaching-methods, communication barriers, and identity issues (Jackson, Ray, & Bybell, 2013; Kim, 2012; Kuo, 2011; Sherry, Thomas, & Chui, 2010; Young, 2011; Sue & Rawlings, 2013; Telbis, Helgeson, & Kingsbury, 2013).

Besides acculturation, the other element that influence international students' social well-being and academic success is self-efficacy (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017). Self-efficacy refers to “beliefs in one's abilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). In the educational setting, self-efficacy is related to perseverance and achievement (Bandura, 1986b). Research shows that students who have high academic self-efficacy often use appropriate cognitive strategies in learning, manage their time effectively, and pay ample attention through their own efforts (Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; Poyrazli, Arbona, Nora, McPherson, & Pisecco, 2002; Gong & Fan, 2006; Yusoff, 2012). For international students, some influences on self-efficacy could be language proficiency, academic progress, career goal achievements, and social involvements (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015).

### Setting

In order to provide services to international students to overcome the study abroad challenges and fulfill their educational goals, the International Education Program (IEP) was created in 1854 at American universities as a student-service organization (Open Doors Report, 2016). The IEP focuses on three dimensions, namely, (1) creating a community of faculty,

students, and professionals that make effort to accelerate cross-cultural and multicultural understanding, (2) increasing international students' social involvement and academic progress, and (3) offering an assistance channel to international students regarding career and legal issues (Goncalves, 2010). Based on the three dimensions, this research study focused on increasing international students' social involvement and academic progress. More specifically, the study examined the effectiveness of the IEP in facilitating international students' acculturation and self-efficacy to assist them in fulfilling their educational goals.

The quality of the IEP can be the direct/indirect factor that influences international students' acculturation and self-efficacy. For example, the IEP offers guidance and explains legal documents to new international students before departure from the home country in order to reduce the anxiety level for international travel. When students arrive, the IEP offers an orientation, welcome party, and American life workshop to help students become familiar with the new environment, and overcome cultural shock. To be specific, cultural shock refers to the distress experienced by the sojourner because of losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social interaction (Oberg, 1960). During the entire study-abroad period, the IEP offers language programs, cultural learning and international social events, international career guide workshops, counseling services, and other essential services to help international students adjust, learn, and build skills to improve acculturation and self-efficacy. The IEP works as the bridge between international students and the foreign environment (Hayden, Levy, & Thompson, 2015; Johnson & Swain, 1997).

International Education Program (IEP) were created in 1853 at American universities as a student-service organization. International education in the U.S. was not considered in the main stream of higher education before World War I. The only exceptions were some church-related

events (Bu, 2003). After World War I, the Institution of International Education (IIE) was founded with the mission of promoting international peace and understanding. In 1948, the Association of International Educators was established as the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA) to provide a professional organization, training, and development of the advisors responsible for the growing population of international student on U.S. campuses (Bu, 2003). Since then, advancing international education has been one goal of higher education in the United States (Bu, 2003).

Moreover, the IEP plays a key role in cross-cultural learning by not only serving international students but also providing a bridge to bring diverse cultures and perspectives to the U.S. (Chissoe, 2017). Two programs, the Fulbright Program and the National Security Education Program, were instrumental. In 1945, Senator J. William Fulbright introduced a bill in the U.S. Congress that called for the use of surplus war property to fund the promotion of international goodwill through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture, and science. On August 1, 1946, President Harry S. Truman signed the bill into law, and Congress created the Fulbright Program, the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Government. The National Security Education Program (NSEP) was established by the National Security Education Act of 1991, which created the Boren scholarship and fellowship to lead in the development of the national capacity to educate U.S. citizens, understand foreign cultures, strengthen U.S. economic competitiveness, and enhance international cooperation and security. The creation and enactment of these legislations suggest enhancing international education program to higher education in the U.S.

The Thomas University (pseudonym) is an Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) of higher education in South Texas. Thomas University had started the International Education Program in

1990, when it joined the state education system. Over 12,000 students, including more than 600 international students were enrolled at Thomas University in 2018. Thomas University is dedicated to creating an inclusive community and establishing collaborative relationships across cultures and aspires to enrich and educate without exclusion and foster responsible global citizenship. The IEP at Thomas University promotes international learning environments that embrace diversity.

### Statement of the Problem

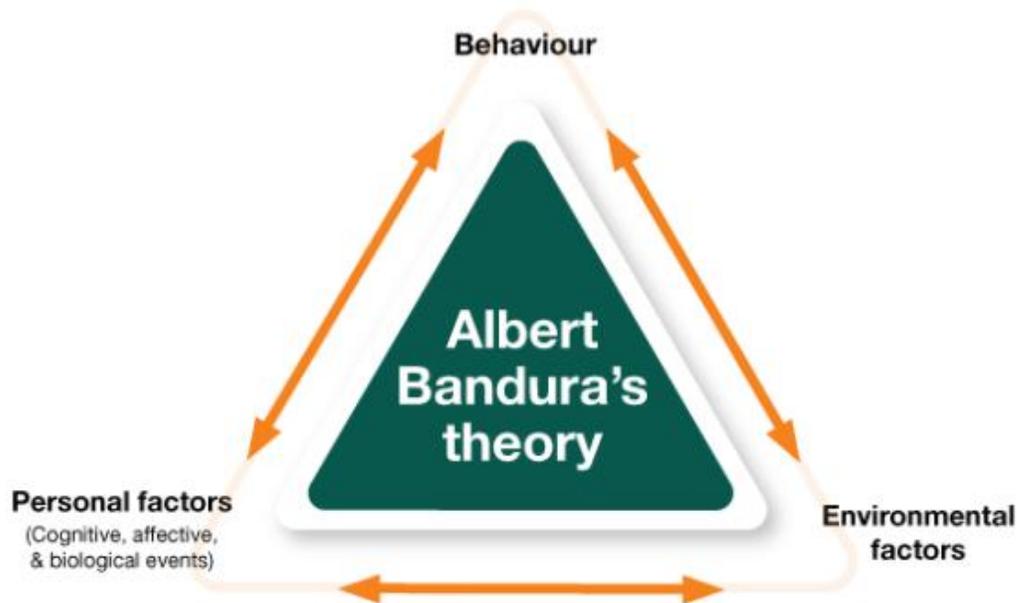
To provide an effective IEP in U.S. higher education institutions, educational leaders need an inside perspective of the effectiveness of current IEP service. Understanding the challenge of acculturation and self-efficacy that international students face provide effective information to educational leaders for improvement in the IEP. In a review of the literature, there was scientifically-driven evidence showing that most international students have experienced challenges of acculturation and self-efficacy, but few studies focused on how the IEP influences the aforementioned challenges (Deardorff, 2006). A systematic review of the literature showed no studies focusing on the acculturation and self-efficacy of the international students in Hispanic Serving Institutions of higher education in South Texas.

### Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the works of Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory and John W. Berry's (2005) acculturation theory. Bandura's social cognitive study presented a comprehensive theory of human motivation and action from a social cognitive perspective. The theory addresses the prominent roles played by cognitive, vicarious, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes in psychosocial functioning, and emphasizes reciprocal causation through the interplay of cognitive, behavioral, and environment factors (Bandura, 1986a). The behavior,

personal factors, and environmental factors have an interaction effect with each other (Figure 1). Self-efficacy is part of the personal factors which may affect and be affected by people's behavior and environmental factors.

Figure 1. Triadic reciprocal causation model



In Bandura's social-cognitive theory, the self-efficacy component has a profound impact on students' motivation and achievements (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy refers to "beliefs in one's abilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). In an educational setting, self-efficacy is related to perseverance and achievement (Bandura, 1986b). In other words, self-efficacy is a personal belief in one's capability to achieve the academic goal from meeting course requirements to attaining designated types of performances. More importantly, self-efficacy illustrates the capability to organize and to execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. The level of academic performance during transitional challenges which was

defined as the challenges people met when moving to an unfamiliar environment are the primary sources for self-efficacy which is important to human motivation (Wirawan & Bandu, 2016).

Often described as task-specific self-confidence, self-efficacy has been a key component in motivation and learning (Artino, 2012). To be specific to international students, the transitional challenges influence international student's academic performance by decreasing the level of students' motivation and learning (Sato & Hodge, 2015). Unfamiliar academic environment and the lack of foreign language proficiency often discourage international students to engage in classroom activity and team projects. Without adequate support, the unachieved self-expectation and the negative feedback that students receive from others could reduce their motivation for future works as an vicious circle (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017), where less support brings less motivation, which leads to less engagement and less support.

Berry's (2005) acculturation theory presents a comprehensive preliminary framework for understanding acculturation in dimensions of culture, psychology and groups, and explains the flow of psychological acculturation and adaptation. In terms of Berry's acculturation theory, behavior changes and acculturative stress are the two psychological acculturation outcomes that take place in the adaptation process. However, adaptation as the behavior change may or may not improve the fit between individuals and their environments (Berry, 2005).

Adaptation is a multifaceted concept (Berry, 2005). Psychological adaptation involves one's psychological and physical well-being (Schmitz, 1992). Psychological problems often increase soon after in-person contact (Berry, 2005). Differently, sociocultural adaptation refers to the acculturating individual's ability to manage daily life in the new culture. Sociocultural adaptation typically has a linear improvement with time (Berry, 2005). Moreover, economic adaptation could be the third aspect of adaptation (Aycan & Berry, 1996). The economic

adaptation relates to the change of one's economic status and psychological adjustment (Aycan & Berry, 1996).

As a result, personality variables and life changing events connect to psychological adaptation whereas cultural knowledge, degree of contact, and intergroup attitudes connect with sociocultural adaptation (Ward, 1996). To international students, the aforementioned three types of adaptation directly influence their academic achievement and social engagement.

Additionally, McNeal (1997) connected acculturation and school achievement closely by suggesting that it could positively affect academic outcomes. Acculturation contributes to motivation and study effort which directly affects school achievement (Campbell, 2015). Moreover, acculturation is significantly related to international students' educational satisfaction since the unfamiliar environment challenge is not the only problem students need to face. The change in learning methods due to a different education system alter the way international students think about their study achievement and satisfaction (Wadsworth, Hecht, & Jung, 2007).

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of the IEP on international students' acculturation and self-efficacy in an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in South Texas. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the importance of acculturation in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
2. What is the importance of self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
3. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating acculturation?

4. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating self-efficacy?

#### Operational Definitions

For the purpose of the study, the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals and the role of the International Education Program in facilitating them were measured by the respondents' responses to the International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ) survey instrument.

#### Glossary of Terms

*Acculturation* refers to the phenomena which results when groups of people of different cultures keep experiencing subsequent changes in their original culture patterns (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936).

*Boren Scholarship and Fellowship* was established by David L. Boren to recruit and train experts in foreign languages and cultures to serve in various academic, cultural, and national security areas (Boren Awards, 2018).

*Fulbright Scholarship and Fellowship* is the largest U.S. exchange program offering opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide (Fulbright, 2018).

*Institute of International Education (IIE)* is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to building international goodwill through educational and cultural exchange among nations (IIE, 2018).

*International Education Program (IEP)* is a university department that provides international students with services and cultural involvement opportunities (Chissoe, 2017).

*International Students* are those who have crossed a national or territorial border for the purpose of education and are now enrolled outside their country of origin. (United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018).

*Open Door Report* is a comprehensive information resource on international students and scholars studying or teaching at higher education institutions in the United States, and U.S. students studying abroad for academic credit at their home colleges or universities, which is supported by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (Institute of International Education, 2018).

*Self-Efficacy* refers to “beliefs in one's abilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3).

*The National Security Education Program (NSEP)* was established by the National Security Education Act of 1991, which created the Boren scholarship and fellowship by a mission that seeks to lead in development of the national capacity to educate U.S. citizens, understand foreign cultures, strengthen U.S. economic competitiveness and enhance international cooperation and security (Boren Awards, 2018).

#### Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions

The study was delimited to international students at an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in South Texas who had participated in the IEP in 2018; thus, could express their perceptions of the study's variables of interest, namely, acculturation and self-efficacy. Due to the non-random nature of the sampling, external validity was limited to the study's participants. Due to the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn. It was assumed that the participants completed the survey questionnaire honestly and that research remained objective throughout the conduct of the study.

## Significance of the Study

The study documented international students' perceptions of the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy and the IEP's effectiveness in facilitating acculturation and self-efficacy. Petzold and Peter (2015) reported that the key components of the social norms to international education are personal development, job marketing opportunities, and self-satisfaction, while acculturation and self-efficacy can be instrumental in impacting personal development and self-satisfaction for international students, respectively (Deardorff, 2006). The study's findings would be helpful in understanding whether or not the IEP has the potential to play an effective role in facilitating international students' acculturation and self-efficacy.

In addition, leadership is an indispensable factor to international education. International leadership refers to the process that influences students and faculty to engage in the internationalization of higher education institutions to achieve the goal of preparing students to be successfully engaged in a global society in international education (NAFSA, 2010). The IEP development and student service improvement goal cannot be achieved without effective educational leadership. The study's findings may be instrumental in informing international education leaders of the methods to design and execute effective program development strategies as it pertain to international students.

Effective international programs benefit both international and domestic students as well as scholars by increasing the international critical perception, diverse culture, and innovation in globalization of education. International educators, including faculty, staff, and student workers, may find the study's findings relevant to their work when the need arises to develop a program or international education strategies to achieve educational goals.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature focused on how IEP can facilitate international students' self-efficacy and acculturation to achieve their educational goals. This chapter is a review of the literature regarding internationalization within the higher education context, the relationship between international students and the international education program, the connection of acculturation, self-efficacy, and international education, and the challenges of international education. In the section regarding the connection of acculturation, self-efficacy, and international education, Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1989) was chosen to undergird the study of self-efficacy, and Berry's acculturation theory was chosen to support acculturation.

#### Internationalization within the Higher Education Context

The internationalization in the U.S. higher education happened much earlier than people realized. First of all, the development of American higher education system itself was a result of the internationalization influence from the Oxford, Cambridge and the German research university (Dolby & Rahman, 2008). The growth of international education in American universities took small steps. Before World War I, International education in the U.S. was not considered in the main stream of higher education (Bu, 2003). Following World War I, the Institution of International Education (IIE) was founded with the mission of promoting international peace and understanding. In 1945, Senator J. William Fulbright introduced a bill in the U.S. Congress that called for the use of surplus war property to fund the promotion of international goodwill through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture, and science. In 1948, the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA), the

Association of International Educators was established to provide a professional organization, training, and development of the advisors responsible for the growing the international student population on U.S. campuses (Bu, 2003). At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, international education program, including study abroad programs and international student service programs, in American institutions were merely seen as a new concept or innovation of an institution's profile. Today internationalization and globalization are part of key concerns to higher education institutions (Rumbley, Altbach, & Reisberg, 2012). They are connected to the issues as social and curricular relevance, institutional quality and prestige, national competitiveness, innovation potential and sources of potential revenue (Rumbley et al., 2012).

Today people are living in a globalized world. Internationalization and globalization have been a trend of much analysis over the last two decades (Rumbley et al., 2012). Globalization influences technology, economy, environment, culture, education, medical science, ideology and much more field (Knight, 2015). Globalization is a process that includes the overall activities of transnational and transcultural integration of human and non-human activities (Al-Rodhan & Stoudmann, 2006). In education, globalization has profound implications for international education (Myers, 2010). Globalization of education refers to worldwide institutions, professional organizations, policies, ideologies, students and faculty members affecting local education practices and decision-making (Spring, 2015). According to Altbach (2006), globalization in higher education is the macro-trend that influences the economic, technological and scientific elements in higher education. Meanwhile, internationalization in higher education is defined as a process of consolidating the intercultural dimension into higher education through extending new educational goals, functions, or knowledge delivery approaches (Knight, 2003). Today, internationalization and globalization are considered the core of the academic enterprise,

specifically in regard to future strategies made by policy-makers and institutional leaders (International Association of Universities, 2010).

Many signs inevitably indicate the internationalization trend is taking place in higher education. Some examples of the central elements in the globalization phenomenon would be the increasing mobility of international students and scholars, the rapid growth in cross-border education, world-class aspiration, graduates and institution global competition, the cooperative networking among higher educational institutions and national higher education systems, and dramatic commercial increase (Rumbley et al., 2012). Knight (2008) defined rationales which explain for the driving force regarding why a country or an institution wants to address and invest in internationalization. Table 1 and Table 2 summarizes the change of rationales in 10 years. Table 1 shows the rationales for driving internationalization in 1999, and Table 2 shows rationales driving internationalization in 2008.

Table 1

Change in Rationales Driving Internationalization 1999 (Knight, 2008)

Four Categories of Rationales (1999)
<p>Academic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International dimension to research and teaching</li> <li>• Extension of academic horizon</li> <li>• Institution building</li> <li>• Profile and status</li> <li>• Enhancement of quality</li> <li>• International academic standards</li> </ul> <p>Economic</p>

- Revenue generation
- E-competitiveness
- Labor market
- Financial incentives

#### Political

- Foreign policy
- National security
- Technical assistance
- Peace and mutual understanding
- Notional identity
- Regional identity

#### Social

- National cultural identity
- Intercultural understanding
- Citizenship development
- Social and community development

Table 2

Change in Rationales Driving Internationalization 2008 (Knight, 2008)

Two Levels of Rationales (2008)
<p>Institutional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International branding and profile</li><li>• Income generation</li><li>• Student and staff development</li><li>• Strategic alliances</li><li>• Knowledge production</li></ul>
<p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human resources development</li><li>• Strategic alliances</li><li>• Commercial trade</li><li>• Nation building</li><li>• Social cultural development</li></ul>

Traditionally, the rationales for internationalization have been presented in four groups: social/cultural, political, academic, and economic (Knight & de Wit, 1999) as shown in Table 1. Over time, the rationales have been changed from four categories into two levels – institutional and national as Table 2 shows (Knight, 2008).

#### International Students and International Education Program

International Education Program (IEP) work as a direct and essential part in the globalization of education. It plays a key role in cross-culture learning by serving international

students and providing a bridge that bring diverse cultures and perspectives to the U.S. (Chissoe, 2017). The IEP is a bridge between international students and U.S. institutions and can be instrumental in influencing the international students and the institution.

The increase of international students at U.S. universities has brought cultural diversity and academic prosperity (Campbell, 2015). In the academic year 2016-17, 1078,822 international students enrolled at U.S. universities, demonstrating a 3.4% increase of the number of international students from the previous year (Open Doors Report, 2017). It can be seen that first, this diverse student group brings global perspectives and knowledge, particularly in science fields (Sato & Hodge, 2009). Second, international students contribute to America's economic strength and financial well-being through consumer activities, academic research and patenting, and creation of knowledge-based products and services (National Science Foundation, 2016). Third, international students as ambassadors further international communication of foreign policies, cultural learning, transnational business, and universal values (Anderson, 2013).

In order to provide services to international students to overcome study abroad challenges and fulfill their educational goals, in 1854, IEP was created in U.S. universities as a student service department (Open Doors Report, 2016). The IEP focus on three dimensions: 1). creating a community that make effort to accelerate cross-cultural and multicultural understanding; 2). increasing international students' social involvement and academic progress; 3). offering the assistance channel to international students regarding career and legal issues (Goncalves, 2010).

Although international students enrich American institutions in many disciplines, studies show that they face certain challenges that impede them to achieve their education goals (Altbach, 2006; Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Campbell, 2015). Researchers show that the key

components of the social norms to overseas education for international students are personal development, job marketing opportunities, and confidence (Petzold & Peter, 2015; Sherry, Thomas & Chui, 2010). Acculturation and self-efficacy can be instrumental in impacting personal development and confidence for international students, and acculturation and self-efficacy challenges bring a dramatic influence on international students' social well-being and academic success (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Campbell, 2015; Sato & Hodge, 2015).

The quality of the IEP can be a direct and an indirect factor that influences international students' acculturation and self-efficacy. The influence of the IEP starts from pre-departure to a year after graduation, continues through international students' entire study abroad experience, such as admission, international travel, orientation, language programs, cultural engagement and international social events, international career guide, counseling services and other essential services (IIE,2018). Effective IEP services could reduce international students' anxiety level, help them to get familiar with the foreign environment and overcome cultural shock which was referred to the distress experienced by the sojourner as a result of losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social interaction (Oberg, 1960). Moreover, the effective service could help international students engage in the new culture and be able to share their original culture with others, which eventually increases the self-efficacy of both the academic and social fields (Scott, 2000). The service the IEP offers is the bridge between international students and the foreign environment (Hayden, Levy, & Thompson, 2015).

#### Acculturation and International Education

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, acculturation was defined as the phenomena which results when groups of people having different cultures contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Today, the

prevailing meaning for acculturation is that acculturation is a bi-dimensional and multidimensional concept (Chun, Organista, & Marin, 2002). For example, adaptation, change, moderating variables, preferences, desire for ethnic affiliation, and the possibility that the dominant culture may undergo a change process influenced by aspects of the newcomer culture could all be components of acculturation (Berry, Trimble, & Olmedo, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Richman, Gaviria, Flaherty, Birz, & Wintrob, 1987). Acculturation challenges include the cultural and psychological adjustments that an individual or cultural group endures within a new environment (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder 2006). International students as individuals who have grown up in a different culture often encounter unfamiliar teaching methods, communication barriers, and identity issues (Jackson, Ray, & Bybell, 2013; Kim, 2012; Kuo, 2011; Sherry, Thomas, & Chui, 2010; Young, 2011; Sue & Rawlings, 2013; Telbis, Helgeson, & Kingsbury, 2013).

Berry (2005) presents a comprehensive framework for understanding acculturation at the cultural and psychological levels, group level and individual level, and explains the flow of psychological acculturation and adaptation. The theory supports the study by providing a framework for explaining the relationship between acculturation and the barriers international students face when trying to achieve their educational goals. As can be seen in Figures 2 and 3 and Table 3, in terms of Berry (2005)'s acculturation theory, two psychological acculturation outcomes begin early in the adaptation process – behavior changes and acculturative stress. The coping strategies at this level are to adjust or assimilate (Berry, 2005). When greater levels of conflict occur, or the experiences are judged to be problematic, the acculturative stress paradigm as the Figure 3 showed may be applied (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). In other words, adaptation process may lead behavior changes which may or may not improve the fit between

individuals and their environments. Adaptation process may also lead to acculturative stress which could be caused by conflict level or development of problematic.

Figure 2. A Preliminary Framework for Understanding Acculturation: Cultural and Psychological Level

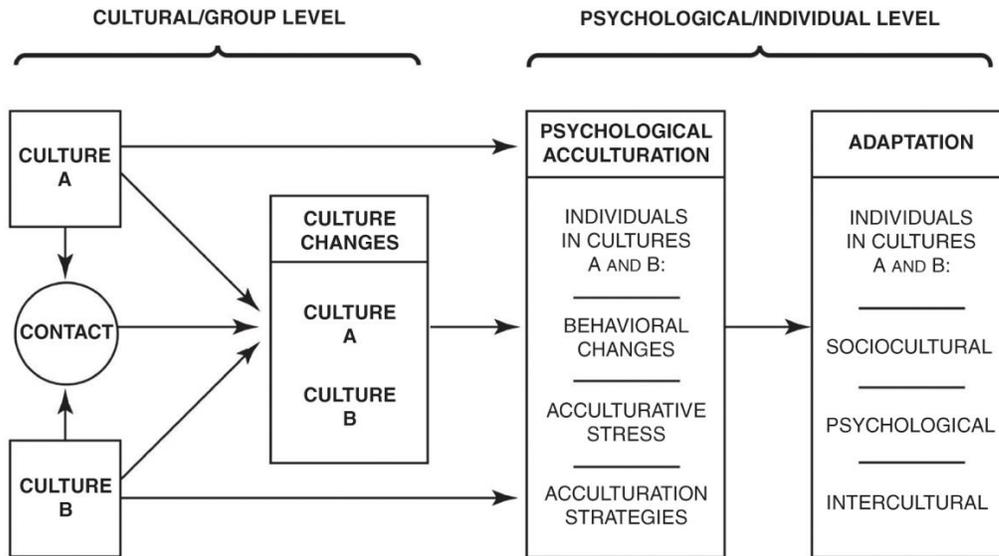


Figure 3. A Framework for Acculturation Research

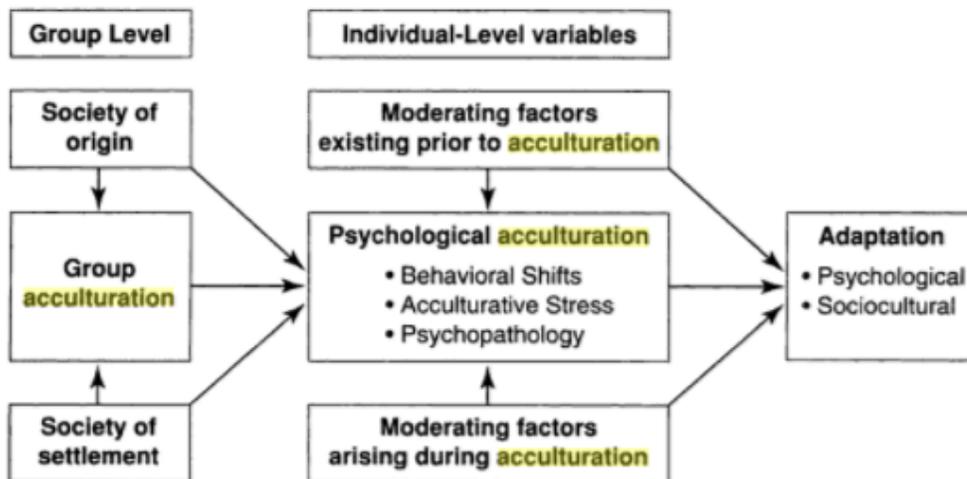


Table 3

## Specific Features of Psychological Acculturation and Adaptation

Variable	Specific features
Behavioral shifts	Culture learning (e.g., language, food, dress, social norms) Culture shedding (e.g., changing social norms, gender attitudes) Culture conflict (e.g., incompatibility, intergroup difficulties)
Acculturative stress	Problem appraisal Stressors Stress phenomena (e.g., psychological, psychometric, anxiety)
Psychopathology	Problems Crises Pathological phenomena (e.g., depression, schizophrenia)
Psychological adaptation	Self-esteem Identity consolidation Well-being/satisfaction
Sociocultural adaptation	Cultural knowledge, social skills Interpersonal and intergroup relations Family and community relations

Adaptation is multifaceted (Berry, 2005). However, adaptation may or may not improve the fit between individuals and their environments (Berry, 2005). Psychological adaptation largely involves one's psychological and physical well-being (Schmitz, 1992), whereas sociocultural adaptation refers to how well an acculturating individual is able to manage daily life in the new cultural context. Psychological problems often increase soon after contact and sociocultural adaptation typically has a linear improvement with time (Berry, 2005). Moreover, economic adaptation has been suggested as the third aspect of adaptation (Aycan & Berry, 1996). As a result, personality variables and life changing events connect to psychological adaptation whereas cultural knowledge, degree of contact, and intergroup attitudes connect with sociocultural adaptation (Ward, 1996).

To international students, the three types of adaptation aforementioned directly influence their academic achievement and social engagement. Factors identified as critical to the mental health of international students derived from three broad dimensions: adjusting to unfamiliar

academic practices; developing skills to manage everyday life in a different cultural context; and both recognizing and seeking professional help for mental health problems (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016). Second, the cross-cultural literature underlines the benefit of attachment security in the process of adaptation. In a survey of international students in the United States, attachment insecurity has been associated with stressful life events and sociocultural distress (Chen, Mallinckrodt, & Mobley, 2003). Avoidance of intimacy, referred to as attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety were found to predict problems in sociocultural adaptation in Chinese and Taiwanese international students in the United States (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). They also positively correlated with loneliness and negatively with life satisfaction for Taiwanese students (Wu & Yao, 2008). Thirdly, although economic status is a resource, a common experience for international students is a combination of personal advantage change, such as language, and limited working opportunities (Aycan & Berry, 1996). One's departure economic status is frequently higher than one's entry status; work experience is frequently devalued on arrival (Cumming, Lee, & Oreopoulos, 1989). The economic hardship could influence the stability of international students' academic achievement and living status (Sherry, Thomas, & Chui, 2010).

A core role of the IEP is to help international students to cope with acculturation. Coping strategies workshops and social engagement activities are examples of acculturation improvement services that the IEP provides. Although integration is typically the most frequently chosen strategy, differences in how people support acculturation are evident (Berry, 2005). The features of the contact situation, the vitality of one's cultural group, and national policies in the larger society influence people's acculturation strategies (Moise & Bourhis, 1997). For example, in a Muslim-welcome social context, Muslim student groups may be active on campus, in which integration works as a common acculturation strategy. In contrast, in the

special travel ban period, international students in certain cultures may choose to deemphasize their original culture to be engaged in the community (Coll, Pinyonattagarn, & Pramoolsook, 2003). Regarding coping strategies, problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance-oriented coping are the three typical coping mechanisms (Endler & Parker, 1990). Problem-focused coping mechanisms focus on solutions of a problem when an affliction happens; emotion-focused coping mechanism is shown as expressing strong emotion experience when an affliction happens; avoidance-oriented coping mechanism is the response to try to avoid people or circumstances that related to an affliction (Endler, 1997). Assisting international students to access the knowledge of acculturation and coping strategies may help them to avoid avoidance or isolation. However, these strategies are likely to be successful only if the dominant society has positive attitudes towards and is willing to accept members of the acculturating groups (Berry, 2005). Therefore, one of the IEP's function should be to construct a welcoming environment for international students and engage them with dominant society in order to eliminate separation and marginalization, and accelerate cross-culture communication (IIE, 2018).

Acculturation contributes to motivation and study effort which affects school achievement directly (Campbell, 2015). Positive acculturation leads to positive study motivation and effort (Campbell, 2015). Moreover, acculturation was significantly related to international students' educational satisfaction (Wadsworth, Hecht & Jung, 2007). Facing challenges of both new environment and learning system change at the same time, it is hard to meet the educational satisfaction for international students. Once one challenge has been solved, the hardship on the other decrease along with it (Campbell, 2015; Wadsworth, Hecht, & Jung, 2007).

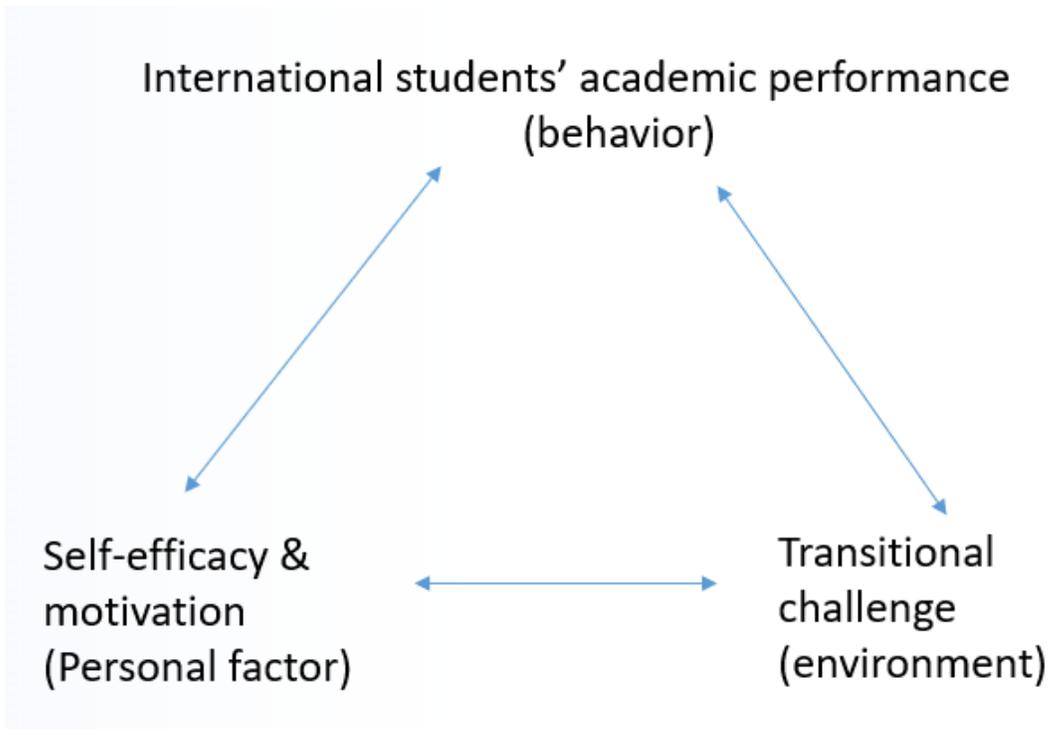
## Self-Efficacy and International Education

The other element influencing international students' social well-being and academic success is self-efficacy (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017). Self-efficacy refers to “beliefs in one's abilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). In the educational setting, self-efficacy is related to perseverance and achievement (Bandura, 1986b). Research finds that students who have high academic self-efficacy often apply more effective cognitive strategies in learning, manage their time more effectively, and pay more attention on their own effort (Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; Poyrazli, Arbona, Nora, McPherson, & Pisecco, 2002; Gong & Fan, 2006; Yusoff, 2012). In contrast, self-efficacy challenges may negatively influence students' academic achievement. For example, students who have low self-efficacy may make slow progress on language proficiency, academic subject, career goal achievements, and social involvements (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015).

Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory presents a comprehensive framework of human motivation and action from a social cognitive perspective. The theory addresses the prominent roles played by cognitive, vicarious, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes in psychosocial functioning. Cognitive process is the act of knowing and perception; vicarious learning permits individuals to learn a novel behavior without undergoing the trial and error process of performing it; through self-reflection, people make sense of their experiences, explore their own cognitions and self-beliefs, engage in self-evaluation, and alter their thinking and behavior accordingly; self-reflective refers to careful thought about one's own behavior and beliefs (Bandura, 1989). Cognitive process also emphasizes reciprocal causation through the interplay of cognitive, behavioral, and environment factors (Bandura, 1986a). In the international education settings, the three interactional factors of Bandura's social cognitive theory are international

students' performance (behavior), self-efficacy and motivation (personal factor), and transitional challenge (environment). The three factors affect each other as can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4. The Application of Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model on IEP



In Bandura's (1986b) social-cognitive theory, the self-efficacy component has a profound impact on students' motivation and achievements, especially in perseverance and achievement. Self-efficacy is a personal belief in one's capability to achieve the academic goal from meeting course requirements and capability to organize and to execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. The level of academic performance during transitional challenges are the primary sources for self-efficacy which is a core component to human motivation (Wirawan & Bandu, 2016). Often described as task-specific self-confidence, self-efficacy has been a key component in motivation and learning (Artino, 2012).

To be specific to international students, the transitional challenge influences international students' academic performance by decreasing the level of students' motivation and learning (Sato & Hodge, 2015). Unfamiliar academic environment and the lack of foreign language proficiency often bring initial discouragement to international students on classroom activity engagement and team works. Without adequate support, the unachieved self-expectation and the discouraging information students received could reduce their motivation for the future works (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017). To improve international students' self-efficacy, it is vital for the IEP to collaborate with university departments, faculty members, academic advisors, career and counseling centers, among others to understand the challenge students are facing. As a result, the IEP could develop effective strategies to fit their own students and institution's need.

#### Challenges of International Education

The challenges facing higher education today cannot be understood unless proper account is taken of the phenomenon of globalization. Globalization is a process that includes the overall activities of transnational and transcultural integration of human and non-human (Al-Rodhan & Stoudmann, 2006). First, globalization cannot simply be seen as a higher form of internationalization. It is a much more turbulent phenomenon that not only transcends but ignores national boundaries (Scott, 2000). As higher institutions promote globalization on campuses, American universities remain limited by the unfriendly immigration policies which decrease the diversity on campus.

Moreover, support from faculty members is also needed to help international students to improve acculturation and self-efficacy. Faculty most commonly understand the challenges that international students face -- functioning in English, achieving unique academic goals, adjusting culturally, and integrating with American students. Though faculty members appreciate multiple

benefits that international students brought to their departments, it is still hard to change dominant students' preferences for having American students in their study groups (Trice, 2003).

Finally, as higher education funding has decreased, tuition has increased - in many cases, dramatically (Mitchell, 2016). In some states, funding cuts have forced reductions in campus staff, student support services, and course offerings. Budget-cuts tightened the funding allocation of international education in higher institutions (Lien & Wang, 2010). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2017), grants to educational agencies have been declined by 3.7% from the 2016-2017 academic year. Without funding support, student service and engagement functions barely run as normal. In some case, funding cuts can lead to program cuts easily. Although the dire fiscal context at the time of this writing is not likely to be a permanent feature of campus financing, it is necessary for higher education leaders to seek alternative options and sources to operate international education program.

### Summary

Upon conclusion of the literature review on the IEP's roles in improving international students' acculturation and self-efficacy to advance internationalization and globalization in higher education, it is likely that international education will be a pioneer in the internationalization trend in the higher education field. Meanwhile, innovation in the IEP is necessary for higher education institutions to better facilitate international students to achieve their academic goals and social engagement demands under the globalization trend and new challenges.

Research shows the meaningful relationship among acculturation, self-efficacy as it pertains to international students' education goals and performance of IEP. To help international students with cultural adaptation and self-efficacy, IEP needs to collaborate with various student

service departments and academic departments. Current literature suggests continuous challenges in front of international educators, which includes faculty, staffs, and student workers.

International educators must always hold themselves to the very highest standards of inclusion regardless of the challenges they may face.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

The quantitative study was designed and implemented to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the importance of acculturation in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
2. What is the importance of self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
3. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating acculturation?
4. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of International Education Program in facilitating self-efficacy?

#### Research Design

The quantitative study collected, processed, and analyzed data to achieve the objectives of the scientific inquiry. The study was descriptive in nature, focusing on the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy and the effectiveness of international student services in facilitating them as perceived by a non-probability sample of university level international students. Due to the descriptive and exploratory nature of the study, there were no independent or dependent variables (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2015; Vogt, 2007). Due to the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn.

## Subject Selection

The study took place in an Hispanic Serving Institution in south Texas, hereafter refers to as the University. At the time of conducting the study, the state-funded University offered 33 undergraduate, 25 master's level, and five (5) doctoral degrees through six colleges (Education and Human Development, Business, Liberal Arts, Nursing and Health Sciences, Science and Engineering, and the newly founded University College to support undergraduate student success). There were approximately 12,000 students, of which, 335 were international students, who were invited to voluntarily participate in the study. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB protocol and permission are in Appendix A.

## Instrumentation

For the purpose of the study, the researcher developed the International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ), which is shown in Appendix B. The consent to participate in the study was embedded in the three-part survey questionnaire. Acculturation was measured by nine (9) items derived from the Multidimensional Individual Difference Acculturation (MIDA) model (Safdar & Rasmi, 2010): (1) psychological well-being, (2) out-group social support, (3) in-group social support, (4) cultural competence, (5) ethnic identity, (6) academic hassles, (7) in-group contact, (8) out-group contact, and (9) psychophysical distress.

Self-efficacy was measured by ten (10) items derived from the General Self-Efficacy Scale, GSES (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995): (1) my ability to solve difficult problems; (2) my ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me; (3) my ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals; (4) the confidence in my ability to deal efficiently

with unexpected events; (5) the resourcefulness to know how to handle unforeseen situations; (6) my ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort; (7) my coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties; (8) my ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem; (9) my ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble; and (10) my ability to handle whatever comes to my way.

In Part 1, the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy was measured, using a 4-point Likert-type scaling: 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, and 1 = very unimportant. In Part 2, the effectiveness of the International Education Program in facilitating acculturation and self-efficacy was examined, 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, and 1 = very ineffective. In Part 3, data on the following selected characteristics of the respondents were collected: gender, age, ethnicity, degree, country of origin, years of the education at the University, and the total number of years of education outside the home country.

The content validity of the ISASEQ was examined by the researcher's doctoral dissertation committee. On November 28, 2018, the ISASEQ was pilot-tested with 19 graduate students to examine its reliability/internal consistency and utility. The pilot-test data attested to the internal consistency of the study's four major variables, utilizing Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. The following reliability coefficients were obtained: acculturation importance scale (0.70), self-efficacy importance scale (0.82), acculturation effectiveness scale (0.91), and self-efficacy effectiveness (0.95).

### Data Collection

An on-line version of the ISASEQ was used for the purpose of data collection. The study participants were recruited by email. The Office of International Education at the University sent out emails to 335 international student who were enrolled in spring semester 2019. An initial

email containing the study's purpose and the link to the on-line survey was sent on December 14, 2018. The follow-up email was sent on January 18, 2019. There were 94 international students who responded to the online survey, yielding a 28.00% response rate. Due to non-probability nature of sampling, the 94 participants were not representative of the population.

### Data Analysis

The online data were downloaded into an Excel file and exported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 that was used for the purpose of data manipulation and analysis (IBM Corp, 2017). The level of significance was set, a priori, at 0.01. Descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage distribution tables, measures of central tendency, and variability, were used to summarize and organize the data (Field, 2018).

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991) was used to estimate the reliability/international consistency of the scale scores. Specifically,  $\alpha = [k/k-1] [1-(\sum\sigma_i^2/\sigma_x^2)]$ , where  $k$  is the number of items on the test,  $\sigma_i^2$  is the variance of item  $i$ , and  $\sigma_x^2$  is the total test variance (sum of the variances plus twice the sum of the co-variances of all possible pairs of its components, that is,  $\sigma_x^2 = \sum\sigma_i^2 + 2\sum\sigma_{ij}$ ) was computed for each of the constructs.

At the item level, Wilcoxon rank-sum test (Field, 2018), a non-parametric statistical technique, was used to examine differences between importance and effectiveness measures. The test assumes random samples from continuous populations and that data are at least ordinal. It is analogous to t-test for correlated. When both sample sizes are greater than 10, an approximate  $Z$  is computed. The  $z$ -to- $r$  transformation (Field, 2018) was used to compute the effect sizes and examine the practical significance of the findings. Specifically, the effect size was computed by  $r = Z / \sqrt{N}$ , where  $N$  is the total number of observations. The effect sizes were characterized as 0.10 = small effect, 0.30 = medium effect, and 0.50 = large effect (Cohen, 1988).

At the scale level, t-test for correlated samples was employed to examine the differences between importance and effectiveness scores (Field, 2018). The mean difference effect size, Cohen's *d*, was computed to examine the practical significance of the findings. To do so, the mean difference was divided by the standard deviation of the mean difference and characterized as 0.20 = small effect, 0.50 = medium effect, and 0.80 = large effect (Cohen, 1988).

Analysis of the data also included t-test for independent samples, one-way analysis of variance, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Field, 2018).

### Summary

An online survey questionnaire, developed by the researcher, approved by the dissertation committee, and pilot-tested for its reliability and utility was used to collect the data between December 2018 and January 2019. There were 94 respondents, which constituted the study's non-probability sample. The SPSS 25 was used for the purpose of data analysis. The level of significance was set at 0.01. Several univariate, multivariate, parametric, and non-parametric statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. The practical significance of the findings was evaluated.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of the International Education Program (IEP) on international students' acculturation and self-efficacy in an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in South Texas. To do so, an online International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ) was developed and used to collect the data. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the importance of acculturation in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
2. What is the importance of self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
3. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating acculturation?
4. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating self-efficacy?

Descriptive statistics, univariate (t-test, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test), and multivariate (Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha) statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Mean difference effect sizes and z-to-r transformations were computed to examine the practical significance of the findings. The level of significance was set, a priori, at 0.01.

#### A Profile of the Subjects

The non-probability sample consisted of 94 (49, 52.10% male) undergraduate and graduate international students from 25 different nationalities. The majority of the participants

were Asian and graduate students. China was represented the most, followed by Vietnam and India. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

A Profile of the Subjects, Categorical Variables, n = 94

Variable	F	%
Gender		
Male	49	52.10
Female	45	47.90
Ethnicity		
Asian	68	72.30
Black	5	5.30
Hispanic	5	5.30
White	10	10.60
Other	6	6.40
Education		
Bachelor's Degree Seeking	35	37.20
Master's Degree Seeking	42	44.70
Doctorate Degree Seeking	17	18.10
Nationality		
China	31	33.00
Azerbaijan	1	1.10
Bangladesh	1	1.10
Brazil	2	2.10
Canada	1	1.10
Colombia	2	2.10
Ecuador	2	2.10
Hong Kong	1	1.10
India	9	9.60
Kenya	1	1.10

Table 4 (cont'd)

Mexico	1	1.10
Nepal	1	1.10
New Zealand	1	1.10
Nigeria	3	3.20
Pakistan	1	1.10
Saudi Arabia	4	4.30
Sweden	1	1.10
Taiwan	3	3.20
Thailand	1	1.10
Turkey	1	1.10
Uganda	1	1.10
Ukraine	2	2.10
United States	2	2.10
Uzbekistan	1	1.10
Vietnam	18	19.10
Missing	2	2.10

A typical principal was 25.70 years old ( $SD = 4.27$ ) with 2.40 years of education at the study's HIS ( $SD = 1.71$ ) and 4.00 years of studying outside the home country ( $SD = 3.60$ ).

Results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

A Profile of the Subjects, Continuous Variables,  $n = 94$

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Age	25.73	25.00	24.00	4.27
Years attending the study's HSI	2.40	2.00	1.00	1.71
Years studying outside home country	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.60

#### Item-Level Results

##### Importance

The international students were asked to complete the 38-item ISASEQ, using a 4-point Likert-type scaling: 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, and 1 = very

unimportant. The international students rated the importance of nine items measuring acculturation. The means of respondents' responses were used to rank the importance scores. Results are summarized in Table 6.

The international students rated the importance of ten items measuring self-efficacy. The means of the respondents' responses were used to rank the findings. Results are summarized in Table 7.

Table 6

The Ranking of the Importance of Acculturation Items, n = 94

Item	Mean*
Psychological well-being	3.63
Academic hassles	3.46
Cultural competence	3.40
Out-group social support	3.33
In-group social support	3.20
Ethnic identity	3.11
Psychophysical distress	3.10
Out-group contact	3.04
In-group contact	3.02

\* 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

Table 7

The Ranking of the Importance of Self-efficacy Items, n = 94

Item	Mean*
Ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	3.63
Ability to solve difficult problems	3.57
Ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble	3.57
The confidence of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events	3.53
Ability to handle whatever comes to my way	3.46
Ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	3.45
Ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem	3.43
Coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties	3.38
The resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations	3.37
Ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me	3.28

\* 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

## Effectiveness

The international students used the same 38-item ISASEQ to rate the effectiveness of the IEP in impacting acculturation and self-efficacy, using a 4-point Likert-type scaling: 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, and 1 = very ineffective.

There were nine acculturation items and the means of the respondents' responses were used to rank the effectiveness scores. Results are summarized in Table 8. The international students rated the effectiveness of the IEP in impacting self-efficacy. The mean scores were used to rank the responses. Results are summarized in Table 9.

Table 8

The Ranking of the Effectiveness of IEP Items on Impacting Acculturation, n = 94

Item	Mean*
Psychological well-being	3.24
Cultural competence	3.16
Out-group social support	3.15
Academic hassles	3.14
In-group social support	3.13
Out-group contact	3.06
In-group contact	3.04
Psychophysical distress	3.01
Ethnic identity	2.99

\* 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

Note: IEP = International Education Program

Table 9

## The Ranking of the Effectiveness of IEP Items on Impacting Self-efficacy, n = 94

Item	Mean*
Ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble	3.30
The confidence of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events	3.29
Ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	3.28
Ability to solve difficult problems	3.21
Ability to handle whatever comes to my way	3.21
Ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem	3.15
Ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	3.15
The resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations	3.11
Coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties	3.10
Ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me	3.00

\* 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

Note: IEP = International Education Program

## Scale Scores

The ISASEQ measured two acculturation and two self-efficacy constructs (importance and effectiveness). The means of the respondents' responses were used to compute a scale for each construct. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to estimate the internal consistency of the scale scores. Results are summarized in Tables 10 and 11.

Table 10

## The Importance of Acculturation and Self-efficacy Constructs, n = 94

Construct	#of items	Reliability		
		Coefficient	M*	SD
Acculturation	9	0.62	3.25	0.33
Self-Efficacy	10	0.85	3.47	0.37

\* 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

Table 11

## The Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Acculturation and Self-efficacy, n = 94

Construct	#of items	Reliability		
		Coefficient	M*	SD
Acculturation	9	0.81	3.10	0.42
Self-Efficacy	10	0.90	3.18	0.47

\* 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

Note: IEP = International Education Program

## Comparison of Importance with Effectiveness

At the item level, a series of Wilcoxon Signed-Rank was performed to examine the differences between importance and effectiveness scores for acculturation and self-efficacy. The effect sizes were based on z-to-r transformation. As can be seen in Table 12, three differences were statistically significant based on the comparison of importance of acculturation with effectiveness of IEP on impacting acculturation, namely, psychological well-being, cultural competence, and academic hassles, favoring importance scores. The effect sizes, as computed by z-to-r transformation, ranged from negligible to medium. With respect to self-efficacy, as shown in Table 13, all differences were statistically significant, favoring the importance scores, and effect sizes were mainly medium.

Table 12

Comparison of Importance of Acculturation with Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Acculturation at the Item Level, n = 94

Construct	Importance Mean <sup>a</sup>	Effectiveness Mean <sup>b</sup>	z <sup>c</sup>	Effect Size <sup>d</sup>
Psychological well-being	3.63	3.24	4.33*	0.32
Out-group social support	3.33	3.15	2.05	0.15
In-group social support	3.20	3.13	0.91	0.07
Cultural competence	3.40	3.16	2.78*	0.20
Ethnic identity	3.11	2.99	1.47	0.11
Academic hassles	3.46	3.14	3.39*	0.25
In-group contact	3.02	3.04	0.29	0.02
Out-group contact	3.04	3.06	0.11	0.01
Psychophysical distress	3.10	3.01	1.04	0.08

\* p < 0.01

<sup>a</sup> 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

<sup>b</sup> 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

<sup>c</sup> As calculated by the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

<sup>d</sup> Effect size 0.10 = small, 0.30 = medium, 0.50 = large

Table 13

Comparison of Importance of Self-efficacy with Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Self-efficacy at the Item Level, n = 94

Construct	Importance Mean <sup>a</sup>	Effectiveness Mean <sup>b</sup>	z <sup>c</sup>	Effect Size <sup>d</sup>
Ability to solve difficult problems	3.57	3.21	4.23*	0.31
Ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me	3.28	3.00	3.27*	0.24
Ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	3.63	3.28	4.91*	0.36
The confidence of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events	3.53	3.29	3.16*	0.20
The resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations	3.37	3.11	3.49*	0.20
Ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	3.45	3.15	3.38*	0.25
Coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties	3.38	3.10	3.52*	0.26
Ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem	3.43	3.15	3.68*	0.27
Ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble	3.57	3.30	3.58*	0.20
Ability to handle whatever comes to my way	3.46	3.21	3.29*	0.24

\* p < 0.01

<sup>a</sup> 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

<sup>b</sup> 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

<sup>c</sup> As calculated by the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

<sup>d</sup> Effect size 0.10 = small, 0.30 = medium, 0.50 = large

At the scale level, a series of t-test for correlated samples was performed to examine the differences. Mean difference effect sizes (Cohen's d) were used to examine the practical significance of the findings. As can be seen in Table 14, the importance scores were higher than were the effectiveness scores for both acculturation and self-efficacy, the differences were statistically significant, and mean differences effect size ranged from 0.38 to 0.64. Although importance scores were higher than the effectiveness scores for both variables, examination of mean difference effect sizes suggested that the difference was higher for self-efficacy, compared to acculturation.

Table 14

Comparison of Importance of Acculturation and Self-efficacy with Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Acculturation and Self-efficacy,  $n = 94$

Construct	Importance		Effectiveness		t	d**
	M <sup>a</sup>	SD	M <sup>b</sup>	SD		
Acculturation	3.25	0.33	3.10	0.42	3.74*	0.38
Self-efficacy	3.47	0.37	3.18	0.47	6.22*	0.64

\*  $p < 0.01$

<sup>a</sup> 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

<sup>b</sup> 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

\*\* d = mean difference effect size: 0.20 = small, 0.50 = medium, > 0.80 = large

Note: IEP = International Education Program

#### Generalizability of the Scale Scores

The study's 94 international students were mostly male ( $n = 49$ ), Asian ( $n = 68$ ), and studying for a master's degree ( $n = 42$ ). The differences between male and female participants based on the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy, and the effectiveness of the IEP on impacting them were not statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The homogeneity of variances assumption was met in all analyses. Results are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15

The Importance of Acculturation and Self-efficacy and the Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Acculturation and Self-Efficacy by Gender

Construct	Male ( $n = 49$ )		Female ( $n = 45$ )		t*
	M	SD	M	SD	
Importance <sup>a</sup> of Acculturation	3.22	0.33	3.30	0.33	-1.08
Importance <sup>a</sup> of Self-efficacy	3.48	0.40	3.46	0.35	0.23
Effectiveness <sup>b</sup> of Acculturation	3.09	0.39	3.11	0.46	-0.29
Effectiveness <sup>b</sup> of Self-efficacy	3.18	0.45	3.18	0.49	0.02

\* None of the differences was statistically significant.

<sup>a</sup> 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

<sup>b</sup> 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

A series of One-way ANOVA was performed to examine education level (BS, MS, Doctorate) differences based on the outcome measures. The homogeneity of variance assumption

was met in all analyses. As can be seen in Table 16, none of the differences were statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 16

The Importance of Acculturation and Self-efficacy and the Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Acculturation and Self-Efficacy by Education Level

Construct	BS (n = 35)		MS (n = 42)				Doc (n = 17)
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F*
Importance <sup>a</sup> of Acculturation	3.23	0.29	3.24	0.33	3.27	0.40	0.06
Importance <sup>a</sup> of Self-efficacy	3.43	0.39	3.50	0.38	3.48	0.36	0.35
Effectiveness <sup>b</sup> of Acculturation	3.15	0.41	3.08	0.44	3.06	0.40	0.40
Effectiveness <sup>b</sup> of Self-efficacy	3.29	0.39	3.13	0.49	3.08	0.57	1.52

\* None of the differences was statistically significant.

<sup>a</sup> 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

<sup>b</sup> 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

For the purpose of the investigation, ethnicity was recoded into Asian, White, and Other.

Group differences, based on ANOVA results, were not statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The homogeneity of variances assumption was met in all analyses. Results are summarized in

Table 17.

Table 17

The Importance of Acculturation and Self-efficacy and the Effectiveness of IEP on Impacting Acculturation and Self-efficacy by Ethnicity

Construct	Asian (n = 68)		White (n = 10)		Other (n = 16)		F*
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Importance <sup>a</sup> of Acculturation	3.25	0.33	3.32	0.35	3.22	0.33	0.29
Importance <sup>a</sup> of Self-efficacy	3.40	0.36	3.58	0.41	3.67	0.32	4.02
Effectiveness <sup>b</sup> of Acculturation	3.13	0.40	3.12	0.50	3.00	0.46	0.66
Effectiveness <sup>b</sup> of Self-efficacy	3.17	0.45	3.44	0.55	3.06	0.47	2.15

\* None of the differences was statistically significant.

<sup>a</sup> 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, 1 = very unimportant

<sup>b</sup> 4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, 1 = very ineffective

Bivariate associations between age, years of higher education at the current university, and years of education away from the home country and the study's four variables of interest were examined, using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. As can be seen in Table

18, the only statistically significant correlation coefficient was between importance of acculturation and the total number of years of education outside the birth place.

Table 18

Age, Years at Current University, Years Studied Away from Home Country, Acculturation, and Self-efficacy Correlation Matrix, n = 94

Construct	Age r	Years at University r	Years Studied Abroad r
Importance of Acculturation	0.04	0.12	0.32*
Importance of Self-efficacy	0.05	-0.16	-0.12
Effectiveness of Acculturation	-0.17	0.07	0.07
Effectiveness of Self-efficacy	-0.17	0.09	0.04

\* p < 0.01

#### Summary of the Results

All importance scores were higher than the effectiveness scores. Regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and years of university education, acculturation and self-efficacy were reported to be quite important and the International Education Program was effective in facilitating both. Importance of acculturation was affected by years of education outside the home country.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND DISCUSSION

We are now all living in a globalized world that is connected through the economy, technology, environment, culture, education, medical science, ideology, and many more fields (Knight, 2015). In education settings, globalization has profound implications for international education (Myers, 2010). International students at U.S. universities have brought global perspectives, cultural diversity and academic prosperity (Campbell, 2015).

Although international students enrich American institutions in globalization and many other fields, studies show that they face certain acculturation and self-efficacy challenges that affect their social well-being and academic success (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Campbell, 2015; Sato & Hodge, 2015). On the one hand, international students, as individuals who have grown up in a different culture, encounter unfamiliar teaching-methods, communication barriers, and identity issues as the acculturation challenges (Jackson, Ray, & Bybell, 2013; Kim, 2012; Kuo, 2011; Sherry, Thomas, & Chui, 2010; Young, 2011; Sue & Rawlings, 2013; Telbis, Helgeson, & Kingsbury, 2013). On the other hand, language proficiency, academic progress, career goal achievements, and social involvements could affect international students as influences on self-efficacy (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015). For example, international students who are not proficient in English may consider themselves as not having the ability to achieve the same academic level goal as their peers, which would affect the student's self-judgement of his or her ability to achieve a goal.

One approach in gaining increased recognition for enhancing education globalization is to improve international student services, which could help international students to overcome the study abroad challenges and make the cross-culture learning possible. The International

Education Program (IEP) was created for the mission of improving the cross-culture learning through (1) creating a community of faculty, students, and professionals that make effort to accelerate cross-cultural and multicultural understanding, (2) increasing international students' social involvement and academic progress, and (3) offering an assistance channel to international students regarding career and legal issues (Goncalves, 2010). The quality of the IEP influences international students' directly and indirectly acculturation and self-efficacy. To provide an effective IEP in U.S. higher education institutions, education leaders need an inside perspective from international students about their views of acculturation and self-efficacy as well as how they feel about the IEP service.

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of the IEP on international students' acculturation and self-efficacy in an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in South Texas. The proposed study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the importance of acculturation in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
2. What is the importance of self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?
3. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating acculturation?
4. How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating self-efficacy?

## Summary of the Study

The study examined international students' perceptions of acculturation and self-efficacy and the effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating international students' acculturation and self-efficacy. For the purpose of the study, the researcher developed the International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ) to collect the data. There are two parts to the ISASEQ: (1) the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy and (2) the effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating acculturation and self-efficacy. Acculturation was measured by nine items derived from the Multidimensional Individual Difference Acculturation (MIDA) model (Safdar & Rasmi, 2010). Self-efficacy was measured by 10 items derived from the General Self-Efficacy Scale, GSES (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). The content validity and internal consistency of the instrument were examined and documented. Due to the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn, and the external validity was limited to the study's participants due to the non-probability nature of the sampling.

A total of 94 international students from the Thomas University (pseudonym) participated in the study. A typical participant was 26 years old ( $SD = 4.27$ ) with 2.40 years of experience studying at the University ( $SD = 1.71$ ) and having 4 years of experience studying away from their respective home country ( $SD = 3.60$ ). Respondents were predominately Asian ( $n = 68$ ), male ( $n = 49$ ), and holding graduate degrees ( $n = 42$ ).

The results showed that the international students, regardless of various demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, education level, years of study experience at the university) found the acculturation and self-efficacy quite important. The results also showed that the IEP could be effective in facilitating international students' acculturation and self-efficacy. All the scores that indicated the importance of acculturation and self-efficacy were

higher than the scores indicating the effectiveness of the IEP in facilitating the two constructs. Based on mean difference effect sizes, the difference between the importance of acculturation and the effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating acculturation was smaller than the importance of self-efficacy and the effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating self-efficacy, which suggests that the IEP needs to improve providing international students with assistance to build self-efficacy.

### Conclusions

The researcher had postulated that acculturation and self-efficacy are important factors in international students' college study and the International Education Program could be effective in facilitating both. The results of the study supported the notions regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and years of university education.

### Discussion

International students as a special student group are experiencing many challenges in both life and academic aspects (Trice, 2003). Two of the challenges are often overlooked by colleges and universities are acculturation and self-efficacy (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Campbell, 2015; Sato & Hodge, 2015). Nevertheless, higher education institutions and their leaders are in the essential position to utilize engagement practices to help international students overcome their challenges and achieve their foreign educational goals. Gaining a sense of international students' perspective is a decisive factor for international education leaders to understand students' expectation and needs and make targeted improvement of the student service. Following that logic, this study was conducted in order to understand how important international students value acculturation and self-efficacy and how they perceive the effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating their acculturation and self-efficacy.

*RQ1: What is the importance of acculturation in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?*

The participants were asked to rate the importance of acculturation in nine areas, namely, (1) psychological well-being, (2) out-group social support, (3) in-group social support, (4) cultural competence, (5) ethnic identity, (6) academic hassles, (7) in-group contact, (8) out-group contact, and (9) psychophysical distress, using a 4-point scaling: 1 = very unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = important, 4 = very important. The results showed that the participating international students considered acculturation as important.

Berry's (2005) acculturation theory explains the flow of psychological acculturation and adaptation as an adaptation process. Specifically, personality variables and life changing events connect to the psychological adaptation, whereas, cultural knowledge, degree of contact, and intergroup attitudes connect with sociocultural adaptation (Ward, 1996). Based on students' responses to the adaptation items (e.g., cultural knowledge, degree of contact, and intergroup attitude), the results of the study suggested that psychological adaptation and sociocultural adaptation are important factors in acculturation.

*RQ2: What is the importance of self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education?*

The importance of self-efficacy was measured by 10 items: (1) my ability to solve difficult problems; (2) my ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me; (3) my ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals; (4) the confidence of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events; (5) the resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations; (6) my ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort; (7) my coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties; (8) my ability

to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem; (9) my ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble; and (10) my ability to handle whatever comes to my way. The 4-point scaling consisted of 1 = very unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = important, 4 = very important. The results showed that international students considered self-efficacy an important factor in their study abroad experience.

According to Bandura's (1986a) social cognitive, self-efficacy refers to "beliefs in one's abilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p.3). Self-efficacy illustrates the capability to organize and to execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. Based on students' responses, a connection among self-reported abilities, confidence, and self-efficacy can be theorized.

*RQ3: How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of the International Education Program in facilitating acculturation?*

The effectiveness of the IEP on facilitating the abovementioned acculturation items was measured, using a 4-point scale: 1 = very ineffective, 2 = ineffective, 3 = effective, 4 = very effective. The results showed that the participants found the IEP effective in facilitating acculturation.

In terms of Berry's acculturation theory, two psychological acculturation outcomes begin early in the adaptation process, namely, behavior changes and acculturative stress (Berry, 2005). The coping strategies at this level are either adjusting or assimilating (Berry, 2005). The results of the study support the theoretical framework, suggesting that the IEP, as a facilitation service, may have a positive influence in the adaptation process.

*RQ4: How do international students in an Hispanic Serving Institution of higher education perceive the role of International Education Program in facilitating self-efficacy?*

The effectiveness of the IEP in facilitating self-efficacy was measured. A 4-point scaling was used: 1 = very ineffective, 2 = ineffective, 3 = effective, 4 = very effective. The results showed that the participating students found the facilitation of self-efficacy by the IEP effective. Bandura's (1986a) social cognitive theory emphasizes reciprocal causation through the interplay of cognitive, behavioral, and environment factors.

### Implications

Research shows that international students face certain acculturation and self-efficacy challenges that affect their social well-being and academic success (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2017; Campbell, 2015; Sato & Hodge, 2015). The quality of the IEP can influence international students' acculturation and self-efficacy directly and indirectly as a bridge between international students and diverse U.S. campus (Chissoe, 2017).

Many international students face challenges as they pursue higher education outside their home countries. They face obstacles such as different food, unfamiliar living conditions, financial problems, finding balance between studies and work. They have to adjust to the schedule of classes, learning styles, other possible difficulties related to language, culture, personal barriers. A student may encounter a few difficulties of the transitional period from everyday situations in daily life and to cultural adaptation (Baklashova & Kazakov, 2016).

Among all the challenges, acculturation and self-efficacy can be instrumental in impacting personal development and self-satisfaction for international students, respectively (Deardorff, 2006). It becomes the responsibility of international education leaders to collaborate with each other and with other education leaders to improve IEP in order to facilitate international students to achieve their educational goals.

International education researchers, Hayden, Levy and Thompson (2015), reported that effective IEP services could reduce international students' anxiety level, help them to get familiar with the foreign environment and overcome cultural shock which was referred to the distress experience by the sojourner as a result of losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social interaction (Oberg, 1960). Moreover, the effective service could help international students engage in the new culture and be able to share their original culture with others, which eventually increases the self-efficacy of both the academic and social fields (Scott, 2000). The service an IEP offers is the bridge between international students and the foreign environment.

Measures towards the effectiveness of the IEP in facilitating acculturation and self-efficacy could inspire international education leaders on how to improve the IEP service upon the reflection of the study's findings. Subjects of the study responded to acculturation factors listed as psychological well-being, cultural competence, out-group social support, academic hassles, in-group social support, out-group contact, in-group contact, psychophysical distress and ethnic identity, and self-efficacy factors listed as the ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble, the confidence of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events, ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals, ability to solve difficult problems, ability to handle whatever comes to my way, ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem, ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort, the resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations, coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties, and ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me indicated that the IEP positively associate with each factors. The study provided insights on how international students can access help from the IEP to improve their acculturation and self-efficacy obstacles.

With the prevalent trend of globalization in all areas, especially in education, providing an effective IEP becomes a responsibility of educational institutions and leaders. The study informs international education leaders of the methods to design and execute effective program development strategies as it pertains to international students.

#### Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of the study, the recommendations are as follows:

To improve the IEP, international education leaders are ultimately responsible for innovations and reformation. For example, the IEP could set up its own English program for international students to support language proficiency. Language barriers could affect students' academic learning, participation in different events, and cultural understanding, which are related to acculturation and self-efficacy. For now, most of the universities use English training agencies instead of creating their own English program because of the cost or recruitment challenges. However, the chain agencies follow the same teaching instruction for all locations, which has less effectiveness than does a tailored program. The universities English program could develop workshops to assist international students in becoming familiar with the use of colloquial English, commonly used slang words, and the social and cultural mores of the US society in order to communicate effectively, both in academic and in nonacademic settings.

Secondly, to improve the acculturation, the IEP could organize a cross-cultural learning event for domestic students and faculty to learn the value of embracing international students and appreciating the diversity from each other since domestic students and faculty are the essential cooperative partners to make the adaptations easier. Faculty should consider the value and learning opportunities for all students. American students also need to develop intercultural

competence to interact with international students such as providing cross-culture training for staff, who will work with international students.

Moreover, the IEP needs to foster tutoring as unfamiliar academic system guidance, as well as counseling service as psychological support for international students. Different from the academic atmosphere in Asia, western countries encourage students to express their own opinions and have open discussion with peers and professors. To adapt the new study model, international students need to adjust their learning method to learn how to react with different objections. The IEP could cooperate with academic and cultural groups to host workshops on communication skills and cross-cultural learning challenges.

Last, educational policy makers, practitioners, researchers, and school leaders should consider investing in a network to provide a local platform for international educators to gain the opportunity to communicate and learn from each other. Many signs inevitably indicate that globalization of higher education directly and indirectly impacts issues such as curricular relevance, institutional quality and prestige, national competitiveness, innovation potential, and sources of potential revenue (Rumbley et al., 2012). It is necessary for international educators to create and join networks to share the international education information, strategies, and innovations. For now, most platforms for the connection of international educators remain on the national level, and the local platforms are either absent or deficient in many places. As the pioneers on the road of educational globalization, international education leaders have the responsibility to create an effective platform for their international peers.

## Recommendations for Further Research

Due to the non-probability nature of the sampling, external validity was limited to the study's participants. The was delimited to international students who attended an HSI in South Texas and focused on acculturation and self-efficacy only. Additionally, it was assumed that the study's participants were honest in completing the survey instrument. The study's delimitations, limitations, and assumptions offer opportunities for further research

First, since this study was conducted in a four-year public university in South Texas, the results cannot be generalized to other states or other universities. More research regarding international students' perceptions and perspectives on acculturation and self-efficacy is strongly recommended to enhance the generalizability of the results. For example, according to U.S. News, many international students attend private universities and community colleges (Ross, 2016; Lit, 2016), replication of the study with other colleges and universities' international students is needed.

Second, replication of the study to examine constructs other than the two examined in this study is needed. For improving international students' study abroad education experience, only examining acculturation and self-efficacy is not enough. More adaptation factors such as isolation, stress, and confidentiality should be explored to holistically understand the challenge international students experience. With a broader picture, effective IEP services can be developed and implemented.

Third, a longitudinal study to examine the developmental changes that can be contributed to the IEP is recommended. The data for this study were collected at one point in time. A longitudinal study can be instrumental in observing and exploring the challenges international students face and the effectiveness of the IEP in providing assistance over a period of time.

Fourth, conducting qualitative and mixed methods studies to document the perspectives of the international students regarding the IEP's importance and effectiveness is recommended. To gain more specific insights from international students regarding their perception of IEP, a single quantitative research cannot be enough. Qualitative research is recommended for understanding people's subjective insight. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research, researchers would have a comprehensive picture of students' perceptions and perspectives, which could inspire international education leaders to explore effective IEP services to facilitate the postsecondary success of international students.

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## APPENDIX A

### IRB Approval and Application



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
CORPUS CHRISTI

OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE  
Division of Research, Commercialization and Outreach  
6300 OCEAN DRIVE, UNIT 5844  
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78412  
☎ 361.825.2497

Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

DATE: December 4, 2018  
TO: Rosie Banda, College of Education and Human Development  
CC: Yuehui Bu (Phoebe), College of Education and Human Development  
FROM: Office of Research Compliance  
SUBJECT: Exempt Determination

Human Subject Research Activities that do not meet one or more exempt categories are subject to IRB review.

On 12/4/2018, the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Office of Research Compliance reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Title:	The Role of International Education Programs in Facilitating International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy
Investigator:	Rosie Banda
IRB ID:	112-18
Funding Source:	None
Documents Reviewed:	112-18_Yuehui Bu_IRB_12_4_2018 112-18_Recruitment Script_12_4_2018 112-18_Consent form - Yuehui Bu_12_4_2018 112-18_Survey_12_4_2018 112-18_Support letter from Yu_12_4_2018

Based on the information provided, the Office of Research Compliance has determined the research meets exempt category 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) (Research involving use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior).

Therefore, this project has been determined to be exempt from IRB review. You may proceed with this project.

**Reminder of Investigator Responsibilities:** As principal investigator, you must ensure:

1. **Informed Consent:** Ensure informed consent processes, if applicable, are followed and information presented enables individuals to voluntarily decide whether to participate in the research project.
2. **Amendments:** This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. Any planned changes that would impact the criteria in which the exempt determination was made, requires submission by the investigator to the IRB to ensure that the research continues to meet criteria for exemption. Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment Application to the Research Compliance Office for review. The Amendment must be approved before being implemented.
3. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the Research Compliance Office.



OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE  
Division of Research, Commercialization and Outreach  
6300 OCEAN DRIVE, UNIT 5844  
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78412  
O 361.825-2497

Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

**4. Adverse Events: Adverse events must be reported to the Research Compliance Office.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions at [irb@tamucc.edu](mailto:irb@tamucc.edu) or 361-825-2497.

Respectfully,

Rebecca  
Ballard, JD,  
MA, CIP

Digitally signed by  
Rebecca Ballard, JD,  
MA, CIP  
Date: 2018.12.05  
08:38:12 -06'00'

Rebecca Ballard, JD, MA, CIP  
Director, Research Compliance and Export Control Officer  
Division of Research, Commercialization and Outreach

ORC USE ONLY	
HSRP #:	112-18
Date Received:	12/4/2018

## Human Subjects Research Protocol for Exempt, Expedited, or Full Board Review



### Instructions and Researcher Certifications (Failure to follow may result in a delay in processing)

Complete this form if "research" will be conducted.

**Do not complete** this form for:

1. non-research activities; or
2. to fulfill TAMUCC coursework only without a research activity or element.

**By signing this Human Subjects Research Protocol for Exempt, Expedited, or Full Board Review (HSRP), all Principal Investigators (PIs), co-PIs, and personnel (collectively, "Researchers") certify the following:**

1. CITI Training "Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher" course has been completed and is current for any research activity regardless of source of funding or whether unfunded (expires after three years);
2. CITI Training "Responsible Conduct of Research Course" has been completed in addition to the "Basic/Refresher" and is current only if the source of funding is the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or the National Science Foundation (NSF) (expires after three years);
3. Have read and understood the responsibilities set forth in TAMUCC Rule 15.99.01.C1.01;
4. If the research is in conjunction with the Corpus Christi Independent School District (CCISD), have followed CCISD processes and requirements for external research (e.g., consent or assent templates, translation or interpretation requirements, etc); will seek a second, independent approval from CCISD per its requirements - this approval may be sought simultaneously with and independently of TAMUCC IRB approval (see <http://ccisd.us/DEPARTMENTS/District-Support/External-Research>); for questions, contact Dr. Toni Moynihan-McCoy: [toni.moynihan-mccoy@ccisd.us](mailto:toni.moynihan-mccoy@ccisd.us).
5. If the HSRP is submitted for a doctoral dissertation, have coordinated with the College of Graduate Studies (CGS) to meet its requirements;
6. Have read and reviewed this HSRP; any applicable supporting documentation or third-party approval has been obtained from the appropriate authority and has been included as an attachment to the HSRP (e.g., recruitment script, informed consent, parental consent, child assent, school permission, facility use permission, grant/proposal, Translator Certification, Interpreter Certification, etc); have signed the HSRP electronically;
7. Will immediately report any adverse event to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the Office of Research Compliance (ORC);
8. Have submitted the HSRP a minimum of thirty (30) days in advance of the anticipated start date (additional time is required for review at full board); will communicate whether there is a firm start date or other deadline associated with the HSRP; and
9. Will submit a Completion Report at the conclusion of research under this HSRP.

**After completing the foregoing, submit the HSRP with supporting documentation via email to the IRB Mailbox: [irb@tamucc.edu](mailto:irb@tamucc.edu)**

**For questions, email:**

[research.compliance@tamucc.edu](mailto:research.compliance@tamucc.edu)

## Researchers

	Name	Email (use TAMUCC email)	College	Category	Category (Other)
PI	Rosie Banda	rosie.banda@tamucc.edu	Education	Faculty Adviser	Chair
Co-PI (1)	Yuehui Bu	yuehui.bu@tamucc.edu	Education	Graduate Student	Researcher
Co-PI (2)	Kamiar Kouzekanani	kamiar.kouzekanani@tamucc.edu	Education	Faculty	Methodologist
Co-PI (3)					
Co-PI (4)					
Co-PI (5)					

## Overview

A. Research Classification:  Other:

*ORC and/or the IRB will ultimately be responsible for making the Research Classification and Level of Review. For guidance, see content at the end of the HSRP.*

B. Anticipated Level of Review:

C. Externally funded:  Award Start Date:  Maestro #:

D. Title:

E. Anticipated Start Date:  F. Estimated Completion Date:

## Purpose and Objective

A. Describe the purpose of the research in layman's terms.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the role of the International Education Program (IEP) on international students' acculturation and self-efficacy in a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in South Texas.

B. Describe the objective(s) and/or research questions in layman's terms.

The proposed study is guided by the following research questions: 1) What is the importance of acculturation in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in a Hispanic serving institution of higher education? 2) What is the importance of self-efficacy in fulfilling educational goals as perceived by international students in a Hispanic serving institution of higher education? 3) How do international students in an Hispanic serving institution of higher education perceive the role of the office of international student services in facilitating acculturation? 4) How do international students in an Hispanic serving institution of higher education perceive the role of the office of international student services in facilitating self-efficacy?

## Participants; Recruitment

### Participants

A. Indicate whether any of the following populations will be **specifically targeted** for inclusion in the research. Each category must be answered. *Additional protections for participants may be required.*

Adults over the age of 18 ( <b>able</b> to legally consent)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Prisoners (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Minors under the age of 18	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Persons whose first language is <b>not</b> English (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Persons with mental disabilities (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Students enrolled in a researcher's course (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Persons with economical disadvantages (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Employees under the direct supervision of a researcher	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Persons with educational disadvantages (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Persons who are sick or ill (physical or mental)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Persons with AIDS or HIV (adults or minors)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other potentially vulnerable populations depending on the circumstances of the research (describe in "B")	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Pregnant women, fetuses, and/or neonates</b> <small>Note: Research including this vulnerable population is generally health care/medical studies specifically targeting research of pregnant women, fetuses, and/or neonates. Pregnant women can be included in research if all inclusion criteria is met and a specific exclusion is not part of the project design. Select "No," unless the research specifically involves the inclusion of pregnant women, fetuses, and/or neonates.</small>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

**B. Describe the criteria to determine who is included or excluded in the final participant population (e.g., minimum age, grade range, physical characteristics, learning characteristics, professional criteria, etc).**

The study is delimited to current international students at TAMUCC because the population is participating in the international education program, 18 years of age and older. The students who are currently enrolled in any English Language Training Program will be excluded from the study. The participants must be able to read English to participate. I will only recruit individuals that speak and read English.

**C. Target number of participants (use a minimum target if a specific target is not appropriate for the research design).**

The minimum number is 50. The maximum number is 150.

**D. Non-TAMUCC Participants or Facility**

Complete this section only if the research will be conducted at a third-party facility or participants will be recruited from a third-party site (non-TAMUCC).

Provide the non-TAMUCC location or non-TAMUCC participants to be recruited here (include any permission as an attachment).

N/A

**Recruitment**

**E(1). Method.** Describe methods that will be used to identify the potential participants.

Potential participants are the international students at TAMUCC, whose contact information/email addresses will be obtained from the Office of International Education. The director has agreed to send the initial email, introduce the PI to the potential participants. Qualified students will be able to participate in the study if they want. The letter of support from the director of the Office of International Education is attached.

**E(2). Materials.** Describe how potential participants will be recruited, what materials will be used (include as an attachment), and how they will be distributed (i.e., who, what, when, where, and how).

The study participants will be recruited by email upon IRB approval. The email addresses will be obtained from the Office of International Education at TAMUCC. An initial email containing the study's purpose and the link to the on-line survey will be sent to the potential participants. There will be one resending recruiting email to be sent out before the deadline if the number of participants is not reach the minimum target number. After the application deadline, if the number has still not reached the minimum target number, I will extend the application deadline and send out 1-3 resending emails for recruitment. The consent to participate in the study is embedded in the survey-ISASEQ.

**E(3). Incentives.** If applicable, provide the amount, type, and time of distribution of any payment/incentive to participants.

\$10 Amazon gift card will be send to the participants who complete the survey before the deadline through email. The participants will need to fill in their name and email address before the survey for the reward purpose. I will send each of them a \$10 Amazon gift card redeem code through email. I will set up the deadline once I got the IRB approved and proposal hearing passed. The tentative date of the deadline will be Dec. 30, 2018. I will close the survey when the participants number is reached to 150 before the deadline. In summery, I will close the survey either on the deadline or when the participant number reaches to the maximum target number.

**Identification of Participants; Data Collection and Storage; Equipment; Records Retention and Destruction**

**A. Identification of Participants.** Indicate whether the data collected may contain individual identifiers (need for "confidentiality"), or whether the data will be collected anonymously.

Confidential

**B. Data Collection.** Describe the method(s) or procedure(s) for data collection in step-by-step, layman's terms (include collecting party, frequency, duration, location, etc). The use of audio or video recording must be justified by the research purpose/objective or future research.

An initial email containing the study's purpose and the link to the on-line survey will be sent to the potential participants. I will resend the recruiting emails if the number of participants has not reached the minimum target number. The consent to participate in the study is embedded in the ISASEQ. Participants will know what you will be asked to do, what risks are involved, what are the possible benefits, the right not to participate, who will know about their participation, who to contact. If the participants do not agree to participate in the study, they do not need to continue the survey.

The data will be collected by using the International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ), which is attached. In Part I, participants will be asked to indicate the level of importance of factors affecting acculturation and self-efficacy. In Part II, participants will be asked to indicate the effectiveness of the international education program in impacting their acculturation and self-efficacy. In Part III, participants will be asked to kindly provide some demographic information.

**C. Equipment.** Describe any equipment to be used (e.g., audio, visual), ownership (e.g., TAMUCC, personal), and methods of storage (e.g., password, location).

The Co-PI's personal computer will be used to store the collected data and perform data analysis. The computer will be kept locked and password-protected when not in use. Dr. Kouzekanani will also have access to the raw data, which will be stored in his password-protected TAMUCC office computer. Backup copies will be stored on the Microsoft OneDrive cloud-based storage system, which is password-protected with 2-factor authentication. Microsoft provides ransomware and other protections against hackers to OneDrive users.

**D. Data Storage.** Describe how the data collected will be stored, location(s), how the confidentiality of individually identifiable information will be maintained (if applicable), and who will have access. (For audio and video recordings, address recordings and transcripts).

Consent documents and collected data will be stored electronically in the password-protected Qualtrics database for a minimum of three years beyond the completion of the doctoral dissertation. The electronic version of all data will also be stored in the Co-PI's personal computer. Backup copies will be stored on the Microsoft OneDrive cloud-based storage system, which is password protected with 2-factor authentication. Microsoft provides ransomware and other protections against hackers to OneDrive users. Co-PI(2)--Dr. Kouzekanani will also have a copy of the data, which will be stored in his TAMUCC computer. Both computers are kept locked and password-protected when not in use. Only the Co-PIs will have access to the raw data.

**E. Records Retention and Destruction.** For data collected, describe how records will be maintained, duration (justified by research design and/or future research), destruction mechanism, and responsible party for each. (Include audio and video recordings and applicable transcripts).

Consent documents and collected data will be stored electronically in the password-protected Qualtrics database for a minimum of three years beyond the completion of the doctoral dissertation.

### Risk to Participants; Mechanism of Protection; Outside Assistance

**A. Risk to Participants.** Indicate the level of risk to participants.

<b>No risk</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Minimal risk</b> Definition: the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Greater than minimal risk</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**B. Mechanism of Protection.** Describe every potential risk to human subjects that may result from participation in the research ("Risk"), and indicate the method or procedure to be used to mitigate the potential risk ("Protection Mechanism"). Consider physical, psychological, social, legal, and economic risks (e.g., breach of confidentiality, injury, psychological distress, pressure to conform, pressure to participate, etc).

	Risk	Protection Mechanism
1.	Breach of confidentiality	Consent documents and collected data will be stored electronically in the password-protected Qualtrics database for a minimum of three years beyond the completion of the doctoral dissertation. Only the Co-PIs will have access to the returned survey data, which include the participant's Acculturation and Self-Efficacy & generic demographic data (e.g., age & ethnicity); no personal identifiers will be collected. Data will be collected on-line and kept confidential. I will change settings in Qualtrics to not collect IP addresses. Specifically, the electronic version of all data will be stored in the Co-PI's personal computer. Backup copies will be stored on the Microsoft OneDrive cloud-based storage system, which is password protected with 2-factor authentication. Microsoft provides ransomware and other protections against hackers to OneDrive users. Co-PI(2)--Dr. Kouzekanani will also have a copy of the data, which will be stored in his TAMUCC computer. Both computers are kept locked and password-protected when not in use.
2.	Possibility of pressure to participate/coercion	The Director of the Office of International Education has agreed to send the initial email to the potential participants on behalf of the Co-PI. The supporting email is attached. To avoid the perception of coercion or pressure to participate, the email specifically highlights the voluntary nature of the study, that the participants can stop completing the questionnaire at any time, and that the questionnaire responses will be kept confidential.
3.		
4.		
5.		

**C. Outside Assistance.** If applicable, describe any outside assistance available to participants to mitigate the Risks stated above and how it will be provided (e.g., medical care, counseling, etc).

Not Applicable

**Benefits to Participants; Benefits to Society**

**A. Benefits to Participants.** If applicable, describe the potential benefits to participants as a result of taking part in the research (exclude payments/incentives). If there are no benefits, then state so.

The study is of no direct benefits to the participants.

**B. Benefits to Society.** Describe the potential benefits to society or contribution to generalizable knowledge as a result of the research.

The study's findings will be helpful in understanding whether or not the IEP has the potential to play an effective role in facilitating international students' acculturation and self-efficacy. In addition, the program development cannot be achieved without effective educational leadership. The study may inspire international education leaders to design and execute effective program development strategies. International educators, including faculty, staff, and student workers, may find the study's findings relevant to their work when the need arises to develop a program or international education strategies to achieve the educational goals.

**Waiver of Informed Consent; Waiver of Signed Informed Consent; Informed Consent Process**

<p><b>A(1).</b> Is a <b>waiver or alteration</b> of informed consent requested? (i.e., entire process is waived, or basic element(s) are altered) See <i>Criteria for Waiver of Informed Consent at the end of the HSRP for guidance.</i></p> <p>If "<b>yes</b>," go to C. If "<b>no</b>," go to A(2).</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>A(2).</b> If "<b>no</b>," is a waiver of <b>documentation of informed consent</b> requested? (i.e., informed consent will be obtained without participants' signatures) See <i>Criteria for Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent at the end of the HSRP for guidance.</i></p> <p>If "<b>yes</b>," go to C. If "<b>no</b>," go to B.</p>	<p>Yes ▼</p>
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**B. Informed Consent Process.** If "**no**" to both A(1) and A(2), describe below **step-by-step** how informed consent will be obtained. If the "short form" will be used, describe below (See *Informed Consent Documentation at the end of the HSRP for guidance*).

Note:

- 1) Participants must be given time to review the informed consent and supporting documents and ask questions.
- 2) For **minor participants**, researchers must obtain both parental informed consent and a separate child assent written at an appropriate reading level.
- 3) For participants whose **first language is not English**, informed consent may be required in English and non-English. In addition, submission of a **Translator Certification or Interpreter Certification** form may be required.
- 4) For research conducted in conjunction with **CCISD**, follow those requirements, as applicable. ORC and the IRB cannot advise on CCISD requirements.

**C. Waiver of Informed Consent; Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent.** If "**yes**" to either A(1) or A(2), describe below why a waiver or alteration of informed consent **and/or** a waiver of documentation of informed consent is requested and how the applicable criteria are met based on the circumstances of the research (see *Criteria for Waiver of Informed Consent or Criteria for Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent at the end of the HSRP for guidance*).

This study will be an online survey. A consent form will be in the on-line survey, which the participants must read and agree to before being allowed to complete the survey (see the attachment). Participants agree to participate in the study by completing the following survey. Participants will be told in the survey that "please do not complete the survey if you do not wish to participate in the study". Signatures will not be requested because of the format of the study is an online survey. Participants will need to read the consent form before they make decision whether to participate. If they submitted the survey, the researcher will consider them as the understand the consent as the consent form stated.

## Researcher Qualifications

**A.** Describe qualifications or attach CVs/resumes for **all personnel listed** on the HSRP.

Yuehui Bu is a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. She has completed the required coursework in research methods and the CITI training in research involving human subjects. Dr. Rosie Banda is an assistant professor of Educational Leadership in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, and will be supervising the dissertation research. Dr. Kamiar Kouzekanani is a professor of quantitative methods in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, and will serve as the methodologist. research. CV's are attached for each researcher.

## Researcher Signatures

By signing this HSRP, the Researcher(s) certifies that he/she has read and understood the requirements and responsibilities set forth in the section entitled "Instructions and Researcher Certifications" in relation to the research. In addition, the Researcher (s) certifies that he/she will abide by any and all applicable federal, state, and/or institutional regulations, including any requirements from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or the Office of Research Compliance (ORC).

	Name	Conflict of Interest (select one)	Date
PI	Dr. Rosa M. Banda	No conflict of interest with this proje ▼	
Signature:	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 20px;">Rosa Banda</div> <div style="font-size: 8px;">             Digitally signed by Rosa Banda              DN: cn=Rosa Banda, o=TAMUCC, ou=TAMUCC, email=rosie.banda@tamucc.edu, c=US              Date: 2018.10.11 09:06:00 -05'00'           </div> </div>		
Co-PI (1)	Yuehui Bu	No conflict of interest with this proje ▼	

	Name	Conflict of Interest (select one)	Date
Signature:	Yuehui Bu	Digitally signed by Yuehui Bu Date: 2018.10.10 22:32:34 -05'00'	
Co-PI (2)	Dr. Kamiar Kouzekanani	No conflict of interest with this proje	
Signature:	Kamiar Kouzekanani	Digitally signed by Kamiar Kouzekanani Date: 2018.10.11 09:10:28 -05'00'	
Co-PI (3)			
Signature:			
Co-PI (4)			
Signature:			
Co-PI (5)			
Signature:			

#### Determination of Level of Review

Studies involving audiotaping and/or videotaping **do not qualify** for exempt review and will be reviewed at the level of expedited or full board.

Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

Additional protections for participants may apply to research involving: pregnant women, human fetuses, and neonates; prisoners; children; and/or other vulnerable populations.

### Exempt Review

- 1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal education practices, such as (i.) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii.) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
- 2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless (i.) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii.) any disclosure of human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.
- 3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under the previous paragraph, if (i.) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (ii.) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
- 4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.
- 5) Research and demonstration projects that are conducted by or subject to the approval of federal department or agency heads, and that are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine (i.) public benefit or service programs (ii.) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under these programs (iii.) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv.) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
- 6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies (i.) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii.) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### Expedited Review

- (1) Clinical studies of drugs and medical devices only when condition (a) or (b) is met.
  - a. Research on drugs for which an investigational new drug application (21 CFR Part 312) is not required. (Note: Research on marketed drugs that significantly increases the risks or decreases the acceptability of the risks associated with the use of the product is not eligible for expedited review).
  - b. Research on medical devices for which (i) an investigational device exemption application (21 CFR Part 812) is not required; or (ii) the medical device is cleared/approved for marketing and the medical device is being used in accordance with its cleared/approved labeling.
- (2) Collection of blood samples by finger stick, heel stick, ear stick, or venipuncture as follows:
  - a. from healthy, nonpregnant adults who weigh at least 110 pounds. For these subjects, the amounts drawn may not exceed 550 ml in an 8 week period and collection may not occur more frequently than 2 times per week; or
  - b. from other adults and children, considering the age, weight, and health of the subjects, the collection amount of blood to be collected, and the frequency with which it will be collected. For these subjects, the amount drawn may not exceed the lesser of 50 ml or 3 ml per kg in an 8 week period and collection may not occur more frequently than 2 times per week.
- (3) Prospective collection of biological specimens for research purposes by noninvasive means.

Examples: (a) hair and nail clippings in a nondisfiguring manner; (b) deciduous teeth at time of exfoliation or if routine patient care indicates a need for extraction; (c) permanent teeth if routine patient care indicates a need for extraction; (d) excreta and external secretions (including sweat); (e) uncannulated saliva collected either in an unstimulated fashion or stimulated by chewing gumbase or wax or by applying a dilute citric solution to the tongue; (f) placenta removed at delivery; (g) amniotic fluid obtained at the time of rupture of the membrane prior to or during labor; (h) supra- and subgingival dental plaque and calculus, provided the collection procedure is not more invasive than routine prophylactic scaling of the teeth and the process is accomplished in accordance with accepted prophylactic techniques; (i) mucosal and skin cells collected by buccal scraping or swab, skin swab, or mouth washings; (j) sputum collected after saline mist nebulization.
- (4) Collection of data through noninvasive procedures (not involving general anesthesia or sedation) routinely employed in clinical practice, excluding procedures involving x-rays or microwaves. Where medical devices are employed, they must be cleared/approved for marketing. (Studies intended to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the medical device are not generally eligible for expedited review, including studies of cleared medical devices for new indications).

Examples: (a) physical sensors that are applied either to the surface of the body or at a distance and do not involve input of significant amounts of energy into the subject or an invasion of the subject's privacy; (b) weighing or testing sensory acuity; (c) magnetic resonance imaging; (d) electrocardiography, electroencephalography, thermography, detection of naturally occurring radioactivity, electroretinography, ultrasound, diagnostic infrared imaging, doppler blood flow, and echocardiography; (e) moderate exercise, muscular strength testing, body composition assessment, and flexibility testing where appropriate given the age, weight, and health of the individual.
- (5) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected, or will be collected solely for nonresearch purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis).
- (6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.
- (7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt).
- (8) Continuing review of research previously approved by the convened IRB as follows:
  - a. where (i) the research is permanently closed to the enrollment of new subjects; (ii) all subjects have completed all research-related interventions; and (iii) the research remains active only for long-term follow-up of subjects; or
  - b. where no subjects have been enrolled and no additional risks have been identified; or
  - c. where the remaining research activities are limited to data analysis.
- (9) Continuing review of research, not conducted under an investigational new drug application or investigational device exemption where categories two (2) through eight (8) do not apply but the IRB has determined and documented at a convened meeting that the research involves no greater than minimal risk and no additional risks have been identified.

### Criteria for Waiver of Informed Consent

- (c) An IRB may approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent set forth above, or waive the requirement to obtain informed consent provided the IRB finds and documents that:
  - (1) The research or demonstration project is to be conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local government officials and is designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs; and
  - (2) The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration.

- (d) An IRB may approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent set forth above, or waive the requirement to obtain informed consent provided the IRB finds and documents that:
- (1) The research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects;
  - (2) The waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects;
  - (3) The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration; and
  - (4) Whenever appropriate, the subjects will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation.

#### **Criteria for Waiver of Documentation of Informed Consent**

- (c) An IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form for some or all subjects if it finds either:
- (1) That the only record linking the subject and the research would be the consent document and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each subject will be asked whether the subject wants documentation linking the subject with the research, and the subject's wishes will govern; or
  - (2) That the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context.

In cases in which the documentation requirement is waived, the IRB may require the investigator to provide subjects with a written statement regarding the research.

#### **Informed Consent Documentation**

- (a) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, informed consent shall be documented by the use of a written consent form approved by the IRB and signed by the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. A copy shall be given to the person signing the form.
- (b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, the consent form may be either of the following:
- (1) A written consent document that embodies the elements of informed consent required by §46.116. This form may be read to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, but in any event, the investigator shall give either the subject or the representative adequate opportunity to read it before it is signed; or
  - (2) A short form written consent document stating that the elements of informed consent required by §46.116 have been presented orally to the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. When this method is used, there shall be a witness to the oral presentation. Also, the IRB shall approve a written summary of what is to be said to the subject or the representative. Only the short form itself is to be signed by the subject or the representative. However, the witness shall sign both the short form and a copy of the summary, and the person actually obtaining consent shall sign a copy of the summary. A copy of the summary shall be given to the subject or the representative, in addition to a copy of the short form.

## APPENDIX B

### International Students' Acculturation and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ISASEQ)

In Part I, you are asked to indicate the level of *importance* of factors affecting acculturation and self-efficacy.

In Part II, you are asked to indicate the *effectiveness* of the international education program in impacting the factors that define the abovementioned constructs.

In Part III, you are asked to kindly provide some demographic information.

## CONSENT FORM

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in the study, this form will also be used to record your consent.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete an electronic survey. The survey may take up to 10-15 minutes to complete.

### **What are the risks involved?**

The risks are minimal and not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

### **What are the possible benefits?**

You will receive no direct benefit from participating in the study; however, the study's findings may have a benefit in the field of education.

### **What are the alternatives to being in this study?**

Instead of being in this study, you may choose not to be in the research study.

### **Do I have to participate?**

No, your participation is voluntary, and you may decide to drop out at any time throughout the study with no penalties.

### **Who will know about my participation in this research study?**

No one, and no identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any report that may be published. Your name and/or IP address will not be collected.

### **Who do I contact with questions about the research?**

You may contact the researcher, Yuehui Bu at [yuehui.bu@tamucc.edu](mailto:yuehui.bu@tamucc.edu) or 361-249-1972.

### **Who do I contact about my rights as a research participant?**

The research study has been reviewed by the Research Compliance Office and the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Rosie Banda at [rosie.banda@tamucc.edu](mailto:rosie.banda@tamucc.edu) or 361-825-3284 or the TAMUCC Research Compliance Officer, at [IRB@tamucc.edu](mailto:IRB@tamucc.edu) or 361-825-2497.

### **Agreement to Participate**

*You agree to participate in the study by completing the following survey. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. Please do not complete the survey if you do not wish to participate in the study.*

**Part 1 – Please indicate the level of importance of the following items that influence your life in the U.S.:**

**4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, and 1 = very unimportant**

**Acculturation**

*Psychological well-being* as the positive perspective on self-acceptance, relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth (e.g., I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life).

Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*Out-group social support* as administrative, academic and social support system, support of friends from the larger society and your educational institution (e.g., I have American friends who would help me when I want help).

Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*In-group social support* as the support systems provided to you by members of your ethnic in-group (e.g., Friends from my ethnic group are around when I am in need).

Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*Cultural competence* as English communication skills, cultural efficacy, relationships, and social norms (e.g., I think that I am familiar with the U.S. norms and culture).

Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*Ethnic identity* as integration with ethnically similar others (e.g., Being a member of my ethnic group is important to my sense of what kind of person I am).

Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*Academic hassles* as the challenges you have experienced when you study at this institute (e.g., obtaining money for tuition fees and arranging for a place to live).

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*In-group contact* as the similarity to other people from your country on clothing, pace of life, food, religious beliefs, recreational activities, accommodation/residence, friendships, cultural activities, political ideology, and social customs.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*Out-group contact* as the similarity to other people from the U.S. on clothing, pace of life, food, religious beliefs, recreational activities, accommodation/residence, friendships, cultural activities, political ideology, and social customs.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

*Psychophysical distress* as poor mental health conditions (e.g., Feeling helpless or strong stress).

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

### **Self-Efficacy**

My ability to solve difficult problems.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

The confident of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

The resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

My ability to handle whatever comes to my way.

- Very important       Important       Unimportant       Very unimportant

**Part II – Please indicate the effectiveness of the international education program in affecting the following:**

**4 = very effective, 3 = effective, 2 = ineffective, and 1 = very ineffective**

**Acculturation**

*Psychological well-being* as the positive perspective on self-acceptance, relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth (e.g., I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*Out-group social support* as administrative, academic and social support system, support of friends from the larger society and your educational institution (e.g., I have American friends who would help me when I want help).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*In-group social support* as the support systems provided to you by members of your ethnic in-group (e.g., Friends from my ethnic group are around when I am in need).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*Cultural competence* as English communication skills, cultural efficacy, relationships, and social norms (e.g., I think that I am familiar with the U.S. norms and culture).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*Ethnic identity* as your integration with ethnically similar others (e.g., Being a member of my ethnic group is important to my sense of what kind of person I am).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*Academic hassles* as the challenges you have experienced when you study at this institute (e.g., obtaining money for tuition fees and arranging for a place to live).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*In-group contact* as the similarity to other people from your country on clothing, pace of life, food, religious beliefs, recreational activities, accommodation/residence, friendships, cultural activities, political ideology, and social customs.

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*Out-group contact* as the similarity to other people from the U.S. on clothing, pace of life, food, religious beliefs, recreational activities, accommodation/residence, friendships, cultural activities, political ideology, and social customs.

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

*Psychophysical distress* as poor mental health conditions (e.g., Feeling helpless or strong stress).

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

### **Self-Efficacy**

My ability to solve difficult problems.

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My ability to find the mean and ways to get what I want if someone opposes me.

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My ability to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

The confident of my ability to deal efficiently with unexpected events.

Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

The resourcefulness to make me know how to handle unforeseen situations.

- Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My ability to solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

- Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties.

- Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My ability to find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem.

- Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My ability to think of a solution when I am in trouble.

- Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

My ability to handle whatever comes to my way.

- Very effective       Effective       Ineffective       Very ineffective

## Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your Ethnicity?

Asian

Black

Hispanic

White

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What degree are you pursuing?

Bachelor's

Master's

Doctorate

5. Which country do you come from? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many years have you studied at this university? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many years have you studied outside your country? \_\_\_\_\_