COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION

PATTERNS OF MIDDLE EAST AND

SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS AT

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

AND THEIR DIFFERENCES IN

AWARENESS OF UNIVERSITY

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

By

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Bachelor of Arts

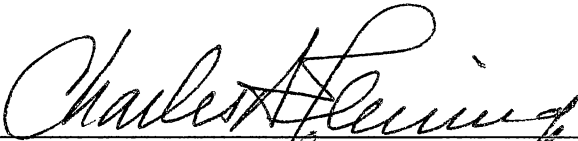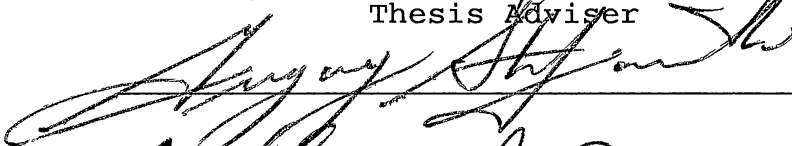Langston University

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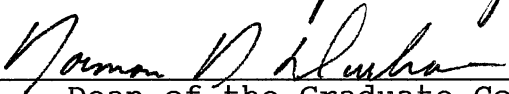July, 1990

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study analyzed the communication patterns of Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian students attending Oklahoma State University in the spring of 1990. The study also sought to determine the relevance of several variables such as students' communication patterns and demographical characteristics to students' awareness of the university's facilities and services.

Many people contributed to this effort. The writer is, of course, indebted to hundreds of international students who, with their suggestions and time, provided the necessary information for this study. In particular, however, the author would like to express his deepest gratitude to the following persons:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General

Since the end of the American Revolution educational institutions of higher learning in the United States have included in their student bodies many foreign students. In 1784, for example, Francisco de Miranda came from South America to study at Yale. His studies there enhanced his influence on the movement of Hispanic-American peoples for independence from Spain. Since that time, thousands of foreign students have come to study in the United States. Among them are such distinguished leaders as President Menocal of Cuba and President Lefebre of Panama.[1] In 1834 Yung Wing graduated from an American college and was the first Chinese student to do so. On returning to China he was instrumental in sending 120 additional Chinese students to the United States.[2]

World War I accelerated the movement of international understanding and increased the flow of students to the United States. As a result, the number of students in the United States from abroad rose from 4,856 in 1911-12 to 8,357 in 1920.[3] Immediately after the war it became clear that the influx of foreign students in the United States

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created problems that needed solutions. Professor Kandel wrote that:

> Both groups of students--foreign and American-- would need counsel and advice in the selection of the institutions best adapted to their needs as well as other pertinent information relevant to travel and study abroad; and...in the interests of international relations and the promotion of goodwill the flow of students in both directions needed the stimulus of financial assistance in the form of scholarships and fellowships or, in the case of teachers, of the creation of visiting professorships or other aids.[4]

However, as the numbers of foreign students increased in recent years, the problems of adjustment have become more noticeable. This study was undertaken to examine how specific problems of intercultural communication have affected the adjustment of foreign students at Oklahoma State University.

International students at Oklahoma State University (O.S.U.) may not all be equally aware of the university's educational facilities and services. Some of these facilities and services are very essential to the learning ability and academic progress of international students. As a result, students who are unaware of these facilities and services can become frustrated and they may leave the university without completing their work. The relationship between an international student's socio-cultural background and the student's strengths/weaknesses in personal communication affects the quality of communication between the student and local organizations. Also, such

differences as ethnic background, religion, country of
origin, and mode of communication may affect the student's
awareness or lack of awareness of the university's
facilities and services.

Although a large number of services have been provided
at OSU, students' lack of awareness of these facilities may
cause the students to be dissatisfied. As a result, this
lack of awareness may contribute to the decrease in the
number of international students attending O.S.U. In
1982/83, almost 2,100 international students from 83
countries were enrolled at O.S.U. However, in the fall of
1989 only 1,417 students attended Oklahoma State
University, a decrease of 32% from 1982 to 1989. In
contrast, from 1980 to 1989 the overall number of
international students attending higher education
institutions in the United States increased by 17%.[5]

This study was undertaken to examine the relationship
between the international students' cultural character-
istics and their communication patterns, and to examine the
possible relationship between the international students'
cultural background and their awareness of the university's
facilities and services.

Background

Every culture has its unique lifestyle which becomes
evident through its modes of communication. As Associate
Professor of Communication at Arizona State University,

William B. Gudykunst, et al, wrote:

> Although every individual possesses a somewhat
> unique way of relating to others, and these
> styles differ drastically within single cultural
> groups, societies have developed general norms
> and rules for appropriate communication with
> others. Cultural differences in degree of
> formality, expression of emotion, use of
> ambiguity, anticipated future interaction, and
> use of confrontation can significantly affect the
> conflict process.[6]

People are born into different cultures and their cultures contribute to the structure and function of the society by shaping the values placed on certain ideas and behaviors. The role of communication becomes a vital part of the society by exposing people to certain valued ideas and concealing from them other choices. Some elements such as "history" or "background" help to develop attitudes and personality in members of that society which are called cultural characteristics.[7] The combination of these characteristics contributes to the identity of a person's subculture and nationality. These are characterized by gender, national origin, religion, occupation, and generational differences.[8] Cultural and subcultural expectations influence all aspects of social behavior, and have the major role in shaping human perception of the world.[9]

Researchers Chase and Giles concluded:

> Cultural selection, organization, and interpretation
> exert a powerful influence on the way we view others'
> communication. Even beliefs about the very value of
> talk are different from one culture to another.[10]

Each group of people with a common culture, such as a nation, has some kind of image of other nations or groups in terms of their traits. Herbert C. Kelman, President of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, wrote:

> In most cases even whole nations are classified into categories such as friendly, hostile, weak, or trustworthy. People rely on such characterizations to explain the behavior of another nation and to predict what it will do in the future.[11]

When people deal with well-known situations, such as in their own culture, they know how to behave so that their goals may be achieved. But when interacting with people of other cultures they behave in accordance with the previous perceptions learned from their own culture.

Researcher Felipe Korzenny related the same problem to international students:

> Foreign students(in the U.S. or abroad) are a special example of persons who are expected to perform in unknown or almost unknown cultural settings. They are expected to function well immediately upon arrival in a physical environment and a social milieu that is not necessarily prepared to host them.[12]

However, moving to a new culture for many international students is a complex experience. As they enter a new culture they bring with them a complicated set of culturally based assumptions, values, perceptions, and ways of behaving. Confronted with alternative sets of assumptions, values, culture, and religion, students who go

abroad are usually forced to examine the cultural

background which they brought with them and then they need

to decide how much of their native culture they need to use

or give up. All students must then decide how much of

their culture they want to exchange and how much of it they

need to save for their return home.[13]

Communication is not independent of the influence of

culture. Research associates, Miller and Sternberg,

reiterated this:

> Communication consists of a continuous effort of
> making predictions about the behaviors of others
> while in interaction with them. The more
> information one has about the persons one is
> interacting with, the more valid and accurate are
> the predictions that can be made. Such
> information includes the context in which the
> interaction takes place. In an intracultural
> situation individuals share much more information
> than they do in an intercultural situation.
>
> Three different levels of information can be
> said to be important when communicating:
> cultural, sociological and psychological.
> Cultural information refers to the patterns of
> behavior that are shared and traditionally used
> among the people who comprise a culture.
> Sociological information refers to phenomena
> which are peculiar to particular social groups
> within one culture. Psychological information
> refers to the modes of behavior of particular
> individuals within different social groups and
> different cultures.[14]

Overall, the nature of differences in communication

patterns from one group to another is anecdotal in

nature.[15] For example, Hall said this points to

communication problems resulting from cultural differences

in construction of time, space, friendship, contractual

agreements and status symbols.[16]

However, because of the fact that communication is the principal force behind any culture, and the inevitability of the close relationship between culture and communication, almost every detail of communication between two persons is based on the cultural background of each one.[17]

Statement of the Problem

The National Center for Educational Statistics' projections indicated that between the academic years 1980/81 and 1988/89, full-time enrollments of domestic students were likely to fall by 1,075,000 at the undergraduate level, and by 130,000 at the graduate level.[18] This trend was partially verified at OSU by the decrease in enrollment of 23,000 (Fall of 1982-83) to 19,500 (Fall of 1989-90)[19]. In the same study it was stated that the foreign student enrollments could be a compensating factor in maintaining a constant faculty and staff. This compensation has not occurred at OSU as the enrollment of both domestic and foreign students has declined. Clearly OSU did not attract an increased number of new foreign students as even 500 fewer international students enrolled in the spring semester of 1990 compared to the fall semester of 1989.[20]

Retention of international students at Oklahoma State University may be a problem. One reason for the decrease

of international students at that institution could be
ineffective communication between the university and the
international students. Also, it is possible that the
differences in cultural background contribute to the
students' awareness or lack of awareness of the
university's educational services. So, in order to
maintain effective and balanced communication, the
university should be aware of international students'
differences in communication patterns.

Purpose of the Study

The information diffusion patterns, socio-cultural
background, and differences in media use by international
students may be related to the quality of communication
between the international students and the university. The
main purpose of this study was to examine the differences
between the Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern students at
Oklahoma State University in terms of communication
patterns and awareness of university facilities. As a
secondary area of examination, this study also investigated
the relationship between students' cultural backgrounds and
their color preferences. As an example of the relationship
between culture and awareness of university facilities,
even the colors associated with certain cultures may
determine the acceptance level of specific messages.

Research Theory

There are numerous theories concerned with the communication process. One such theory, the Constructivist Theory of Intercultural Communication, seeks to explain how various human interactions are interpreted differently by people of different cultures.[21] This study will examine a special application of this theory.

Because of the differences in media use, information diffusion patterns and socio-cultural background, international students at Oklahoma State University may not be equally aware of the university's educational facilities and services. This study relied on the Constructivist Theory of Intercultural Communication which is based on the central role of the interpretive process in human interaction.

Objectives

Based on the background, problem, and purpose of this study the following primary research questions were examined:

1. Are there any differences in awareness of university facilities between Middle Eastern and Oriental students that might be associated with the students' socio-cultural background and their different communication patterns?

2. Is the length of time that students have spent at O.S.U. related to their media use and communication patterns?

Assumptions

Assumptions of the study were as follows:

1. It was assumed that the respondents had sufficient proficiency in English language to accurately answer the questions in the survey questionnaire.

2. It was assumed that international students, due to their uniqueness of socio-cultural values, have different communication patterns that need to be examined.

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to the literature in the area of international students and their communication patterns with respect to their cultural differences.

The research data may help other researchers to establish basic assumptions for more investigations in the future in the same area.

The information generated from this study will help develop useful recommendations for the sponsoring agencies to assist them in finding more efficient communication processes with international students.

Limitations of the Study

1. The yearly report of the ISS and <u>Open Doors</u>[22] in the past ten years indicates that the largest body of international students in the United States and at Oklahoma State University are from Southeast Asia and the Middle East. As a result, this study was limited to only international students from these two regions who were enrolled in the spring semester of 1990 at Oklahoma State University.

2. The study was limited to the survey method of collecting information. Also, data was collected on a voluntary basis.

3. Due to the lack of time and funds the survey was limited to only one follow-up.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II contains the review of literature which examined the theoretical basis of intercultural communication and recent research relating to this subject.

Chapter III discusses the research design, sampling and methodology.

Chapter IV discusses the research findings and analysis.

Chapter V contains the summary, conclusions of this study and recommendations for further research and for the sponsoring agencies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the past two decades many studies have examined issues related to international students in institutions of higher education in the United States.[23] Each one of these studies, in a variety of ways, has improved the information needed to maintain the quality of communication between these institutions and international students. Also, results of these studies can reduce students' cultural conflicts and misunderstandings.[24]

As an approach to the study of communication differences of international students, this research began by examining the literature relating to the intercultural communication process. To begin, a rational for examining a theory which gives a clear and independent conceptualization of the core features of communication is presented to provide a basis for the study of communication across cultural communities.[25]

Intercultural Communication and
Constructivist Theory

There are two schools of thought in the theory and research of intercultural communication. They are (1) the

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cultural dialogue group and (2) cultural criticism.

(1) The Cultural Dialogue Group

Supporters of this group argue that intercultural communication is an effort to bring people together "along mutually satisfying lines." They are searching to find out how people from different cultures manage to get along, and when two persons from different cultures communicate, they seek to identify what are the components of the thinking processes which affect their communication.

At the same time supporters are looking into any similarity or dissimilarities between any two cultures and the degree of the difficulties in communication between them. Students of this school of thought believe that patterns of thinking in human beings are affected by their social and environmental values as well as by their education. This group may be identified with a modern trend towards intercultural communication.[26]

(2) Cultural Criticism

In this group, the researcher looks for the points of contention in each culture so that they can be used in the form of isolated materials for necessary research in transcultural interaction. They believe that it would be a waste of time to look for harmony and similarities among cultures without describing them in a classified manner.[27] With this type of attitude cultural critics are hoping that

they may be able to isolate the barriers in intercultural

communication to create a perfect communication

media. Barna wrote:

> A better approach is to study the history,
> political structure, art, literature, and
> language of the country....But more important,
> one should develop an investigative, non-
> judgmental attitude and a high tolerance for
> ambiguity--which means lowered defenses.
> Margaret Mead suggests sensitizing persons to the
> kinds of things that need to be taken into
> account instead of developing behavior and
> attitude stereotypes, mainly because of the
> individual differences in each encounter and the
> rapid changes that occur in a culture pattern.[28]

It seems that supporters of this theory have been able

to successfully combine classification, analysis, and

application of intercultural communication.

Intercultural communication is a field of research

which directly involves human interaction. It is through

this kind of research that scholars in this field have

identified those barriers which affect how people create

meaning for dialogue exchange.[29] Jesse G. Delia has tried

to model a cosmology to analyze the underlying root

metaphor of the structural development and referred to it

as an "organism, the living, organized system presented to

[perform] experience in multiple forms."[30] In short she

tried to describe the stability of the model in various

forms, which includes the study of non-interference and

independence among the different sectors (people, or

subgroups) within a whole body.

James L. Applegate, et al., revealed certain
interesting facts with respect to inter- and cross-cultural
communication. He stressed a coherent theory of cultural
communication which shows that the basic behavior of a
cultural group directly emerges from its history and it is
reflected upon the various forms of everyday
communications. He emphasized that people of a fixed
cultural group should be responsible for interpreting their
own social environment.[31] That is why theories related to
a culture should be interpretative in nature and people
should try to project it in actual manner. They should not
misrepresent the values of their culture. Moreover, it is
important that there must exist a perfect bridge between
culture and communication.

After the Second World War the field of cultural
anthropology underwent an explosive development.
Sociologists, psychologists, educators, and economists all
added to the increasing interest in a discipline which
began by assuming that culture is the foundation of social
structures. Every institution expresses itself as a system
of behavior imposed on individuals, which they must learn,
share and transmit.[32]

When an individual attempts to find meaning and
direction from his behavior, it is necessary for the
individual to make a distinction between three basic
elements of that process which are interpretation, action,
and interaction. These three concepts also play a major

role in analysis of cultural influence on communication.

George Kelly defined these three concepts as follows:

> Interpretation is accomplished through the development and application of cognitive schemes that segment the ongoing stream of social life into domains of experience (e.g., physical, interpersonal, moral/religious) creating relatively differentiated and hierarchically integrated schematic structures within and across domains...
>
> The cognitive schemes employed by individuals define intentions and imply alternative lines of action within situations...What results is action organized onto strategies designed to actualize the intention to behavior...
>
> Interaction involves the coordination of individual lines of action through the application of shared schemes for the organization of action itself...Organizing schemes are tied to the content of interaction. They may link particular acts...for routine interactions between individuals within described roles in institutional settings (e.g., teacher-student interaction), or offer a general plan for an entire speech event (e.g., the meeting of a college class).[33]

In constructivism, communication is seen as being tied to an individual's intention and interpretation. Communication is also viewed as a behavior which is based on organized strategy and coordinated action. So it is possible to hypothesize that communication patterns result from cultural influence--rather than communication, determining cultural characteristics.

According to the views put forward by sociologists, the socio-linguistic codes are characterized by certain linguistic rules which affect cultural communication and

are the primary vehicles for acculturation. One such rule

is line of action. Individuals choose a line of action

depending upon their intention. This results in an action,

and an action is composed of strategies.[34] These

strategies in turn formulate the intention to behavior.

This is known as a strategic action scheme. The

coordination of a series of such lines of action, when

organized properly, gives rise to an interaction scheme.[35]

An organizing scheme is one type of interactional scheme.

It is directly tied to the content of interaction. Barbara

J. O'Keefe, et al., wrote:

> They may link particular acts (e.g., adjacency
> pairs), define a script for routine interaction
> between individuals within ascribed roles in
> institutional settings (e.g., teacher student
> interaction) or offer a general plan for an
> entire speech event (e.g., the meeting of a
> college class).[36]

The main goal of the constructivist is to reveal the

character of the relationship between communication-

relevant forms such as strategic action schemes and

interactional organizing schemes. Holiday wrote:

> Language is best conceptualized as a resource
> capable of use in accomplishing a variety of
> potential objectives.

Also, he constructed a taxonomy of main functions of

language which are as follows:

Personal	to elaborate feeling, motives, and needs...

Regulative/control	affecting change in other's thinking and behavior
Referential	describing objects and relationships
Imaginative	experimenting with language and creating new ways of seeing the world
Identity management	creating a desired self-image.[37]

A typical classroom period gives some examples of linguistic organizing schemes that are characteristic of different cultures in questioning patterns or disciplining procedures. This example may also be applied to college groups. Attewell wrote:

> Evidence of cultural influence can be found in organizing schemes embodied in many types of interaction...Uncovering consistencies in the nature and hierarchic structuring of organizing schemes that emerge in various contexts for communication within a cultural community defines yet another important avenue of cultural influence on communication.[38]

When the strategies adopted for communication are closely analyzed, they indicate that the culture very much influences one's communication and, in order to understand the degree of influence, one should examine the cultural attitude of the individual's intentions or motives with respect to interaction between the sender and receiver of the message.

Martha Ward described the influence of culture on the process of communication:

> Cognitive schemes, strategies, and organizing schemes

employed in communicative relationships, all document
cultural influences on communication. They help us
understand how and why communication assumes the form
and function it does within the culture.[39]

Inter- and Intracultural Communication

This is a time when the need for understanding and
mutual respect across cultural boundaries is imperative.
As a result, implicit in achievement, understanding and
respect can lead an interchange between two human beings to
successful communication.[40]

It is through the knowledge of languages and cultures
that we best begin to know and comprehend the scope
and significance of human experience in history, from
ancient time to modern; it is through the knowledge of
language and cultures that we best learn to tolerate
and appreciate cultural and linguistic diversity at
home, to understand our contemporaries abroad and so
achieve our full potential as citizens of the world.[41]

Language is, of course, a key component of
communication and although the accurate use of linguistic
forms is necessary for effective communication, in most
communicative situations the communicators do more than
simply talk to each other with well-constructed sentences;
there has to be familiarity with the culture of the
language being used by the communicators.[42]

The key to the understanding of intercultural
communication is to first define culture. There are many
definitions of culture, not all of which are relevant to
this discussion. But the definitions that are often
suggested by anthropologists in relation to intercultural

research are those offered by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) and Triandis (1972, 1977b). From the hundreds of definitions that were studied by this group, the following was selected as the most relevant:

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached value; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action.[43]

Some researchers have gone so far as to state that culture is communication and communication is culture. The reason for this is that culture and communication are not viewed in terms of how they function to help formulate organizational performance, rather they are tools through which reality is put into organized contexts.[44] Benjamin Whorf wrote:

> People who use different languages and are of different cultures perceive the world differently, think differently and adhere to different philosophies because of their different languages and cultures.[45]

Just as communication is culture, or vice versa, so should theories of communication hold notions of symbolic behavior. This idea has been drawn from Wuthnow's definition that culture is the "symbolic-expressive aspect of human behavior."[46] Another definition suggested by

Morgan, Frost, and Pondy's notion is that members of
organizations, by their nature, are "symbolic entities."[47]
From this it can be concluded that culture can lead to
symbolism and the role of communication in creating symbols
and expressions of those symbols. Blumer said:

> The term "symbolic interaction " refers, of
> course, to the peculiar and distinctive character
> of interaction as it takes place between human
> being. The peculiarity consists in the fact that
> human beings interpret or "define" each other's
> actions instead of merely reacting to each
> other's action. Their "response" is not made
> directly to the action of one another but instead
> is based on the meaning which they attach to such
> action.[48]

Gudykunst also indicated the relativity of
communication and culture by stating:

> Culture is directly and indirectly the product of
> communication. Were it not for the capacity of
> human systems to create and use symbolic
> language, the creation of common symbols and
> meaning would be impossible. And, without
> communication, the information generated in one
> place and time could not be preserved or
> transmitted from one place to another, capability
> that allows for the accumulation and transmission
> of culture from one generation to the next and
> from one geographic locale to another. It is
> also through information processing and
> transformation that humans become aware of and
> are able to adapt to the many distinctive
> standards, customs, rules, and conventions that
> characterize cultures and subcultures.[49]

The term "intercultural communication" has been
defined in many ways. A workable definition is that
"intercultural communication" is the communication that
takes place when people of different cultures attribute

meaning to each other's behavior. The result can be misunderstanding, misjudgment, and difficulty; it also can be enlightenment.[50]

Culture and Communication of
International Students

There are many studies of cultural differences in communication patterns of international students and communication problems that these students face as a result of their cultural background.

Many writers have indicated that differences in background and interest, motivation, and many other social and individual factors influence the process and progress of communication.

Placid Kunutu looked at the cultural and racial background of group members and the way their communication patterns were affected. A Jewish female, six foreign non-white students and two American students were interviewed individually for one hour at Columbia University. The results indicated that the patterns of group silence, the meaning attached to group leaders' authority, and sharing of feelings were all influenced by the participants' cultural background.[51]

Middle Eastern students in many ways face great cultural conflicts in adjustment to Western cultural values. On one hand they feel obligated to respect and save their own cultural values. On the other hand, they

need to accept some of the values of Western culture so they can feel comfortable. Stress may result from students reaching a stage where they feel that they do not belong to either the native or the new culture.

Douglas MacGrath, after conducting a survey of students at the Institute of English as a Second Language, found that Middle Eastern students attending this school have problems with differences in "stress, intonation, dialect variation, social register" and "idiomatic usage." He also found out that "matters of religion, diet, hygiene, sex role, proxemics, and punctuality reveal cultural differences." He suggested that these may cause problems that must be handled with empathy in order to ease the foreigner's transition into society.[52]

One of the special cases of difficulty of international students' communication in U.S. institutions of higher learning is the problem that African students are facing. Elizabeth Vukeh has studied this problem at the University of Minnesota. She examined the oral and written communications of students. The study showed that these students have more social than academic problems. Also, "students reported being stereotyped by Americans on and off campus. In all respects this made cross-cultural communication more difficult.[53]

Shankar found in his study of communication problems of international students at the University of Ohio, University of Washington, and University of Central

Missouri that problems arose from fear of speaking,
inability to understand the English language, inability to
reach the right people, and difficulty in speaking to both
professors and American students.[54]

Another study conducted by Holl supported the idea of
similarity of the communication problems of Middle Eastern
students. The study revealed that students from Iran
reported that they experienced difficulty with writing
papers and with depression. Their "best friend" was a
fellow national student. Also, Arab-speaking students
interacted mainly with students from fellow nations and
least with Americans.[55]

Cultural Awareness

Even between two fluent speakers of the same language
there has to be some awareness of cultural differences.
The point is that the basic element of any successful
communication between two people from different cultures is
first, the establishment of intercultural skills and,
second, the development of a cultural awareness between
both of them.

In dealing with other cultures, "learning" them, or
achieving empathy or trans-spection across cultures, it is
necessary to become aware of the depth of one's own
particular cultural conditioning and its pervasiveness in
response to others. One must also be aware of peculiar
assumptions about the nature of life, unique behavior

patterns, and individual ways of thinking and feeling.
Awareness of these at an experiential level can change
learning and behavior which rarely results from
intellectual comprehension alone. This results in
"cultural awareness." When a relationship to others beyond
one's own culture occurs, it can be called global awareness
or cross-cultural awareness; the ability to project into
the minds and emotions of others who are completely
foreign. Often, however, the first step toward this trans-
spection is cultural self-awareness. The recognition of
the degree to which we ourselves are culture-bound
facilitates the leap into the cultural perspective of
others.[56]

Cultural awareness can be recognized as the fact that
culture affects perception as well as influencing values,
attitudes, and behavior.[57] So differences in national
background seem to be a major source of differences in
perception of the host country.[58] David Shield made a
related observation concerning international students:

> It appears that an important basis for the
> difference between students from different world
> areas in their perceptions of the United States
> is the fact that one tends to judge the situation
> one is currently observing in relation to one's
> accumulated background of experience with similar
> situations.[59]

Although this study focuses on the hypothesis that
there are relationships between international students'
demographic characteristics and their social awareness,

some quantitative studies deny such a relationship. One of

these studies was conducted by Lomak, a doctoral candidate

at the University of Ohio, Athens.

Lomak examined 186 international students by

questionnaire to measure the extent of foreign students'

awareness of selected student services and programs and to

measure the relevancy of this awareness to the independent

variables of age, sex, quarters of enrollment, marital

status, university rank, and region of nationality.

The findings revealed that students suffer a low level

of awareness of, usage of, and satisfaction with services.

Also, the study did not show a significant relationship

between the awareness levels of students and the

independent variables mentioned earlier.[60]

Tabdili-Azar, in his study of international students

at the University of San Francisco, confirmed that on

twenty-three of the twenty-eight questions, there were

significant differences between the responses of

international students who claimed not to use university

services and those of foreign student advisers who thought

they used them frequently.[61]

Dania Bial used a survey to research 256 international

students from developing countries regarding their

knowledge of the library at the University of Florida.

Statistical analysis of 104 respondents revealed that there

is a relationship between the students' knowledge of the

library, their length of stay at an American university,

participation in library instruction programs, and region of origin.[62]

Several studies have been done to determine cultural differences among international students. The first reaction of international students in this country is "culture shock." The concept of culture shock emerged as one of the first clear theoretical frameworks in the field. The experience was so consistent that it could be plotted on a chart. It was called the "U" Curve of Cross-Cultural Adjustment. It involved a process of adjustment to the demands of trans-spection across cultures. The student or professional with a task abroad had to project into the mental outlook of the host culture in order to be successful.[63] Stephen Fost described the results of culture shock:

> Experience suggests that culture shock can result in many behavior patterns, from mild depression to severe paranoia. Victims of extreme culture shock often cease attempts to communicate; some may cling to people or artifacts of their own culture; and others may press valiantly on, enduring their unhappiness but accomplishing and learning little.[64]

Perhaps the major contributor to unease in a foreign environment is the increased difficulty, or even impossibility, of communicating what one wishes to communicate and of receiving the information one wishes to receive. Sarbaugh, in his study of intercultural communication, wrote:

> Travelers bring with them their own communication

habits, both verbal and non-verbal, that do not
transcend cultural limits. Studies of intercultural
communication have shown that the amount of time and
energy needed for simple communication increases
rather dramatically as cultural differences
increase.[65]

One's own gestures and other non-verbal cues can,
unknown to the communicator, act as saboteurs of
communication. One's perception of any given person or
situation can be quite different from the other person's
perception.

Some foreign students adjust easily to the American
way of life and some do not. This occurs mainly because of
the differences in their cultural characteristics.
Motarassed's study of international students from the
Middle East found that these students have the most
difficulties.[66] On the other hand, Parker notes that
Middle Eastern students are among the most adaptable
international students in this country.[67]

Conflict of Cultural Characteristics

In this section, research studies bearing on cultural
differences of Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian students
are grouped.

It should be noted that although there are some
quantitative and qualitative studies in these areas, none
of these studies deals directly with cultural character-
istics and differences of these two regions.

Edmund and Christine Glenn[68] pointed out that Eastern cultures have so many differences among themselves that a simple comparison between East and West seems to make little sense. For example, in the process of decision-making, Chinese use a more deductive framework during their negotiations by emphasizing agreement on the general principles of the relationship before moving to the details surrounding the specific agreement.[69] But Japanese negotiators place emphasis on the emotional level of communication.[70] On the other hand, Harris and Moran[71] note that Chinese and Japanese are similar in terms of decision making. In both cultures decisions are made based on group agreements in contrast to the process of decision making in American society which lays stress on individual values when they come in conflict with those of the group.[72]

Over the past few years a considerable number of studies regarding the Arab character have been published. Most of these studies agree on an identical principle or theme. A quotation from Patai is one that probably shows the essence of the problem:

> In attempting to recognize correlations between various aspects of the Arab personality, it is helpful to examine the discrepancy that exists among the Arabs on the three planes of existence that can be distinguished in each individual and group. All of us engage constantly in action. Our actions express our intentions, but, at the same time, are influenced by external factors, such as the control the social and physical environment has over us. The world of action and activity is the first plane of our existence. The second is that of verbal utterance. We often express verbally intentions that we cannot carry

out because of external impediments. In this
respect, verbal expression corresponds more
closely to intentions than actions. But even in
words we do not express all of our intentions.
We refrain from uttering certain things because
of the realities of the environment in which we
live. The third plane is that of the intentions
themselves, that is, of the thoughts we
entertain, the wishes we have, the ideas we
believe in, and so on. The world of the mind, as
this plane can be called, is the one most
independent of the limiting influences of the
environment.[73]

Looking at the reality factor, in Western culture

expression is greatly influenced by reality. On the other

hand, in the Arab world, thought, speech, and verbal

expression can be relatively free from the influence of

reality.

Edward Hall described the Arabs as more "immediate."

He also noted that Arabs are more likely to stand closer,

talk louder and orient more directly.[74]

Muneo Yoshikawa, a faculty member in the East Asian

Language Department at the University of Hawaii who viewed

himself as a "cultural middle man" (in this case a

Japanese-American), provided an excellent statement about

the view of language in Japanese culture.

People who are good in language are not generally
respected in Japanese society due to the
different views on "verbal language." The
psychocultural orientation (worldview) of
Japanese people toward "verbal language" can be
generalized as that of "mistrust. What is often
verbally expressed and what is actually intended
are two different things. What is verbally
expressed is probably important enough to
maintain friendship, and it is generally called
Tatemae which means simply "in principle" but
what is not verbalized counts most-Honne which

means "true mind." Although it is not expressed verbally, you are supposed to know it by <u>Kan</u> "intuition."[75]

Kristin Schwartz's study of international students from Saudi Arabia and China and American students provided some interesting findings. His study compared components of the stress process among these three groups through an open-ended, self-reported questionnaire. The results of this study indicated that:

> ...individuals from different cultures are socialized to identify different types of events as stressful, appraise these events differently, and report that they employ different types of coping behaviors.

> The Chinese identified academic events as stressful most frequently and were likely to employ coping behaviors that acted directly on themselves to meet the demands of the environment. The Saudis identified personal events as stressful most frequently and tended to deal with stressful events by treating the symptoms associated with the stress created by the event. The Americans reported interpersonal events as stressful most frequently and tended to employ coping behavior that acted directly on the environment.[76]

Al-Shedoke, in his study of a sample of 379 Saudi Arabian students from a population of 834 attending U.S higher education institutions, found that the area of most concern to these students was financial aid followed by academic records. Student activities and health service were the areas of least concern.[77] Another study conducted by Kao on Chinese students from mainland China and Taiwan indicated that the greatest problem area for Chinese

students was the English language and the least problem area was religious service. Also, both groups ranked friends as the most preferred helping sources in solving their problems.[78]

One of the special characteristics of the majority of Middle Eastern students was their religion. Almost all Middle Easterners are Muslims, committed to Islam which began more than 13 centuries ago. Islam is not only a religious belief but also a way of life. Islamic traditions were initially oral. The first generation of believers passed these traditions to those who finally committed them to writing. The principles of Islamic law covered all aspects of life and various forms of prayer, fasting, and ritualistic observances. Necessarily, Muslim law for the believer is considered the law of Allah.[79]

According to Sikkema and Niyekawa, the reason for the surprising lack of awareness of the need for deeper cross-cultural understanding may be that the majority of well-educated people have a "passive" understanding of other cultures and subcultures that gives them the feeling that they know the other cultures. The passive understanding of a culture may come from traveling to foreign countries, meeting and interacting with foreign representatives at conferences and seminars or even by reading a translated book or by watching a translated or untranslated film. Much misunderstanding is caused by the assumption that expressions of human feelings and reactions are universal.

On the other hand, active understanding of a culture requires development, at the "gut" level, of an attitude of acceptance, respect, and tolerance of cultural differences.[80]

Just as verbal communication is important in intercultural communication, non-verbal communication or "silent communication" is also one of the most important aspects of culturally related communication. As part of this study another hypothesis deals with the association of color and culture. There are some studies that support such an association. One of these studies was conducted by Sue Tebeau.

The result of this study was presented in the form of a teaching manual for English as a Second Language instructors and it is a guide to better understanding of Asian students. The manual focuses on those elements in Asian culture which are relevant in the day-to-day lives of Asian ESL students. The following issues are discussed: names, birthdates, family structure, use of "Yes" or "Yah," shyness and smiling, etiquette, humbleness, respect, politeness and restraint, religion, attitudes and behavior in the classroom, speech habits, eating habits, time concepts, superstition and symbolism, color perception, cultural shock, and historical influences.[81]

Summary

The foregoing literature review revealed many cultural

differences among international students and their effects
on aspects of their behavior in the United States.
Although there were some contradictions in the findings,
the majority of studies supported the theory underlying the
research question.

The literature indicated that international students
in this country face many problems. However, most of these
problems are the result of misunderstanding and
misinterpretation which creates miscommunication between
the student and the new environment because of cultural
differences.

The literature showed some differences in both
intercultural and intracultural communication among
international students. Also, it showed the effect of
culture on international students' communication patterns
and pointed out some conflicting characteristics of various
cultures.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview

This study is designed to examine the possible
relationship between international students' awareness of
university educational facilities and their socio-cultural
background. The population consists of those students at
Oklahoma State University who are already affected by the
problem of socio-cultural awareness. The purpose of this
study is to investigate the existing social, cultural and
communication gap between students from the Middle East
countries and Southeast Asian countries.

In this regard, a survey was conducted in the form of
a questionnaire among the entire population of the
international students from the Middle East and South-
eastern Asia who were enrolled in spring 1990 at O.S.U.

The literature reviewed in the previous chapter
provided evidence of differences in cultural
characteristics between these two Asian groups. The
literature survey also revealed that many cultural factors
contribute to students' communication behavior. It was
found that some of the prominent factors which contribute
to the differences found among students from different

cultures include adjustment to Western culture, communication problems, difference in behavioral patterns, etc.

This chapter will describe the procedures used in this study, including the research methodology, research instrument, design, data collection, and processing. Finally, the limitations, strengths, and weaknesses of the study will be discussed.

Methodology

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the researcher used a combination of descriptive[82] and explanatory[83] surveys to (1) look for communication patterns of international students at Oklahoma State University, and (2) to examine the relationship between the students' socio-cultural backgrounds and their awareness of the universities' facilities and services. The methodology used in the present study was a mail survey. The survey has certain well-defined advantages which make it a suitable method of data collection for the purpose of scientific investigation in mass communication. The survey method can be used to investigate the behavior patterns of a group of people in society. It can be used to collect a large amount of data.[84] Also, it is cost efficient. Since these three advantages of the survey were conducive to this study, the survey method was implemented to collect the necessary data.

The author recognizes some weaknesses of the survey research, such as the possible misunderstanding of questions by respondents and the possible bias that is a result of a non-response factor.

Population

This study surveyed the entire population rather than a representative sample. The <u>target population</u>[85] in this study is the entire population of international students at O.S.U., and the <u>survey population</u>[86] is the population of Middle Eastern and Oriental students who were enrolled at O.S.U. in the spring of 1990. This survey was carried out on a population basis rather than a sample basis due to the fact that the distribution of the students from each group was not uniform in various categories (i.e., undergraduate, graduate, disciplines, sex, etc.). The number of Middle Eastern students was found to be 188 from 18 different countries in contrast to 557 students from 8 Southeast Asian countries (students from North and Northeast Africa, West and Southwest Asia are considered Middle Eastern whereas students from East and Southeast Asia are considered as Southeast students). Since the stratified sample could produce an unbalanced number of clusters of variables such as gender, age, class and country of origin, a population survey was preferred to a sample survey.

The purpose of the selection of Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian students for this study is as follows:

1. In the second half of the 1980's, students
   representing the top ten countries were from these
   two regions (statistics released by the I.S.S in
   O.S.U. for 1987-1989).[87]

2. The author is originally from the Middle East and
   is familiar with the problems stated in the
   research question with respect to Middle Eastern
   students' behavior.

3. These two regions could provide a reasonable
   geographical and socio-cultural contrast for this
   study.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument in this study was a
six-page mail questionnaire which was developed by the
researcher. The development of this questionnaire was the
result of: (a) a review of literature, (b) the author's
personal observations, and (c) valuable suggestions from
the department adviser and faculty members. The author
also gathered valuable suggestions from collegians from
both regions regarding the construction of reasonable
questions that would not offend the students.

Pilot Study

A pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted to
determine any potential problems or shortcomings of the
instrument. Two weeks prior to conducting the survey, ten

questionnaires were distributed to international students. All questionnaires that were returned were checked for errors and revisions were made.[88]

Questionnaire

The questionnaire survey contained a total of 30 questions, one open-ended and as many as 29 close-ended. The close-ended questions consisted of a rating scale, rank ordering, semantic differential scale, fill-in-the-blank, forced-choice, check-list, mutually exclusive, multiple-choice, and Likert scale questions.

The questionnaire had two versions each containing the same set of questions but using a different approach and can be regarded as a combinational method of verification.[89] The basic objective of the questionnaire was to gather direct responses from the students in the form of answers to these questions. Moreover, the attitude of international students towards different colors was tested by printing the cover letter in two different colors in order to measure speed of response. In each culture certain colors have special significance. For Middle Eastern people, green is such a color and is associated with the Islamic religion. Golden yellow is historically associated with Chinese culture. The researcher assumed that the use of these colors would increase the number and speed of responses to the questionnaire. The 30 questions in the survey were organized in the following manner:

1. Students' Physical Communication Patterns

2. Students' Two-Way Communication Patterns

3. Students' One-Way Communication Patterns

4. Students' Media Use Patterns

5. Students' Awareness of University's Facilities

6. Students' Demographic Questions

7. Students' Opinion Regarding O.S.U

8. Students' Residential Life-Style

9. Students' Cultural Background

Each of the above categories is described in brief below.

1. The first category, i.e., Students' Physical Communication, consists of seven multiple choice questions (#2 through 8) concerning the students' association and relationships as well as attitude towards students from other countries including the U.S. These items also questioned their degree of awareness of the existing facilities in the university.

2. There was one question (#17) designed in the form of Semantic Differential Scales for the purpose of examining two-way communication patterns. This was measured on the basis of response on ten bipolar adjectives with seven-point scales.

3. One Way Communication Pattern (questions #14 and 15) dealt with information about O.S.U., in particular that which can be helpful to students' educational goals as well as the most convenient way of receiving and understanding

messages.

4. Students' Media Use Pattern questions explored the extent to which students take advantage of the news media on campus to receive information. Response format was in the form of rank ordering from extremely useful to extremely useless on a five-point scale.

5. The amount of familiarity with the existing facilities and services (a total of seventeen randomly selected facilities available in the university for the students) was measured by question #16 which is designed in the form of a Likert Scale.

6. Included were demographic questions such as academic class, sex, age and status (#18 through 20 and 25)

7. Whether the international students were able to receive helpful information from OSU and suggestions (if any) they had in order to improve the quality of information was included in questions #11, 13 and 30.

8. Questions #21 through 25 asked about students' living style, length of stay in U.S. and type of companions.

9. A student's cultural background plays an important role in determining one's ability to communicate and reciprocate. Questions #26 through 29 sought information about the socio-cultural background of the international students in order to determine how effectively they can communicate with others.

The different colors selected for the cover letters

were white, green, and golden yellow. One half of the Middle Eastern students were sent questionnaires with green colored cover letters and the other half received questionnaires with white colored letters. Similarly, Oriental students were divided into two groups. One half received questionnaires with white cover letters and the other half were provided with questionnaires accompanied by cover letters printed on golden yellow paper. In addition, the symbol Fu (Good luck or Good fortune) in Chinese brush calligraphy was printed on the top left corner of the yellow cover letter.

On February 8, 1990, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to 693 Oriental students from 14 countries and 286 Middle Eastern students from 19 countries. The result of the first mail-out was 279 returned, which was 39 percent of the total distribution. On March 19, 1990, a follow-up questionnaire was distributed to all non-respondents. As result of the first and second mail-outs, a total of 438 questionnaires were returned to the author, which represented a 61.25 percent return rate.

<center>Research Design</center>

There are three kinds of variables in this research study:

1. Intervening Variables:

These variables are the media used and the communication patterns of international students. These

variables can be either dependent or independent variables.

2. Independent Variables:

These variables relate to individual's socio-cultural background, physical communication pattern, two-way and one-way communication pattern, and residential lifestyle in the U.S.

3. Dependent Variables:

These variables relate to individual's awareness of university facilities and some of the independent variables such as physical communication pattern, two-way and one-way communication pattern, and residential lifestyle in the U.S.

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between the international students' socio-cultural background and their communication pattern ?

2. Is there a relationship between the international students' socio-cultural background and the media used?

3. Is there a relationship between the length of time that a student spends at OSU and the student's media usage and communication pattern?

4. Is there a relationship between the students' socio-cultural differences and their awareness of the university's facilities and services?

5. Is there a relationship between the students' color

preference and the response time on the first mail-out?

Null Hypotheses

1.   There will be no significant difference in the number of responses between those Oriental students who were sent a questionnaire with the white cover letter and those who were sent a questionnaire with the golden yellow cover letter.

2.   There will be no significant differences in the number of responses between those Middle Eastern students who were sent a questionnaire with the white cover letter and those who where sent a questionnaire with the green cover letter.

3.   There will be no significant relationship between the international students' awareness of university facilities and their socio-cultural background.

4.   There will be no significant relationship between the international students' communication patterns and the region they are from.

5.   There will be no significant relationship between the students' length of time at OSU and their awareness of university facilities.

The primary research questions in support of these hypotheses are:

Were there any differences in media patterns between Middle Eastern students and Oriental students?

Did Middle Eastern students know more about university facilities than Oriental students?

Did Middle Eastern students who received a green cover letter respond at a higher rate than those who received a white cover letter?

Did Oriental students who received a golden yellow cover letter respond at a higher rate than those who received a white cover letter?

Data Processing and Statistical Test

Demographic and background data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics such as frequency, proportion, percentage, sample mean, and chi-square.

The t-test was used to examine the differences in data collected from the two groups of students (Middle Eastern and Oriental) with respect to students' awareness of university facilities and services.

The chi square test is used to establish the relationship among all the nominal variables, discussed above.

Limitations

The research was constrained by the following important limitations:

1. Limited to two groups: This research was conducted based on the response from two different Asian groups. More interesting facts might be

revealed had it not been restricted to only two groups.

2. Limited to OSU only: The participants in this research were the students who were enrolled in OSU in the spring of 1990. This restricts the conclusions.

3. Response Rate: There was not a one hundred percent response rate to the questionnaire and this might have resulted in a possible bias.

4. Misinterpretation: Some of the students surveyed might have interpreted the questions wrongly, thus resulting in incorrect evaluation.

5. Finally, there might be other parameters which were not included in the research and which could have produced more distinct conclusions.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

General

This research was conducted to examine OSU inter-
national students' awareness of university facilities and
services. The secondary aim of the research was to
investigate the media used and the communication patterns
of these students with respect to their socio-cultural
background and communication format thereof.

The instrument used for conducting this research was a
six-page questionnaire containing 30 questions.
Questionnaires were sent to the two groups identified and
described in Chapter III: students from Southeast Asia and
from the Middle East. Of these 715 students, 438
responded, which is 61.25 percent of the total.

The response to the first mail-out of the Southeast
Asian students was 224 and the followup provided an
additional 122 responses. The initial response from the
Middle Eastern students was 56 and the followup response
was 37, making a total of 93 responses.

Looking at the individual response percentages, the
Southeast Asians had a 53 percent response rate from a

total mail-out of 549 as compared to the Middle Eastern students' 93 responses, which is 55 percent from a total mail-out of 167. Overall statistics indicate a slightly better response from the Southeast Asian students.

Findings Related to Color of
Questionnaire Cover Letter

As it was hypothesized, the questionnaire cover letter was printed in different colors of white, green, and golden yellow. As discussed in Chapter III, in the first mail-out, 50 percent of the questionnaires sent to each group were accompanied by the color selected for that group. It was hypothesized that the color of the cover letter would boost the number of the responses for the first mail-out. Table I depicts the students' responses to the first mail-out of the questionnaires according to color of the cover letter.

TABLE I

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE TO COLOR COVER
LETTERS BY STUDENTS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Country	Colored		White		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Hong Kong	3	43.00	4	57.00	7	100.00
Indonesia	20	46.50	23	53.50	43	100.00
Japan	2	50.00	2	50.00	4	100.00
Korea	12	46.15	14	53.85	26	100.00

TABLE I (Continued)

Country	Colored Number	%	White Number	%	Total Number	%
Malaysia	32	59.26	22	40.74	54	100.00
PR China	25	71.43	10	28.57	35	100.00
R. China	15	42.86	20	57.14	35	100.00
Singapore	7	50.00	7	50.00	14	100.00
Thailand	3	50.00	3	50.00	6	100.00
Total	119	53.12%	105	46.88%	224	100.00%

As shown in Table I, among the Southeast Asian students, 53.12% responded to yellow cover letters and 46.88% responded to white cover letters. Although this difference is not statistically significant, there are some noticeable differences in some countries in terms of differences in response rate for white or yellow cover letters. As is depicted in the table, over 75% of the returns of the questionnaire by students from the People's Republic of China was a response to a yellow cover letter.

Table II shows the differences between Middle Eastern students in terms of responses to the color of the questionnaire cover letter.

TABLE II

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE TO COLOR COVER
LETTERS BY MIDDLE EASTERN STUDENTS

Country	Colored		White		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Egypt	3	75.00	1	25.00	4	100.00
Iran	7	58.33	5	41.67	12	100.00
Jordan	3	42.85	4	57.15	7	100.00
Kuwait	1	33.33	2	66.67	3	100.00
Lebanon	7	77.77	2	22.23	9	100.00
Morocco	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	100.00
S. Arabia	3	75.00	1	25.00	4	100.00
Sudan	0	00.00	1	100.00	1	100.00
Syria	0	00.00	1	100.00	1	100.00
Tunisia	3	75.00	1	25.00	4	100.00
Turkey	3	50.00	3	50.00	6	100.00
Yemen	0	00.00	1	100.00	1	100.00
Total	32	58.18%	23	41.88%	55	100.00%

Among the Middle Eastern students, 58.18% responded to colored cover letters and 41.82% responded to white cover letters. Despite the apparent differences, however, there was no significant difference between the mean responses of the students with respect to the color of cover letters.

For students from Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia, 60% of each group responded to green cover letters.

There was a significant relationship between the groups and responses to the color of the cover letters with a chi-square of 346.725 for Southeast Asian students and

87.000 for Middle Eastern students. Thus, students in both groups were more likely to respond to questionnaires with colored cover letters than questionnaires with white cover letters.

Geographical and Socio-Cultural Characteristics of Participants

Table III shows the breakdown of the number of students from the different countries in the two regions, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, included in this study. Nine Southeast Asian countries and 13 Middle East countries are represented as indicated below.

TABLE III

GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGINS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST STUDENTS

Middle East			Southeast Asia		
Country	Number of Students	%	Country	Number of Students	%
Japan	5	1.4	Israel	1	1.1
Hong Kong	11	3.3	Syria	1	1.1
Thailand	12	3.5	Sudan	3	3.2
Singapore	19	5.5	Yemen	3	3.2
Korea	39	11.3	Kuwait	4	4.3
R. China	51	14.8	Morocco	4	4.3
Indonesia	58	16.8	Tunisia	6	6.5
P.R. China	65	18.8	Turkey	6	6.5
Malaysia	85	24.6	Egypt	6	6.5
			Jordan	10	10.8
			S.Arabia	11	11.8
			Lebanon	14	15.1
			Iran	24	25.8
Total	345	100.0%		93	100.0%

The students surveyed from Southeast Asia are a more homogeneous group with more students from fewer countries than the second group. The Middle East students are more heterogenous with students from a greater number of different countries. The Middle East countries range geographically from North and Northeast Africa to West and Southwest Asia, whereas a larger geographical area but fewer nations is represented by students from Southeast Asia.

The cultural characteristics of interest from the two broad geographical areas are the ethnic, religious, and linguistic characteristics of students from the different countries in each region. Table IV shows in detail these three characteristics.

TABLE IV

STUDENTS' CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Southeast Asia

Language	Number	%	Ethnic	Number	%	Religion	Number	%
Malaysia	1	.3	Indian	1	.3	Judaism	1	.3
Taiwanese	1	.3	Hakka	2	.6	Hinduism	1	.3
Kazan	3	.9	Khek	2	.6	Bahaism	7	2.0
Indonesia	3	.9	Tibetan	3	.9	Shintoism	11	3.2
Hakka	4	1.2	Singaporian	4	1.2	Taoism	16	4.6
Japanese	5	1.4	Miru	4	1.2	Islam	22	6.4
Thai	15	4.2	Japanese	4	1.2	Confucian	25	7.2
Korean	36	10.3	Miaow	4	1.2	Buddhism	51	14.8
Malay	44	12.6	Indonesian	6	1.7	Christian	106	30.7
Hindi	46	13.2	Mongol	8	2.3			
Chinese	176	51.6	Thai	8	2.3			

TABLE IV (Continued)

Southeast Asia

Language	Number	%	Ethnic	Number	%	Religion	Number	%
			Korean	28	8.1			
			Malaya	47	13.5			
			Hun	50	14.4			
			Chinese*	162	47.0			
No Resp.	11	3.1	No Resp.	12	3.5	No Relig.	105	30.5
Total	345	100.0%		345	100.0%		343	100.0

* Includes Cantonese & Mandarin

Middle East

Language	Number	%	Ethnic	Number	%	Religion	Number	%
Arabic	63	67.7	Arab	63	67.7	Islam	82	88.2
Farsi	24	25.8	Persian	24	24.8	Christian	7	7.5
Turkish	6	6.5	Turk	6	6.5	No Relig.	4	4.3
Total	93	100.0%		93	100.0%		93	100.0

Of the 322 Southeast Asian respondents, 162 were Chinese and 176 use the Chinese language. The second most populous ethnic group is the Huns with 50 respondents, and second in the list of languages is Hindi with 46. Christianity ranked first among religions (105), and a distant second was Buddhism with 51. Also, 105 of the Southeast Asian students stated they had no religious belief. Nine different religions were represented.

In contrast, only three language, ethnic, and religious groups were represented among the 93 Middle East respondents. These ranged from 63 Arab students who speak Arabic to six Turks who speak Turkish. Of the 93, 82 respondents were Muslim, while only 7 were Christian, and 4 claimed no religious affiliation or belief.

Effect of Cultural Background on Physical
Communication of Students from
the Two Regions

Questions 2 through 9 were designed to evaluate the extent to which the respondents' social activities and the country of origin are related. Table V presents the frequency of the responses to the questions with respect to the social activities differences between students from the two regions.

TABLE V

SOCIAL INTERACTION FREQUENCY TABLE

	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
Patterns	Number	%	Number	%
Frequency of visits to ISS:				
As a regular procedure	15	4.3%	13	14.0%
On occasion	275	79.7%	68	73.1%
Never	53	15.4%	11	11.8%
No response	2	.6%	1	1.1%
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

TABLE V (Continued)

Patterns	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Number	%	Number	%
Frequency of meeting fellow students from same country:				
On a regular basis	186	53.9%	36	38.7%
On occasion	148	42.9%	49	52.7%
Never	9	2.6%	8	8.6%
No response	2	.6%	--	-----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%
Frequency of meeting students from other countries:				
On a regular basis	89	25.8%	21	22.6%
On occasion	223	64.6%	66	71.0%
Never	31	9.0%	6	6.4%
No response	2	.6%	--	-----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%
Frequency of meeting with American students:				
On a regular basis	71	20.6%	26	28.0%
On occasion	196	56.8%	54	58.0%
Never	74	21.4%	13	14.0%
No response	4	1.2%	--	-----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

In answer to the question regarding the number of times student respondents visited the office of International Student Services (ISS), 14% of the Middle Eastern students visited the office on a regular basis, while only 4.3% of the Oriental students made regular visits. The variation of the two groups making occasional visits to the ISS office was about 79.7% for Southeast

Asian students and 73.1% for Middle Eastern students. The percentage of students who never went to the ISS office was 6% Southeast Asian and 1.1% Middle Eastern students.

Responses to the question on social interaction among fellow students from the same country showed that 53.9% of Southeast Asian students mingled regularly. Only 38.7% of the Middle Eastern students interacted on a regular basis.

There was little difference in the two groups in terms of social interaction with students from other countries. Of the total Southeast Asian students participating in the survey, 25.8% reported meeting students from other ethnic groups on a regular basis. From the total Middle Eastern respondents, 22.6% met with other ethnic groups regularly. The percentage of students only meeting occasionally with other ethnic groups was also similar to the previous outcomes.

One difference in the social interaction of the two groups with American students was that Middle Eastern Students were more interactive on a regular basis (28%) than the Southeast Asian students (20.6%). Only 14% of the Middle Eastern students reported that they never interacted with American students, whereas 21.4% of the Oriental students reported no interaction.

Table VI summarizes the study patterns of the two groups of international students, showing differences in the types of persons or groups they study with and frequency.

TABLE VI

STUDY PATTERNS OF STUDENTS WITH
OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

Patterns	Southeast Asia Number	%	Middle East Number	%
Group study with international students:				
3-5 times a week	38	11.0%	7	7.5%
Once or twice a week	69	20.9%	18	19.4%
Once or twice a month	29	8.4%	12	12.9%
Several times a semester	114	33.0%	34	36.6%
Never	90	26.1%	22	23.6%
No response	5	1.4%	--	----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%
Group study with students from home country:				
3-5 times a week	43	12.5%	4	4.3%
Once or twice a week	71	20.6%	10	10.8%
Once or twice a month	33	9.6%	9	9.7%
Several times a semester	97	28.1%	22	23.7%
Never	96	27.8%	48	51.6%
No response	5	1.4%	--	-----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%
Group study with American Students:				
3-5 times a week	21	6.1%	6	6.5%
Once or twice a week	30	8.7%	11	11.8%
Once or twice a month	33	9.6%	13	14.0%
Several times a semester	99	28.7%	22	23.6%
Never	157	45.5%	41	44.1%
No response	5	1.4%	--	-----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%
Frequency of study in library:				
3-5 times a week	108	31.3%	11	11.8%
Once or twice a week	93	27.0%	28	30.1%
Once or twice a month	45	13.0%	18	19.4%
Several times a semester	67	19.5%	21	22.6%
Never	26	7.5%	15	16.1%
No response	6	1.7%	--	-----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

In response to the question concerning whether the two groups study with other international students, little difference was noted. Eleven percent of the Oriental students studied with other international students 3-5 times a week, and 7.6% of the Middle Eastern students interacted with other international students by studying 3-5 times per week. One interesting statistic is that 26.1% of the Southeast Asian students and 23.7% of Middle Eastern students said they never studied with international students outside of their ethnic group.

Southeast Asian students studied with students from their home country more often (12.7% - 3 to 5 times per week) than Middle Eastern students (4.3% 3 - 5 times per week). Over one-fourth of the Southeast Asian students (27.8%) responded that they never studied with students from their home country, while 51.6% of the Middle Eastern students never studied with students from their homeland.

Neither of the two groups studied often with American students. Only 6.1 percent of the Southeast Asian students studied with American students 3 to 5 times a week as compared with 6.5% of Middle Eastern students. Those reporting that they never studied with American students were 45.5% of the Southeast Asian students surveyed and 44.1% of the Middle Eastern students surveyed.

Southeast Asian students spent more time in the library studying than did Middle Eastern students. Almost one-third of the Southeast Asian student respondents

studied 3-5 time a week as compared to only 11.8% of the
Middle Eastern students. Also, only 7.5% of the Southeast
Asian students said that they never studied in the
library, while 16.1% of the Middle Eastern students
responded that they spent no time in the library studying.

Perferred Media

Not all students understand all information by the
same communication means. Some prefer receiving
information orally and some prefer receiving written
information. The purpose of question #15 was to detect the
possible differences between student groups with respect to
the way they prefer to receive information. Table VII
shows the frequency and percentage of students' responses
to this item.

TABLE VII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PREFERRED MEANS FOR
UNDERSTANDING MESSAGES

Preferred Communication Means for Increased Understanding	Southeast Asian Number of Students	%	Middle Eastern Number of Students	%
Understand by reading	205	59.4%	34	36.6%
Understand by discussing	111	32.2%	44	47.3%
Understand by listening	22	6.4%	12	12.9%
No response	7	2.0%	3	3.2%
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

As shown in the table, the majority of students from Southeast Asia (59.4%) who participated in the survey responded that they understand information better by reading as compared to 32.2% who chose discussion, and 6.4% who preferred listening as their best way of understanding. On the other hand, 47.3% of the total Middle Eastern students understand information better by discussing it compared to 36.6% who prefer reading, and 12.9% who prefer listening.

For both groups of students, <u>listening</u> to information proved to be the least effective way of understanding the news.

Table VIII shows the frequency and percentage of students' responses.

TABLE VIII

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' REGION OF
ORIGIN AND PREFERRED METHOD OF
RECEIVING INFORMATION

Region	Reading Number	%	Discussing Number	%	Listening Number	%	Total	%
S.E. Asia	204	60.0	112	33.5	22	6.5	338	100.0%
Middle East	35	39.0	43	47.7	12	13.3	90	100.0%
No Response	4	.9	3	.7	3	.7	10	100.0%
Total	243	55.5%	158	36.1%	37	8.4%	438	100.0%

Table VIII shows there was a large percentage of students from Southeast Asia that understood better by reading whereas 46% of Middle Eastern students said they understood better by discussing the subject.

With a chi-square of 100.47, there was a significant relationship at the 95% level of confidence between the students' region of origin and their pattern of understanding the news.

Table IX shows the result of the comparison between students' religion and their pattern of understanding information.

TABLE IX

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' RELIGION
AND PREFERRED METHOD OF
RECEIVING INFORMATION

Religion	Reading Number	%	Discussing Number	%	Listening Number	%	Total	%
Bahaisim	5	1.1	3	.7	0	0.0	8	1.8
Islam	4	.9	48	11.0	11	2.7	64	14.6
Buddhism	37	8.4	18	4.1	7	1.6	62	14.2
Shintoism	8	1.8	1	.2	0	0.0	9	2.1
Confucian	16	3.7	8	1.8	1	.2	25	5.7
Taism	9	2.1	7	1.6	0	0.0	16	3.7
Christian	74	16.9	29	6.6	10	2.3	113	25.9
Hinduism	1	.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	.2
Judaism	2	.5	1	.2	0	0.0	3	.7
No Religion	58	13.2	35	8.0	4	.9	97	22.1
No Response	8	1.8	12	2.7	20	4.6	40	9.1
Total	222	50.7%	162	37.1%	53	12.1%	438	100.0%

As shown in Table IX, 11% of the students who participated in the survey and believe in Islam, responded that they understand information better by discussing it. Christian students claimed reading as their preferred method of receiving and understanding information (16.9%). The largest percentage of students who preferred listening as a method of receiving information were Muslim students.

With a chi-square of 58.317, there was a significant relationship at the 95% level of confidence between religion and the students' pattern of understanding.

Table X shows students' preferred method of receiving information in relation to their ethnic background.

TABLE X

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' ETHNIC
BACKGROUND AND PREFERRED METHOD
OF RECEIVING INFORMATION

Ethnic	Reading Number	%	Discussing Number	%	Listening Number	%	Total Number	%
Chinese	80	18.7	61	13.9	8	1.8	149	34.0
Miru	3	0.7	1	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.7
Hun	35	8.0	14	3.2	1	0.2	50	11.4
Singaporian	2	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.2	4	0.9
Thai	3	0.7	3	0.7	2	0.5	8	1.8
Malaya	24	5.5	15	3.4	2	0.5	41	9.4
Korean	22	5.0	2	0.5	3	0.7	27	6.2
Mongol	6	1.4	2	0.5	0	0.0	8	1.8
Confucian	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.2	2	0.5
Tibetan	2	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.2	3	0.3
Hakka	0	0.0	2	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.5
Indian	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.2
Indonesian	13	3.0	3	0.7	1	0.2	17	3.9
Khek	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.5

TABLE X (Continued)

Ethnic	Reading Number	%	Discussing Number	%	Listening Number	%	Total Number	%
Japanese	1	0.2	2	1.0	2	0.2	5	1.1
Miao	1	0.2	2	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.7
Arab	18	4.1	32	7.3	6	1.5	56	12.9
Persian	8	1.8	11	2.6	3	0.8	22	5.2
Turk	4	0.9	0	0.0	2	0.5	6	1.4
No response	14	3.2	4	0.9	10	2.3	28	6.4
Total	239	54.5%	156	35.6%	43	9.8%	438	100.0%

Ethnic background was related to students' preferred method of receiving information. With a chi-square of 100.15, there is a significant relationship at the 95% confidence level.

Table XI shows the breakdown of the students' preferred method of receiving information with respect to their language.

TABLE XI

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS'
LANGUAGE AND PREFERRED METHOD
OF RECEIVING INFORMATION

Language	Reading Number	%	Discussing Number	%	Listening Number	%	Total Number	%
Chinese	91	20.8	59	13.5	3	0.7	153	34.9
Thai	8	1.8	5	1.1	2	0.5	15	03.4
Korean	28	6.4	2	0.5	4	0.9	34	07.8
Malaya	23	5.3	17	3.9	4	0.9	44	10.0

TABLE XI (Continued)

Language	Reading Number	%	Discussing Number	%	Listening Number	%	Total	%
Kazan	3	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.7
Hakka	2	0.5	1	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.7
Hindu	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.2
Thaiwanese	24	5.5	15	3.4	7	1.6	46	10.5
Malaysian	2	.5	1	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.7
Indonesia	13	3.0	7	1.6	2	0.5	22	5.0
Japanese	5	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	1.1
Arabic	19	4.3	36	8.2	6	1.4	61	13.9
Farsi	8	1.2	12	2.7	4	0.9	24	5.5
Turkish	4	.9	1	0.2	1	0.2	6	1.4
No response	6	1.4	4	0.9	8	1.8	18	4.1
Total	237	54.1%	160	36.5%	41	9.4%	438	100.0%

Table XI shows that 20.8% of the students who speak Chinese prefer reading as a way of receiving information. On the other hand, students who speak Arabic prefer discussing as a method of receiving information.

With a chi-square of 75.130, there is a significant relationship at the 95% confidence level between native language and students' pattern of communication.

As part of examining the international students' one-way communication patterns, question #14 was designed to provide additional data. In this question, students were asked to rank the top three sources from which they preferred to receive news and information about O.S.U.

Table XII reports preference for those media that students feel are more important to them.

TABLE XII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF
STUDENTS IN TERMS OF PREFERRED
MEDIA SOURCES

Southeast Asian

Media	1st Choice Number	%	2nd Choice Number	%	3rd Choice Number	%	No Resp Number	%
Face to Face	122	35.4	90	26.1	74	21.4	59	17.4
Print	126	36.6	123	35.7	50	14.5	46	13.3
Broadcast	29	8.4	68	19.7	90	25.1	159	46.2
Telephone	168	48.7	86	24.9	53	15.4	38	11.0
Mail	35	10.2	87	25.2	84	24.3	139	40.3

Middle East

Media	1st Choice Number	%	2nd Choice Number	%	3rd Choice Number	%	No Resp Number	%
Face to Face	35	37.6	28	30.1	17	18.3	13	14.0
Print	28	30.1	32	34.4	17	18.3	16	17.2
Broadcast	4	4.3	26	28.0	31	33.3	32	34.4
Telephone	39	42.0	24	25.8	16	17.2	14	15.0
Mail	18	19.3	14	15.0	25	26.8	36	38.7

Table XII shows both groups of international students
are strongly in favor of the telephone as their best source
of receiving information about O.S.U. Middle Eastern
students favored face-to-face discussion as their first
choice of receiving information (37.6%). On the other
hand, 35.4% of the Southeast Asian students selected the
same media. Print media was selected first by 36.6% of the
Southeast Asian students. This type media received 30.1%
of the Middle Easterners' first choices.

For the second preferred source of news, the same differences remained between the two groups of students.

Another difference between the two groups of students was related to selection of mail as a preferred source of information. In this case, 10.1% of the Southeast Asian students selected _mail_ as a first choice and 25.2% selected it as a second choice. But for the Middle Eastern students, this media was selected by 19.3% of the students as a first choice and by 15.0% of the students as a second choice.

Considering the relationship of media preference with ethnic background, language, religion, and students' origin, the following results were obtained.

There is no significant relationship between students' ethnic background and media preference.

The relationship between the students' language and media preference with chi-square value of 60.086, is significant. This indicates that students who speak in one of the Chinese languages, Persian, Turkish, or Arabic, may find some media more suitable than others.

The effects of personal oral communication and broadcast communication are related to students' religion with chi-square values of 45.819 and 49.512. This means that students whose religion is Moslem tend to favor oral means of communication.

Both groups rely on print media, yet Middle Eastern students favor print slightly less. A chi-square of 16.61

also indicates a significant relationship between the students' origin and their media preference. This indicates that Southeast Asian students are more likely to favor print media ever oral communication.

Relationship of Cultural Background to
Students' Two-Way Communication Patterns

Another principal finding of this study points out the difference between the students from Southeast Asia and the students from the Middle East in terms of those characteristics that are related to students' two-way communication patterns.

Students responding to question #17 were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 7 for a number of personal characteristics related to communication patterns.

Table XIII shows the percent of the students' responses to each of the personal characteristics of interest.

TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF GROUPS ON SELF-RATING OF
PERSONAL COMMUNICATION CHARACTERISTICS

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Reserved						Talkative
Southeast	6.4	11.5	17.3	33.7	13.9	13.1	4.0
Middle East	2.2	3.4	18.2	34.1	16.0	12.5	13.6

TABLE IX (Continued)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Independent						Dependent
Southeast	32.2	31.6	13.7	11.6	4.8	2.3	13.6
Middle East	45.0	25.6	10.1	7.8	4.5	3.3	3.3
	Outgoing						Shy
Southeast	9.8	16.5	22.1	26.1	13.1	8.0	4.3
Middle East	19.1	19.1	24.7	11.2	14.6	6.7	2.2
	Listener						Talker
Southeast	17.0	16.7	20.5	34.3	9.0	2.1	.3
Middle East	13.6	19.3	13.6	36.3	5.6	2.2	9.0
	Follower						Leader
Southeast	3.3	4.2	12.7	40.3	17.5	16.0	5.7
Middle East	3.5	1.1	5.8	28.0	19.9	22.0	17.4
	Prefer to be alone			Prefer being in group			
Southeast	6.2	13.3	14.3	32.3	16.4	13.3	7.1
Middle East	4.5	4.5	7.9	25.1	19.8	20.4	17.3
	Talker						Reader
Southeast	1.8	7.8	6.3	6.6	22.4	21.8	13.3
Middle East	12.5	8.0	5.7	33.3	13.6	18.4	8.9
	Active						Passive
Southeast	9.7	23.7	25.0	26.5	8.5	4.5	1.8
Middle East	36.5	32.1	16.6	19.0	3.5	1.2	0.0
	Skillful						Awkward
Southeast	10.0	22.0	26.7	31.0	7.7	3.4	3.1
Middle East	14.6	39.0	19.5	22.0	1.2	1.2	2.4
	Cooperative						Competitive
Southeast	19.1	20.7	18.6	26.7	11.7	3.6	4.5
Middle East	13.3	22.2	21.1	21.1	10.0	4.4	3.3

Note: Numbers indicate percentage responding to each scale point

As demonstrated in Table XIII some of the questions
that deal directly with students' communication patterns
were designed so that the same question would be presented

in different ways in order to check the answer through cross reference.

For example, the item concerning a student's personal characteristic as being talkative (oral) was compared to three other variables such as being reserved, a listener, or a reader.

Of the total responses to the question regarding being reserved/talkative, on the highest level of the scale (#7), 13.6% of Middle Eastern students claimed to be talkative while only 4.0% of the Oriental students made such a claim. Again, in response to the question as to whether the respondent is a listener or a talker, on the highest level of the scale, 9.0% of the Middle Eastern students pictured themselves as talkers and 0.3% percent of the Oriental students pictured themselves in approximately the same way. The question of the respondent's being talkative was compared to his/her being a reader. In this comparison 12.5% percent of the Middle Eastern students pictured themselves as being talkative compared to Oriental students with only 1.8% claiming the same characteristic.

Table XIV presents data regarding the average response of students to each personal characteristic. This table shows the mean of responses on the scale from one to seven. Numbers below 3.5% represent students describing themselves as being more like those variables listed on the left, and numbers over 3.5% represent students characterizing themselves as being more similar to the characteristics

which appear on the right side.

TABLE XIV

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STUDENTS FROM THE
MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA IN
TERMS OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION
CHARACTERISTICS

General Characteristics	Southeast Asian Students		Middle East Students
	Average	Significant Difference	Average
Reserved/Talkative	3.924	Yes	4.500
Independent/Dependent	2.466	Yes	2.247
Outgoing/Shy	3.574	Yes	3.126
Listener/Talker	3.090	Yes	3.443
Follower/Leader	4.358	Yes	5.000
Prefer to be alone/in group	4.048	Yes	4.807
Talker/Reader	4.776	Yes	4.149
Active/Passive	3.213	Yes	2.429
Skillful/Awkward	3.265	Yes	2.695
Cooperative/Competitive	3.300	Yes	3.196

As shown in the table, there is a difference between
the groups with regard to personal communication character-
istics. Statistical calculations show significant
differences between students from the two regions in terms
of those characteristics that determine their communication
patterns. With a 95% level of confidence and DF=6, the
calculation indicates t-values ranging from 2.597 (for the
question regarding students' rating themselves as being

leaders or followers) to 4.347 (for the question related to the students' description of themselves as being more cooperative or competitive).

Students' personal communication characteristics were compared to the students' origin. Results of this comparison indicated that from the list of characteristics, there was a significant relationship between the variables except for the communication characteristics of "shy/outgoing" and "cooperative/competitive." Middle Eastern students are more likely to be outgoing and talkative than Southeast Asian students.

Students' Media-Use Patterns

Question #10 asked the respondent to identify the most reliable source of information about O.S.U. Responses of the students to this question were categorized in three forms of communication, oral, print, and broadcast. Table XV indicates the differences between the two groups of students in terms of preference for sources of information at O.S.U. that can be considered as "oral."

TABLE XV

DIFFERENCES IN STUDENTS' PREFERENCE FOR
SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT O.S.U.
(ORAL MEDIA GROUP)

	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
Source of Information Preference	Number of Respondents	Mean	Number of Respondents	Mean
Fellow students	322	2.078	79	2.076
Telephone	316	2.551	81	2.596
Dept. Advisers	315	2.540	82	2.402
Seminars	310	2.981	79	2.608
Office employee	312	2.798	81	2.685
Announcement in class	313	2.297	79	2.253
ISS	296	2.591	81	2.370

Means are based on a scale of 1 to 5. 1= Extremely useful
and 5= Extremely useless

As Table XV indicates, the overall response of
participants in the survey to this question was about
neutral. Students from both groups classified fellow
students as useful sources of information (2.078 and
2.076). One of the major disagreements between the two
groups is that Oriental students consider seminars as a
useless source of information (2.981), while Middle Eastern
students feel that office employees are a useless source of
information. There was a significant difference between
the two groups in these two categories. Despite the
apparent differences in the other categories, however,
there were no statistically significant differences between

the averages for the different groups.

Table XVI shows the differences among the students in terms of rating the broadcast media as a source of information about O.S.U.

TABLE XVI

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE STUDENTS'
PREFERENCES (BROADCAST MEDIA)

Source of Information Preference	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Respondents	Mean	Respondents	Mean
Local Radio	321	3.227	83	3.157
Local Television	319	2.969	83	3.108

Means are based on a scale of 1 to 5. 1= Extremely useful and 5= Extremely useless

As Table XVI indicates, for Middle Eastern students television (3.157) and radio (3.108) are relatively useless sources of news and information about O.S.U., while for Oriental students, there was a difference between television (2.969) and radio (3.227) in terms of being useless.

However, there was no significant difference between the groups in terms of rating radio and television as a source of news about O.S.U.

Table XVII shows the differences among the groups in terms of rating print media as a source of information about O.S.U.

TABLE XVII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE STUDENTS'
PREFERENCES (PRINT MEDIA)

News Source	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Respondents	Mean	Respondents	Mean
College Newspaper	329	1.851	84	2.036
Bulletin Board	323	2.529	83	2.470
Pamphlets	320	2.700	79	2.557

Means are based on a scale of 1 to 5. 1= Extremely useful and 5= Extremely useless

As depicted by Table XVII, there are some calculated differences between the two groups of students.

One of the major similarities is that Oriental and Middle Eastern students both favor the college newspaper as a useful source of news about O.S.U.

In the same question, students were asked to rank the top three most effective means of communication for reaching international students, from among media in all 3 categories.

This ranking produced clear differences between the two groups. For the Southeast Asian students, the college newspaper was considered as a first choice (23.9%), while for the Middle Eastern students, their choice for a source of information was fellow students (21.8%). In terms of second choices, both Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern students were in agreement about college newspapers (17.1% and 20.7%). As to the third choice, Southeast Asian students chose bulletin board (10.3%), and Middle Eastern students chose fellow students and the ISS office (11.5%).

Overall, there were significant differences between Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern students in terms of selecting the most effective means of communication about O.S.U.

Students' Awareness of University Facilities

The degree of familiarity of international students with the most common facilities and services at O.S.U. was measured by question #16. For this question, students were asked to identify those facilities and services that they were familiar with.

Table XVIII shows the differences between the Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern students in terms of awareness of university facilities and services.

TABLE XVIII

FAMILIARITY OF STUDENTS WITH THE
EXISTING UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

Item	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Number	%	Number	%
Computer Center	69	20.0	23	24.7
Study Room at Student Union	106	30.7	44	47.3
Writing Center	116	33.6	31	33.3
Computer Index	47	13.6	18	19.4
Dissertation Abstract Computer	51	14.8	20	21.5
Typing Center	148	42.9	47	50.0
Math Learning Center	88	25.5	33	35.5
Tutor Referral Service	68	19.7	25	26.9
Foreign Language Lab	50	14.5	23	24.7
Family Resource Center	85	24.6	29	31.2
Language class for Spouses	65	18.8	25	26.9
International Students Service	105	30.4	34	36.6
International Students Program	122	35.4	40	43.0
Students Health Center	106	30.7	19	20.4
Freshman Program Service	66	19.1	18	19.4
International Student Organization	107	31.9	25	26.9

An analysis of Table XVIII shows that students from the two regions do not have the same familiarity with facilities listed in the table, but they share the same low percentage of familiarity with services as their percent of awareness of services available at O.S.U. did not exceed 50%. Chi-squares ranging from 67.606 to 148.191 are evidence of a strong relationship between the students' awareness of university facilities and the region they are from. Thus, the region a student is from is related to his degree of awareness of campus facilities.

<u>Demographic and Social Characteristics</u>

Questions #18 to 29 were designed to evaluate the extent to which the demographic and social characteristics are inter-related and how this is related to communication patterns and awareness of university facilities. Table XIX presents the ages of the participants in the study.

TABLE XIX

STUDENTS CATEGORIZED BY AGE WITH
RESPECT TO THEIR REGION

Age Category	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Number	%	Number	%
20 Yrs. or Younger	31	9.0	9	9.7
21-24 years	98	28.4	24	25.8
25-30 years	141	40.9	34	36.6
31-40 years	64	18.6	24	25.8
41 and older	8	2.3	2	2.2
No Resp.	3	.9		
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

Table XIX shows that the largest age group of students from the total number of respondents from both regions was 25-30 years of age (Southeast Asia=40.9% and Middle East= 36.6%). Also, it appears that there are equal percentages of younger students from Southeast Asia (9.99%) and the

Middle East (9.7%). However, there were no significant
differences between the means for age of both groups.

As shown in the previous table, there was no
significant difference between the age groups of Middle
Eastern and Southeast Asian students.

Table XX examines the relationship between the age and
awareness of university facilities.

TABLE XX

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND AWARENESS
OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

Age Category	Aware		Not Aware		
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
20 Yrs. or Younger	20	10.0	20	8.4	40
21-24 Years	69	34.5	53	22.3	122
25-30 Years	72	36.0	103	43.3	175
30-40 Years	32	16.0	56	23.6	88
40 Years and Over	7	3.5	3	1.2	10
No response	0	0.0	3	1.2	3
Total	200	100.0	238	100.0	438

Chi-square=15.55 Significant Relationship

Table XX indicates that students who were 21-24 and 40
years and older are aware of university facilities more
than any other age group. With a chi-square of 15.555 and
95% level of confidence, there is a significant

relationship between the student's age and awareness of university facilities. Thus, students on the extremes of the age categories tend to be more aware of the university facilities than middle-age students (age group of 25 to 40).

Students' Marital Status

Question #20 asked students whether they were married or single. Table XXI shows the differences between the two groups in this category.

TABLE XXI

DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO MARITAL STATUS

Category	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Number	%	Number	%
Married	122	35.3	36	38.7
Single	221	64.1	57	61.3
No Response	2	.6	–	–
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

As depicted in the table, from the total of students in each group, there are more married Middle Eastern students than Southeast Asian students. However, there was no significant difference between the marital status

category of the two groups.

Students' awareness of facilities also was compared to their marital status. Table XXII shows the relationship between the two groups of students with respect to their awareness of university facilities.

TABLE XXII

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' MARITAL
STATUS AND AWARENESS OF FACILITIES

| Category | Aware | | Not Aware | | | |
	Number	%	Number	%	Total	%
Married	69	43.6	89	56.3	158	100%
Single	131	47.2	147	52.7	278	100%
Total	200	100.0%	278	100.0%	436	

As indicated in Table XXII, married students appear to be more aware of the university's facilities than single students. However, with a chi-square of 2.172, there was no significant relationship between students, marital status and their awareness of university facilities.

Students' Gender

Question #19 tabulates students' gender. Table XXIII indicates the differences among these two categories with respect to gender.

TABLE XXIII

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS WITH
RESPECT TO GENDER

Gender	Southeast Asia Number	%	Middle East Number	%
Male	251	72.8	80	86.0
Female	93	27.0	13	14.0
No Response	1	.3	--	----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

Seventy-two percent of the Southeast Asian students
and 86% of the Middle Eastern students were male. The
number of female students from the Middle East compared to
male students appears to be much less than the female-to-
male ratio for students from Southeast Asia.

However, there is no significant difference between
the two regions with respect to gender.

Chi-square of 0.855 indicates that there is not a
significant relationship between the students' gender and
awareness of university facilities.

Students' Residential Life-Style

Data regarding students' residential life-style
(housing) is presented in Table XXIV.

TABLE XXIV

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF
STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO
THEIR HOUSING

Housing	Southeast Asia Number	%	Middle East Number	%
Room in Private Home	11	3.0	2	2.2
Residence Hall	42	12.2	15	16.1
Married Student Housing	123	35.7	51	54.8
Apartment in Town	140	40.6	14	15.1
House in Town	26	7.5	10	10.8
Fraternity House	00	0.0	00	0.0
Others	3	.9	1	1.1
No Response	1	.3	0	0.0
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

The analysis of data shows that there was a similarity between the Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian students in terms of place of residence while at O.S.U. The majority of the respondents live in apartments, followed by married students housing. A few live in private houses and none live in fraternity of sorority houses. One of the major differences between the two groups is that a larger portion of Southeast Asian students live in apartments in town (40.6%) while married student housing was the most preferred place to live for Middle Eastern students (54.8%0).

Table XXV shows the relationship between the students'
residential life-style and students' awareness of
university facilities and services.

TABLE XXV

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDENTS'
PATTERN OF HOUSING AND AWARENESS
OF UNIVERSITY'S FACILITIES

	Aware		Not Aware			
	Number	%	Number	%	Total	%
Room in Private House	3	25.00	9	75.00	12	100%
Residential Hall	15	26.32	42	73.68	57	100%
University Housing	79	45.09	95	54.91	174	100%
Apartment in Town	78	49.68	78	50.32	155	100%
House in Town	25	66.66	12	33.33	36	100%

Chi-square = 20.323 Prob.= 0.002 Significant relationship

The results of the research concerning students'
housing and the relationship with degree of awareness
shows that those students who live independently are not as
aware as those who live in group housing, apartments or
with family. The table shows that living in university
housing has a major impact on students' degree of
awareness. There is a significant relationship between the
students' housing pattern and their awareness of university

facilities. Thus, students living in married student
housing or in apartments and houses in town are generally
more aware of university facilities.

Since the way of perceiving information depends upon
one's environment, question #22 was designed to find out if
there are differences among students in terms of living
company (alone, roommate, or family). Data regarding this
question is provided in Table XXVI.

TABLE XXVI

DIFFERENCES AMONG STUDENTS WITH RESPECT
TO THEIR LIVING COMPANY WHILE
ATTENDING O.S.U.

Category	S.E. Asia Count	%	Middle East Count	%
Alone	37	10.7	21	24.1
With Roommate from Homeland	130	37.7	17	19.5
With Roommate not from Homeland	75	21.7	17	19.5
With Family	99	28.7	32	36.8
No Response	4	1.2	--	----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

As the table indicates, there are some differences
between the groups in terms of students' living
arrangements. While 37.6% of the Southeast Asian students
prefer to live with a roommate from their home country,

only 19.5% of the Middle Eastern students have the same
type of living arrangement. One other differences is the
percent of the students who live with their family
(Southeast Asian=29.1% and Middle Eastern=36.8%).

Awareness of university services is compared to
students' arrangement in Table XXVII.

TABLE XXVII

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
AND AWARENESS OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

	Aware		Not Aware		
	Number	%	Number	%	Total %
Alone	22	37.30	37	62.70	100%
Roommate from home	77	51.70	72	48.30	100%
Roommate not from home	44	46.80	48	52.20	100%
Live with family	57	42.50	77	42.50	100%
No Response	--	-----	4	5.30	100%
Total	200		238		

Chi-square = 7.903   Significant relationship

As it shows in the table, those students who live
alone are less aware of O.S.U. facilities than those who
live with a roommate. Roommates from their home-country
may have more impact on a student's awareness of university
facilities than a roommate who is not from their homeland.

Question #23 concerned students' length of stay in the

United States. Responses to this question were used to compare students from the Middle East to students from Southeast Asia with respect to this characteristic. The result of this comparison is shown in Table XXVIII.

TABLE XXVIII

DIFFERENCES AMONG GROUPS WITH RESPECT
TO THEIR LENGTH OF STAY IN THE U.S.A.

Category	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Number	%	Number	%
Less than 1 yr.	101	29.3	22	23.7
1-3 yrs.	140	40.6	27	29.0
3-5 yrs.	81	23.5	29	31.2
More than 5 yrs.	21	6.1	15	16.1
No Response	2	0.5	--	----
Total		100.0%		100.0%

A comparison of these two groups indicates that from the total number of Middle Eastern students who participated in the survey, 23.7% of them have lived in the U.S.A. for less than one year. This number increases slightly for students in the second and third categories. On the other hand, compared to Middle Eastern students, a larger proportion of students from Southeast Asia have lived in the U.S.A. for less than one year (29.3%). For Middle Eastern students the percent of new students versus

older was directly opposite of the percentages for Southeast Asian students.

The degree of awareness of university facilities was compared to students' length of stay in the U.S.A. Table XXIX shows this comparison.

TABLE XXIX

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' LENGTH
OF STAY IN THE U.S.A AND THEIR
AWARENESS OF FACILITIES

	Aware		Not Aware			
	Number	%	Number	%	Total	%
Less than 1 yr.	29	14.50	66	27.73	95	100%
1-3 yrs.	58	29.00	72	30.35	130	100%
3-5 yrs.	71	35.50	78	32.77	149	100%
5 yrs. and over	42	21.00	22	9.25	64	100%

Chi-square = 23.738   Prob. = 0.000
Significant relationship

The degree of awareness of university facilities is directly proportional to students' years of stay in the U.S.A. (see Table XXV). Apparently, the students who have stayed for 5 years or more are better informed than the others. Students who have been in the U.S.A. 3-5 years have the largest percent of awareness of university facilities.

Chi-square of 23.738 is evidence of a significant relationship between the students' length of stay in the U.S.A. and awareness of university's facilities.

Question #24 dealt with information regarding international students length of stay at O.S.U. Responses of the students to this question are presented in Table XXX.

TABLE XXX

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS WITH RESPECT
TO THEIR LENGTH OF STAY AT O.S.U

Category	Southeast Asia		Middle East	
	Number	%	Number	%
Less than 1 yr.	83	24.1	12	12.9
1-3 yrs.	115	33.3	14	15.1
3-5 yrs.	114	33.0	36	38.7
More than 5 yrs.	30	8.7	31	33.3
No response	3	.9	--	----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

Table XXX shows that there are more students who have been st O.S.U. less than 1 year from Southeast Asia (24.1%) than from the Middle East (13.8). Also, among the Middle Eastern students, 33.3% of the respondents have been at O.S.U. for more than 5 years, while from the total of Southeast Asian students, only 8.7% have been at O.S.U.

more than 5 years.

Table XXXI presents a comparison of students' degree of awareness with length of stay at O.S.U.

TABLE XXXI

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' LENGTH
OF STAY AT O.S.U. AND THEIR
AWARENESS OF FACILITIES

| | Aware | | Not Aware | | | |
	Number	%	Number	%	Total	%
Less than 1 yr.	42	21.00	82	34.45	124	100%
1-3 yrs.	70	35.00	96	40.34	166	100%
3-5 yrs.	62	31.00	48	20.26	110	100%
5 yrs. and over	26	13.00	12	5.05	36	100%

Chi-square = 24.158   Significant relationship

The degree of awareness of university facilities is significantly related to the length of stay at O.S.U., with the chi-square of 24.158. Students with less than 1 year, and over 5 years are aware of university facilities less than any other age group.

Table XXXII reports the differences among students from the two region with respect to students' academic classification.

TABLE XXXII

DIFFERENCES AMONG GROUPS WITH RESPECT
TO THEIR ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATION

Category	Southeast Asia Number	%	Middle East Number	%
Freshman	27	7.8	5	5.4
Sophmore	19	5.5	4	4.3
Junior	36	10.4	10	10.8
Senior	82	23.8	14	15.1
Graduate Student	176	51.0	60	64.5
Special Students	3	.9	--	----
No Response	2	.6	--	----
Total	345	100.0%	93	100.0%

The table shows there was a greater percentage of
graduate students among Middle Easterners (64.5%) than
among Southeast Asian students. But in terms of freshmen
and sophomores, a greater percentage was from Southeast
Asia (freshmen and sophmore combined=13.3%).

Table XXIII compares students' awareness of
university's facilities with their academic classification.

TABLE XXXIII

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' ACADEMIC
CLASSIFICATION AND THEIR AWARENESS OF
UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

Category	Southeast Asia Number	%	Middle East Number	%	Total	%
Freshman	11	34.4	21	65.6	32	100%
Sophmore	13	56.7	10	43.7	23	100%
Junior	26	56.5	20	43.5	46	100%
Senior	54	56.3	42	43.7	96	100%
Graduate Student	95	40.0	141	60.0	236	100%
Special Students	1	3.4	2	6.6	3	100%
Total	200	45.8%	236	54.2%	436	100%

Chi-square = 13.906   Significant relationship

Table XXIII indicates that freshmen students are less likely to be aware of university facilities than any other group (34.4%). The table shows that the degree of awareness of university facilities increases as academic level increases.

With a chi-square of 13.906, there was a significant relationship at the 95% level of confidence between students classification and awareness of the university. The higher the academic classification, the greater the awareness.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

An increase in the number of international students in various American institutions of higher education has demanded more study of the adjustment problems faced by these students. Many of the adjustment problems of International students are the result of their unique cultural backgrounds which form their communication patterns and the way they understand news and information. Consequently, international students, because of their differences in communication patterns, experience different levels of social awareness in a new cultural environment.

Various human interactions are interpreted differently by people of different cultures. As a result, this study was undertaken to examine the relationship between international students' socio-cultural characteristics and their communication patterns. Two groups of students participated in this study--Middle Eastern students and Southeast Asian students. The result of this will help predict the communication patterns of each group with respect to its background and parameters as described.

This study is based on the Constructivist Theory of

Intercultural communication, which is built on the belief that culture affects all aspects of human communication patterns. Therefore, identifying and describing cultural differences between the two cultural groups significantly contributes to a better understanding of communication with and between the two groups.

When culture is considered an influential factor in behavior and communication patterns, cultural awareness is seen as affecting perception and influencing values, attitudes and behavior.

In much research work done in this field, a common finding was that the first reaction of international students in this country was "culture shock." The differences between the cultural characteristics of one's home country and of America determine how quickly foreign students adjust to the American way of life. The conflicting characteristics of various cultures are due to differences in language, ethnic background, religious values, history, and social background.

Further, the intent of this study was to investigate the possible relationship between international students' awareness of university facilities and the communication patterns of these students as a result of their cultural backgrounds.

It was thought that differences existed between international students in their media usage patterns. As a result, they would receive and interpret news and

information differently regarding university facilities.

Having resided in the Middle East for a number of years, the researcher is quite familiar with the behavior of Middle Eastern students. Such familiarity prompted the researcher to choose this group for his study. The other group chosen included Southeast Asian students. This group, because it constitutes a sizeable proportion of the total international student population attending the university, is useful for comparison purposes.

The survey method was used to collect the necessary data for this study. A six-page questionnaire was mailed to 715 international students and 438 responses were obtained. The computer software package used for analyzing data was Systat Version 4.0. T-tests and chi-square analyses were applied to test differences and relationships between the dependent and independent variables. Five hypotheses were tested.

The first hypothesis dealt with students' socio-cultural background and students' communication patterns. Statistical analysis of data indicated there was a significant relationship between students' cultural background (i.e., students' region of origin, religious preference, language, and ethnic background) and their one-way communication patterns (most preferred way of receiving news). Middle Eastern students (Arab, Turks, and Persians) reacted positively toward oral forms of communication as a most preferred way of receiving news and information. In

contrast, Southeast Asian (culturally known as Oriental) students preferred receiving news in written form.

There was a significant relationship between students' cultural background and students' personal characteristics that affected their two-way communication patterns. Students from Southeast Asia (Oriental) tend to be reserved, readers, and listeners. On the other hand, students from the Middle East tend to be more talkative and outgoing.

The relationship between students' cultural background and their physical communication patterns (social interaction and group study with other students) was significant. Also, there was a significant difference between students from Southeast Asia and Middle East in terms of physical communication. Middle Eastern students tend to associate less with other international students from their home or other countries. In this case, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The second hypothesis dealt with students' socio-cultural backgrounds and their use of media. Findings revealed a significant relationship between students' language and religion and their media patterns. However, ethnicity was not related to students' media patterns. Arab-, Turkish-, and Persian-speaking students with muslim faith tend to prefer media that present news and information in an oral form. In this case, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant relationship

between students' sociocultural background and media use
was partially supported.

Considering the third hypothesis, there was a
significant relationship between students' length of stay
at O.S.U. and awareness of university facilities. The
longer students remain at O.S.U., the more they become
aware of university facilities.

The fourth hypothesis considered the relationship
between students' cultural background and their awareness
of university facilities. Statistical analysis revealed
that, from the list of sixteen common university facilities
listed in the questionnaire, there was a significant
relationship for half of those facilities. The null
hypothesis, in this case, was not completely supported.
Thus, facilities like the International Student
Organization and Math Learning Resource Center are related
to students' cultural background. Other resources, such as
the Typing Center and Computer Center, are not related to
students' cultural background. Finally, there was not a
relationship between the students' response rate and the
color of paper on which their questionnaire cover letter
was printed.

Summary of Major Findings

The important findings of this research are:

(1) There were genuine differences between students
from the two regions in terms of their awareness of the

university facilities. Some of the services, such as the International Students' Organization and University Married Student Housing, are known to a greater extent by Southeast Asian students. On the other hand, resources like International Student Services, International Student Programs and the Family Resource Center are more widely known by Middle Eastern students.

(2) At Oklahoma State University, the main sources of information were different for students from Southeast Asia and the Middle East, with Middle Eastern students preferring oral sources of information (such as fellow students and international student services). For Southeast Asian students, an information source such as the college newspaper plays a major role in informing students.

(3) There was a real difference between the groups with respect to their length of stay in the United States and at Oklahoma State University, and their awareness of university facilities. Students who have resided in the U.S.A for a longer period of time are more aware of university facilities than those students who came to the United States more recently. The same relationship exists for student awareness of university facilities and length of stay at O.S.U.

(4) There was a significant difference between students from the two regions in terms of physical communication, one-way communication and two-way communication. Students from Southeast Asia were more

active in terms of association with international students from their native country or other countries.

(5) There was no significant relationship between the students' response and the color and the questionnaires' cover letter. There was, however, some noticeable differences within the countries in terms of response to color of cover letters in the first mail-out.

(6) Generally, Southeast Asian students were more satisfied with the information received from Oklahoma State University than were Middle Eastern students.

(7) Oriental students interact with people from their home country and other international students more than Middle Eastern students do. But both groups interact socially with American students less than they do with international students and students from their homeland.

(8) The above finding is supported by the students' study pattern. Middle Eastern students tend to study with students from home or with other international students much less than Southeast Asians do. However, both groups study less with Americans than with international students.

(9) Middle Eastern students communicate orally more than Southeast Asians do. The study revealed that Middle Eastern students prefer face-to-face communication more than any other form of communication. Also, Southeast Asians prefer receiving information in written form.

(10) Middle Eastern students are more talkative than Southeast Asian students. Southeast Asian students

preferred reading and listening more than talking.

(11) Middle Eastern students were more in favor of electronic media as a source of receiving news and information than Southeast Asian students were.

(12) Age, housing patterns, and living companions of a student was related to that student's awareness of university facilities. A student's cultural background was related to the location where, and person with whom, the student chose to live.

(13) Students from the Middle East expressed more satisfaction with the ISS (International Student Services) in terms of receiving information than did students from Southeast Asia.

(14) In terms of students' responses to the statement that "each department should have a program for informing international students," Southeast Asian students were more in favor of this idea than were Middle Eastern students.

Recommendations

General

When a new student comes to the United States, he brings with him all the social and cultural values of his homeland. These values form the cultural identity of the student. In most cases, the majority of these cultural values remain with the student as long as he/she remains in this country. But while in this country, the student must

learn the norms and values of the new environment and must adapt to the new situation. To prevent a conflict between the old and new, or past and present values, the student should try to find ways to compromise. Of course, it is important that international students maintain most of their own cultural values so they can maintain their personal and national identities, but they should be able to substitute some of their attitudes without creating anxiety and loneliness.

As a result of this study the following recommendations are made to assist the university in adjusting its policies and methods of communication to international students. These suggestions and recommendations are based on the research findings. Some representative student responses and statements are given below:

Recommendations for More Effective Communication with International Students

Communication with international students is not an easy task and can, in some cases, be very complicated. It is necessary to recognize that the first step towards successful communication is to connect the sender of the message to the receiver of the message. The sender should have some understanding of the receiver's social and cultural characteristics. Just as students from different

nations have different languages, they also have a
different sense of logic and values. For this reason, it
is important for the ISS or other organizations which are
in direct contact with international students, to have
trained employees who have some basic knowledge about
international students' cultural characteristics
(languages, religions, and ethnic backgrounds). Another
important issue is that employees may be required to attend
seminars and classes to strengthen their capabilities in
this regard. To motivate these employees to attend such
seminars, it would be helpful to provide the employees with
college credit hours for attendance at these seminars/
workshops.

To familiarize the American students with inter-
national students and boost their interest in getting
involved with international students, the university might
offer a one-hour seminar in cultural awareness. Students
may not be required to attend the class but instead
students may be assigned to study international students on
the campus and make a report of their findings.

Analyzing questions regarding students' physical
communication patterns reveals that students from each
culture tend to communicate with people of that culture
more than anybody else. Also, in each cultural group there
is a possibility of a social network which defuses
necessary news and information essential to that group.
Identifying these cultural groups of international students

can contribute to easing the communication barriers with students in that group.

Another available tool that can contribute to effective communication with international students is locating their leaders. Some of them are official such as Saudi Arabian student president, and some are unofficial and are more spiritual leaders. Periodic meetings of these leaders with representatives from the ISS can play a major role in understanding these cultures and communicating with members of that culture.

Another suggestion is to have O.S.U publish a weekly or monthly newsletter that targets only international students. Involvement of international students in providing articles and publishing the newsletter can make this even more effective.

To communicate with international students, O.S.U. may have to adopt the methods and strategies used by radio and television advertising agencies. First, it has to be determined how important the news is that is being sent. Second, it is necessary to define the group(s) who needs to receive the news (audience). Then it is necessary to categorize the audience (students) into clusters based on country of origin, age, class, etc. Other considerations, such as time (how soon should they receive the news), the importance of the news, and the manpower necessary for distribution of the news, play an important part in the clustering of these groups. For example, the more money

and manpower available and the smaller the group, the better the chance of homogeneity, and vice versa. In terms of orientation for new students at O.S.U., the university should avoid grouping undergraduate and graduate students in the same category, because their areas of interest are often very different. Information for undergraduate students may not be sufficient for graduate students.

To summarize, O.S.U. should recognize its target audience and then develop a plan that works for that group and avoid generalization.

International students, because of their language barriers, spend more time than average students on their homework and preparation for tests. As a result, they face a greater problem with lack of time. For this reason, O.S.U. needs to adopt a method of communication that is less time-consuming, such as mailings to the students' houses (same as the Minority Student Office program).

The following recommendations are made based on the researcher's and students' suggestions.

1. Provide international students with a noticeable and specific area in the newspaper so they can express their opinions, receive news and information, and share cultural and social information with other students (i.e., sometimes sharing a recipe). Some of the students suggested that O.S.U. publish a weekly or monthly newsletter for international students.

2. Organize more activities for social contact

between international and American students.

3.   Inform American students, faculty, and staff about the cultural differences among international students so that formal and informal contact will be more comfortable for everyone.

4.   Provide the ISS with a male receptionist. This can ease the communication between the new students and International Students Services.

5.   Provide the ISS with an adviser who was originally an international student.

Students' Suggestions Regarding Preferred Method of Receiving News

These responses were collected by students answering an open-ended question. Also, because more students from Southeast Asia responded to the survey, most of these suggestions are provided by Southeast Asian students.

These suggestions are for preferred media for receiving information and are listed according to frequency response of the students, from most frequent to least frequent.

1.   Mailing weekly or monthly newsletters to students' place of residence.

2.   Reading announcements posted in the various departments.

3.   Receiving information by telephone.

<u>Recommendations for Further Research</u>

1. The study dealt with several factors that affect international students' patterns of communication. However, other variables need to be studied. There was evidence that some of the students' characteristics such as age, class, region of origin, and marital status, are associated with their awareness of university facilities. Therefore, it is suggested that those variables be studied in greater depth.

2. The same study may be conducted by collecting data through one-on-one interviews, thus preventing possible misunderstanding of questions by the respondents, and allowing for the gathering of information in greater depth.

3. The same study could be conducted among the international students attending O.S.U. in the fall semester of 1990. This study could then compare the new students (the majority of international students begin attending American colleges and universities in the fall semester) with those students who have been at O.S.U. for a longer period of time. An examination of change over the period of a student's stay in the United States would also be worthwhile.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of this researcher that foreign students at Oklahoma State University, because of their

cultural differences, have different communication patterns. The literature and statistical analysis of data collected from the survey in many parts contributed to the argument that such a relationship exists. Judging from the information collected from students responding to the survey, international students are not satisfied, overall, with O.S.U.'s method of communication with students. It was the intention of this researcher that this study contribute to a better understanding of international students at Oklahoma State University, which is an essential part of building a cultural bridge for a better global communication.

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APPENDIX A

FIRST MAIL-OUT COVER LETTER

School of Journalism and Broadcasting
Paul Miller 206
Stillwater, Oklahoma   74078-0212
February 8, 1990

Address:

Dear Fellow International Student:

I need your help! I am conducting a study of international students at Oklahoma State University to find out how relevant socio-cultural characteristics are to knowledge of the university's facilities and services.

There are many facilities and services here to help meet student's academic meeds. The international student offices use several methods of communication to inform the international students of available facilities and services, but not all students are equally aware of these services. The results of this study will be provided to O.S.U., so they can improve communication with international students.

You have been selected as a member of the international student body to participate in this survey. This survey requires only ten minutes of your time. Please complete and return it by Feb 25, 1990.

Your answers to all items will be kept in <u>strict confidence</u> and will be used for this research <u>only</u>. The code number on the upper right-hand corner of the questionnaire has been randomly assigned for the purpose of identifying non-respondents and will be removed upon receipt of questionnaire. Please <u>do not sign your name on the questionnaire.</u> A postage paid, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

If you have any questions, please call at **372-3715** or **744-6354.** We appreciate your time and cooperation and look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire by Feb 25, 1990.

Sincerely,

M. Bigdely

APPENDIX B

SECOND MAIL-OUT COVER LETTER

School of Journalism and Broadcasting
Paul Miller 206
Stilwater, Oklahoma 74078-0212
March 19, 1990

Dear Fellow International Student:

    In the middle of February I sent you a questionnaire but haven't heard from you. Perhaps the questionnaire was lost in the mail. Enclosed is another copy.

    Your prompt completion and return of this questionnaire is essential to a valid statistical analysis of the results. I need your help to make to make this important study better.

    There are many facilities and services in this university to help meet student's academic needs. Unfortunately not all international students are equally aware of these services. The result of this study will help O.S.U. find a better way of informing international students about these facilities.

    Your answers to all items will be kept in <u>strict confidence.</u> The code number on the upper right-hand corner of the questionnaire is only for the purpose of identifying non respondents.

    If you have any questions, please call at 372-3715 or 744-6354. Your cooperation in completing the questionnaire and returning within seven days in the enclosed postage paid envelop is very important to the success of this research.

                        Sincerely,

                        Mahmood Bigdely
                        Graduate Student

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTION: Please check the most appropriate answer for each
question or fill in the blanks and return by <u>Feb 25, 1990.</u> to:
M.BIGDELY
School of Journalism and Broadcasting
Paul Miller 206
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078-0212

If you have any questions, please call Bigdely at 372-3715 (home)
or at 744-6354 (work).

Please check the appropriate answer.
1.   How often do you read the O'Collegian?
      _____Always
      _____Often
      _____Sometimes
      _____Seldom
      _____Never

2.   How often do you go to the international student office to
      get information?
      _____As a regular procedure
      _____On occasion
      _____Never

3.   How often do you meet informally with other students from
      your own country (i.e., at the Student Union, at your
      apartment, etc.)?
      _____As a regular procedure
      _____On occasion
      _____Never

4.   How often do you meet informally with other students from
      other countries (i.e., at the Student Union, at your
      apartment, etc.)?
      _____As a regular procedure
      _____On occasion
      _____Never

5.   How often do you meet informally with American friends
      (i.e., at the Student Union, at your apartment, etc.)?
      _____As a regular procedure
      _____On occasion
      _____Never

6.   How often do you study with international students not from
      your country?
      _____3 to 5 times a week
      _____Once or twice a week
      _____Once or twice a month
      _____Several times a semester
      _____Never

7. How often do you study with other students from your own
   country?
   ____3 to 5 times a week
   ____Once or twice a week
   ____Once or twice a month
   ____Several times a semester
   ____Never

8. How often do you study with American students?
   ____3 to 5 times a week
   ____Once or twice a week
   ____Once or twice a month
   ____Several times a semester
   ____Never

9. How often do you study at the library?
   ____3 to 5 times a week
   ____Once or twice a week
   ____Once or twice a month
   ____Several times a semester
   ____Never

10. **EFFECTIVENESS OF INFORMATION SOURCES**

    INSTRUCTION: In the right-hand blanks, please rate the
    following as sources of information about O.S.U.,
    using a scale of "Extremely Useful" to "Extremely Useless."
    Then please rank the top three most effective means of
    communication for reaching international students in the space
    provided on the left-hand side, using a scale of 1, 2, or 3.
    1 = most effective and 3 = least effective.

	Extremely useful	Useful	Neutral	Useless	Extremely useless
____Fellow Students.................	____	____	____	____	____
____College Newspaper................	____	____	____	____	____
____Bulletin Board...................	____	____	____	____	____
____Local Radio......................	____	____	____	____	____
____Local Television.................	____	____	____	____	____
____Telephone.......................	____	____	____	____	____
____Pamphlets.......................	____	____	____	____	____
____Academic Department Advisers	____	____	____	____	____
____Department's Office Employees....	____	____	____	____	____
____Seminars.......................	____	____	____	____	____
____Announcements in class..........	____	____	____	____	____
____Through International Student offices...............	____	____	____	____	____
____Other: Please Specify_____..	____	____	____	____	____

11. INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate your degree of agreement with each of the following statements by placing a check mark(✓) in the appropriate box.

The international student office satisfies the information needs of international students at O.S.U.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Each department should have a program for informing international students.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Generally, the amount of information I receive about the university facilities and services satisfies my needs

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. YOUR PREFERRED SOURCES OF INFORMATION
INSTRUCTIONS: Please rank the top three sources from which you prefer to receive most of your news and information about O.S.U., particularly that information which can be helpful to your educational goals. Use a scale of 1, 2, or 3. 1 = most preferred and 3 = least preferred.

_____ Through face-to-face meetings, such as seminars, public speeches, or conversation with friend(s), faculty and staff at O.S.U. or people in town.

_____ Through any form of print media, such as newspapers, magazines and pamphlets.

_____ Through any form of broadcast media, such as radio or television or even cassette players.

_____ By mail to my home.

_____ By telephone.

15. How do you feel about yourself on any of the following statements. Please check (✓) only that which applies to you.

      ____ I understand information better by reading.
      ____ I understand information better by discussing it with someone.
      ____ I understand information better by listening to someone talk.

16. How familiar are you with the following university facilities and services?
Please place a(✓) in the appropriate blank.

	Not familiar	Familiar, don't use	Use it
Computer Center.....................	____	____	____
Study-room at Student Union........	____	____	____
Writing Center	____	____	____
Computer Indexes...................	____	____	____
Dissertation Abstract Computer.....	____	____	____
Typing Center at Student Union....	____	____	____
Math Learning Resource Center.....	____	____	____
Tutor Referral Service.............	____	____	____
Foreign Language Lab..............	____	____	____
Family Resource Center............	____	____	____
Language Classes for Students' Dependents..........	____	____	____
International Students Service.....	____	____	____
International Students Program.....	____	____	____
Student Health Center.............	____	____	____
Freshman Programs and Services.....	____	____	____
International Students Organization located at 207 Student Union..	____	____	____

17. The following characteristics have been used by many people to describe themselves in general. Each characteristic is represented graphically on a scale. Please check the location on the scale where you picture yourself.

Reserved.........	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Talkative
Independent......	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Dependent
Outgoing.........	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Shy
A Listener.......	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ A talker
Follower.........	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ leader
Prefer to be alone	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Prefer to be in group
A Talker.........	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ A reader
Active...........	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Passive
Skillful with others......	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Awkward with others
Cooperative......	__	__	__	__	__	__	__ Competitive

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

The following information is for statistical purposes only. We do not want your name, but we do need this information to help us analyze the survey. Please check the appropriate responses.

18. Your age is
_____20 years or younger.
_____21 - 24 years.
_____25 - 30 years.
_____31 - 40 years.
_____41 years or more.

19. Your sex is
_____Male.
_____Female.

20. Are you____Married ____Single?

Please Check the Appropriate Answer:

21. Where do you live at present?
_____Room in a private home
_____Residence hall
_____Married Student Housing
_____Apartment in town
_____House in town
_____Fraternity/sorority
_____Others, please specify_____

22. Who do you live with?
_____Alone
_____With roommate(s) from your homeland
_____With roommate(s) not from your homeland
_____With family

23. How long have you lived in the United States?
_____Less than 1 year   _____1 year, but less than 3
_____3 years , but less   _____5 years or more
than 5

24. How long have you been at O.S.U.?
_____Less than 1 year   _____1 year, but less than 3
_____3 years , but less   _____5 years or more
than 5

25. What is your classification?
_____Freshman   _____Sophomore
_____Junior   _____Senior
_____Graduate Student   _____Special Student

26. You consider yourself to be
    ____Middle Eastern   ____European
    ____Latin American   ____Far East Asian (Oriental)
    ____African   ____South Asian
    ____Others. Please specify
    _____

27.' Your religious faith is
    ____Bahaism.   ____Islam.
    ____Buddhism.   ____Shintoism.
    ____Confucianism.   ____Taoism.
    ____Christianity.   ____Hinduism.
    ____Judaism.
    ____Other. Please specify_____

Please Fill in the Blank With an Appropriate Answer.

28. Your native language is _____.

29. Your ethnic background is _____.
    For example: Arab, Hun, Miao, Tibetan, Malaya, Kaolin,
    Indian, Turkish, Armenian, Persian, Kadazan.

    OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE
30. What suggestions do you have for improving the method of
    communication between O.S.U. and international students?

Thank you for answering the questions and mailing them to me.

Thank You:

M. Bigdely

VITA

Mahmood Bigdely

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION PATTERNS OF
           MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS AT
           OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY AND THEIR DIFFERENCES
           IN AWARENESS OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES AND
           SERVICES

Major Field: Mass Communications

Biographical:

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         11, 1948, the son of Aziz and Gohar Bigdely.
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    Education: Graduated from Saadie High School, Ahwaz,
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         Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma, in
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         1990