KOREAN STUDENT'S ONLINE LEARNING PREFERENCES AND ISSUES: CULTURAL SENSITIVITY FOR WESTERN COURSE DESIGNERS

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Korean Student's Online Learning Preferences and Issues: Cultural Sensitivity for Western Course Designers

Introduction

Online courses offer educational solutions to students that previously would not have been able to attend college due to responsibilities, disabilities, distances, economics, and family commitments (Cantoni, Cellario, & Porta, 2004; Horton, 2000; Kelly & Bauer, 2004). Horton (2000) promoted online learning by saying, "As learning shifts from memorizing knowledge to gaining the ability to solve problems and identify valuable sources of knowledge, such resources can solve educational obstacles with online libraries, Internet or personal jump pages as an essential part of learning" (p.24).

However, online courses are not academically suited for everyone; for some the technique offers complications. For example, international students find many distractions in online courses constructed with U. S. philosophy, epistemology, values, and cultural conventions as compared to experiences in their home country or culture (Jon, 2009; Morris, 2009). U. S. instructional designers may not be aware of the complications experienced from culturally-based design problems, and may lack the knowledge to correct these complications (Rogers, Graham, & Mayes, 2007).

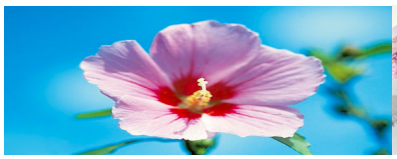
Learners' native cultural conventions, value system, learning preferences, and philosophies need to be considered when designing online courses for maximum effectiveness. Course designers should consider how culture influences students' learning.

The learning problems reported in the literature on online learning when culture is ignored in instructional design provided the impetus for this study.

Korea and Its Culture

The electronic Korean magazine, *Korea.net Gateway to Korea* (2012) provided the following descriptive facts about Korea:

> The Republic Of Korea is a small country on the far eastern edge of Asia. Although it ranks 109th in the world in terms of land area, the country is a center of economic activity, culture, and arts. Korea was colonized by Japan in the early 20th century and later had to endure the Korean War (1950-53), but it has achieved amazing economic growth in a short period, dubbed "the Miracle on the Han River."
>
> Today, Korea is an industrial nation standing tall on the world stage. Its semiconductor, automobile, shipbuilding, steel making, and IT industries are on the leading edge in global markets. It hosted the 1988 Seoul Olympics and the 2002 Korea-Japan FIFA World Cup. More recently, Korean dramas, movies, and music are attracting many audiences in Asian countries and beyond, creating what is being called the "Korean Wave." Korea's new standing in the international community was highlighted in 2010 with the nation becoming the first Asian country to chair the G20 and host the G20 Seoul Summit.
>
> The official country name is the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The capital city is Seoul and has 10.4 million citizens in 2010.
>
> 
>
> The national flag is named Taegeukgi. Its design symbolizes the principles of the yin and yang in Asian philosophy. The circle in the center of the flag is divided into two equal parts. The upper red section represents the proactive cosmic forces of the yang. Conversely, the lower blue section represents the responsive cosmic forces of the yin. The two forces embody the concepts of continual movement, balance, and harmony that characterize the sphere of infinity. The circle is surrounded by four trigrams, one in each corner. Each trigram symbolizes one of the four universal elements: heaven, earth, fire, and water.

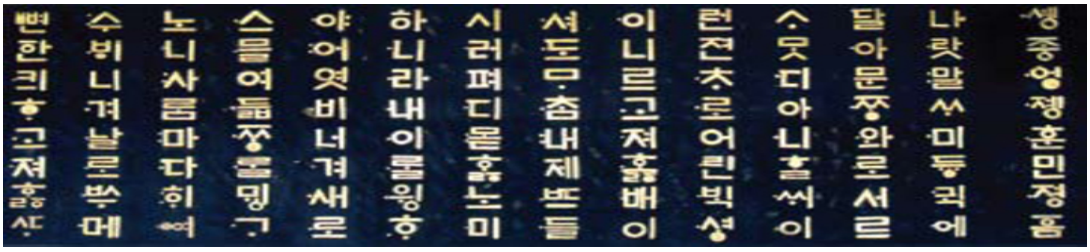


The national flower is Mugunghwa or Rose of Sharon. The currency is called won and is valued at 1,1563 as compared to a single U. S. Dollar as of 2010 (US$1 = 1,156.3 won).

South Korea's language is Hangeul. Their population as of 2010 was 48.87 million citizens with 1.2 million foreign residents. Their median age is 38 years old with a life expectancy of 77 years for males, and 83.8 years for females as of 2009. The three dominant religions practiced as of 2005 were; Buddhists (10,726,463), Protestants (8,616,438), and Catholics (5,146,147), indicating that only half of their citizens practice religion. The population increase rate as of 2010 was 0.26%.

The government's political system is a republic with a president elected to a single 5-year term by direct popular vote. Division of power is among the executive, legislature (unicameral National Assembly), and judiciary branches.

Korea's gross domestic product is US$ 1,014 billion in 2010. The per capita gross national income is US$ 20,759 as of 2010. They exported US$441.5 billion in 2010 and imported US$400.6 billion. Their major industrial products are semiconductors, automobiles, ships, consumer electronics, mobile telecommunications, equipment, steel, and chemicals.



Thanks to Hangeul, Korea has achieved a nearly 100% literacy rate. The scientific and easy-to-write alphabet has also given the country an edge in the computer age. All Koreans speak and write the same language, which has been a decisive factor in forging their strong national identity. Hangeul, which consists of ten vowels and 14 consonants, can be combined to form numerous, syllabic groupings. It is simple yet systematic and comprehensive, and is considered one of the most scientific writing systems in the world. Because Hangeul is easy to learn and write, this has greatly contributed to Korea's high literacy rate and advanced publication industry.

South Korea faces Japan across the East Sea and China across the Yellow Sea. To the north, across the DMZ, is North Korea. The Taebaek Range, referred to as the backbone of the Korean Peninsula, stretches along the east coast and slopes steeply into the East Sea. Along the western and southern coasts, the mountains descend

gradually onto the coastal plains, and large rivers wind through the area. The relatively wide plains stretch far from the mid-and downstream sections of the rivers.

Korea is a peninsula. The Yellow Sea is to the west, the East Sea to the east and the South Sea to the south. To the south of Korea's largest island is the East China Sea. The west and south coasts have heavily indented coastlines where the tidal range is enormous, and the relative flatness of land means that the tideland is very wide. Dotted with so many islands, it is called Dadohae, meaning 'sea of many islands.' The east coast, in contrast, is very straight, the water is deep, and the tidal range is narrow. Along the coast are sand dunes and lagoons, and the volcanic islands of Ulleungdo and Dokdo are far to the east on the East Sea.

Many of Korea's highest mountains are part of the Taebaek Range. The most famous and picturesque is Mt. Seoraksan. The Taebaek Range has a branch trending southwest and culminating at the Mt. Jirisan massif. This is the Sobaek Range. The highest mountain in the Republic of Korea is Mt. Hallasan, a dormant volcano at the center of Jejudo Island.

The largest rivers in South Korea are the Hangang River, Geumgang River, Yeongsangang River, Seomjingang River, and Nakdonggang River. The annual precipitation of Korea is 1,245mm, which is 1.4 times the global average, but the per capita precipitation is only one-eighth of the world average. Water management in Korea is difficult, especially because more than 60% of annual precipitation is lost as

runoff during floods and torrential rains, while rivers dry up in the dry season. Exacerbating matters, water consumption has been increasing sharply due to population growth, economic development, and changes in lifestyle.

The leader of South Korea President Lee Myung-bak was born in 1941 to a poor cattle farm laborer. He had to work to help support his destitute family as a student. In recalling the past, he said, "The chronic poverty that haunted my large family never disappeared until after I was in my 20s." Even though he put himself through Korea University by working as a street cleaner, he had never let go of hope.

After graduating from university, he joined Hyundai Engineering and Construction and became engrossed in his work. Rewarded for his hard work, he was rapidly promoted to the position of director within five years and the CEO of Hyundai Engineering and Construction after only 12 years. Working in the Hyundai Group, he developed a cosmopolitan mindset as a leading CEO in Korea through establishing a social network with international dignitaries. He also crisscrossed the world to build various magnificent structures, including the Penang Bridge in Malaysia and a thermal power plant in Iraq.

After entering politics in 1992 as a member of the National Assembly of the New Korea Party in the 14th National Assembly after wrapping up a 27-year career with the Hyundai Group. In 2002, Lee declared his candidacy for Seoul Mayor. He came from behind to win the election. After the election, he vowed, "I will give Seoul a complete makeover." (p. 1)

Researcher's Perspective

This researcher has extensive experience in online course development and teaching (18 years) but, most importantly, possesses a passion for educational and cultural equality. During a previous qualitative interview with a native Korean professor, the researcher was told that, "United States online courses and websites are like babies compared to Korea's online courses; however, I would prefer the United States' because they are less distracting" (anonymous by request, personal communications, February 26, 2009). During the interview, the professor indicated that Korea is a technologically innovative country where

85 percent of their population graduates from college. This scholarly comment stimulated in this researcher an interest to determine its exact meaning and to examine the research literature on online cultural diversity and learning styles and their relationship to online learning. What did this scholar mean when he referred to Western-constructed web-based courses as babies? How would U.S. online courses be less distracting? The thought of a better constructed, more interesting online course demanded the researcher's attention and sparked the need to learn more. Curiosity prompted this researcher to research the literature to find the answers, to extend the existing research through a focused research study, and to apply the findings to U. S.-constructed online courses for greater efficiencies.

This researcher's background as a professional sales and marketing business owner also provides awareness of the requirement of adequately matching a product, such as online courses, to the customers-our students, in the case of education. Ayres (2009) supported the concept of matching students' profiles of learning preferences to the product of online courses in the same manner used for marketing other types of goods and service to meet target markets. The researcher's working hypothesis that students and educational institutions would mutually benefit financially and academically when such matching is appropriately and skillfully accomplished combined with evidence in the literature that this is frequently not considered in developing culturally-targeted courses online provided further impetus for this study.

Morris' (2009) research considered culturally effective online course construction for Asian students including, Japan, China, Taiwan, Viet Nam, and South Korea. Her study established a foundation for the continuance of line-of-inquiry multicultural research focused on online learning. That foundation provided the basis for this study, which continued the

line of inquiry by narrowing the cultural focus and broadening the methodology. This study continued the investigation of culturally appropriate online course construction by narrowly focusing on just South Korea. It was hypothesized that these students come from a technologically advanced country but could encounter difficulties in U. S. constructed online courses due, not to lack of technology skills, but rather to culturally inappropriate course design. Because South Korea is such a technologically advanced country, and because of its high literacy rate (97%), this study examined cultural dimensions that might produce best practices for online course construction (Cantoni et al. 2004; Kelly & Bauer, 2004; Liaw, 2008; Liu, Liao, & Pratt, 2009; Pituch & Lee, 2006; Sánchez-Franco, Martínez-López, & Martín-Velicia, 2009; Lee, &Yoon, 2003; Lee, 2009). The high technology fluency and literacy rates of South Korean minimize the effects of those variables on success with online courses, allowing issues with these courses to more likely be attributed to cultural factors in the course design.

Another rationale for beginning intensive research of online learning preferences of Korean learners is based in the support of their government and industry. Lee et.al (2009) claimed, “With the Korean government as the driving force behind the rapid growth of e-learning, the development of e-learning in South Korea is fueled by the rapid growth of its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) industry” (p.1320). This situation suggests significant need for thorough analysis of the most culturally-appropriate design practices to maximize learning in an online environment.

Issues in Cross-Cultural Online Course Design

Instructional Design Distractions

Research suggests that cultural dissimilarities promote pedagogical distractions in online courses. McCloughlin and Oliver (1999) indicated that a very important instructional design problem for multicultural learners is the lack of cultural contextualization. Courses are most effective when they apply practical applications of students' experiences, but many online courses lack contextualization (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). While U. S.-constructed courses are designed for local contextualization, they are often not fully adaptable to international students' diverse cultures and appropriate cultural learning experiences (McLoughlin & Oliver, 1999).

Reeves and Reeves (1997) emphasized the importance of web-based cultural sensitivity. Cultural insensitivity in colors, idioms, gender, text, symbols, direction, and practices can offer distractions (Park, Cho, & Lee, 2007). Henderson (1996) asserted that multicultural course construction for minority and marginalized groups is a matter of cultural equality (House, et al. 2004). Catterick (2007) insisted that -based philosophical foundations of American education such as cognitivist and constructivist approaches actually conflict with some cultural traditions and need to be adapted to accommodate culturally inclusive course construction and curriculum. Rogers et al. (2007) recommended course construction to include general cultural and social applications. McLoughlin (2000) emphasized the importance of learning equality by means of understanding learners' preferences, needs, multiple communication channels, multiple perspectives and various instructional techniques such as scaffolding, instructional support, bridging transactional distance, and flexible goals. While many recommendations are provided in the literature, the common thread that appears

to be consistent throughout is specific knowledge and recognition of cultural diversity and the use of this knowledge in creating culturally sensitive instructional design.

User Interface Distractions

Culturally incompatible graphical user interfaces for online courses, including colors, pictures, icons, images, symbols, and numbers can create visual language issues for diverse learners. Graphical elements and images are online mechanisms for creating interest and capturing attention. Images convey meanings but can convey different, and sometimes unintended, meanings based on culture. Lim and Jusri (2003) provided an example in which a dragon in Chinese culture would represent auspicious luck while it represents unpleasant monsters in U. S. culture. Similarly, while Americans consider an owl to be a symbol of quiet wisdom, Taiwanese consider the same symbol to be shrewdness, and it represents bad luck to Eastern Indians. Thus, use of culturally inappropriate graphic elements in online courses can create message confusion and misunderstanding.

Directionality and other features of text are graphic influences of the user interface. U. S. culture reads text from top to bottom and left to right, while the Middle East reads horizontally from right to left and top to bottom (Lim & Jusri, 2003). Culturally appropriate course design must also consider text elements such as characters, diacritical marks, numeric and currency formats, numerals, special characters, directional marks, date/time format, and telephone numbers and addresses (Evers & Day, 1997; Marcus & Gould, 2000).

Transactional distance (Moore, 1983; Moore & Kearsley, 2005) theorizes the need for appropriate social and psychological distance from teacher to learner based on learner autonomy, physical distance, dialog, and structure preference. Transactional distance is

established by the course structure and learner autonomy preferences (Moore & Kearsley, 2005), and these preferences can vary among different cultures.

An example of specific cultural preferences influencing reactions to online courses in the context of Korean learners' was provided in research by Park, Cho, and Lee (2007). These researchers analyzed agricultural e-learning in rural development administration in Korea and concluded that adults prefer interactive learning as opposed to reading technical information. The study evaluated user satisfaction in three categories: quality of content, quality of system, and relationship with manager. The most satisfaction was derived from 'relationship with manager', followed by 'quality of contents,' and the least satisfaction was derived from 'quality of system' (p.279). Variables used in determining the quality of the system were search engine, picture quality of video on demand, and picture quality of video-conferencing. This and other examples in the literature led the researcher to a working hypothesis that clear preferences could be identified for Korean learners in online courses and that at least some of these preferences could be related to culture.

Language Barriers

Course designers' failure to acknowledge language barriers can distract online students' cognitive processes. Culture influences the structure of language as well as the usage of language, and language represents manifestation of culture, cultural values and worldview (Gunawardena, Wilson, & Nolla, 2003; Morris, 2009). English is used predominately in U. S. online course construction, yet many online students use English as a second language. Pincas (2001) cited language differences as a contributing factor for online discourse. Bates (2001) maintained that writing styles and idioms are not transferable from U. S. cultures to other cultures.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Henderson's Multiple Cultural Model (1996) (MCM) was the basis of the theoretical framework of this study. This model provided a framework for conceptualizing, defining, and discussing the learning preferences of learners from various cultures in terms of culturally-based expectations. Henderson defined a multiple cultural model (MCM) for minority and marginalized groups and proposed a framework for more efficient multiculturalism in online course construction. Henderson (1996) theorized that the role of instructor emphasizes predetermined learning goals, preferences, and specific objectives for transmitting knowledge. Others have asserted that the instructor facilitates learning as a mentor rather than presenting abstract knowledge (Edmundson, 2004; Hofstede, 1991, 2001; Rezaei & Katz, 2002).

Henderson (1996) modified the model for studying differences among cultures, integrating Reeves' (1994) pedagogical dimensions which he developed for studying computer-based education. Reeves' model proposes two sets of extreme preference poles for learning. It does not indicate that one pole is superior to the other, but instead is a bi-polar scale for assessing pedagogical efficiencies and focuses on minority and marginalized populations with 15 different dimensions.

Henderson adapted Reeves' 15 dimension bi-polar scales to reflect an emphasis on a multi-cultural model. Table 1 was created by Morris (2009) for the purpose of providing examples of Henderson's model of cultural learning preferences applicable in the 15 dimensions specifically to an online learning environment.

Table 1

Henderson's Multiple Cultural Model Adapted by Morris*
Examples of Student's Learning Preferences Based on 15 Bi-Polar Dimensions

Dimensions	Students that take online courses, prefer to	Students that take online courses, prefer to
Epistemology	Pursue theoretical knowledge Pursue knowledge for its own sake	Obtain practical knowledge Acquire factual knowledge
Pedagogical Philosophy	Listen to lectures Have the instructor lead the class Learn from real-life experiences.	Learn from individual and social experiences.
Underlying Psychology	Clear pre-designated learning performance Value learning outcomes	Value the learning process Value reorganizing any thoughts rather than changing their external behavior
Goal Orientation	Clearly stated learning objectives Predetermined learning goals	Flexible learning goals Broad and open-ended learning goals
Instructional Sequence	Learn step-by-step Learn in detail	Learn in an unstructured way Learn general principals first and specific knowledge later
Experiential Value	From textbooks rather than other resources From theory rather than experience	Learn by doing Learn through practical examples
Instructor's Role	Believe role of instructor is providing knowledge Believe instructor should be an expert on the subject matter	Believe role of instructor is for guiding the learning Believe the role of the instructor is as a mentor
Value of Errors	Repeat learning until they can generate correct answers Learn through mistakes	Accept limited mistakes as a part of learning Learn through mistakes
Origin of Motivation	Save time and money Value earning school credits more than I value enjoying the class	Learn through a variety of learning activities as a part of learning. Enjoy online learning itself
Program Flexibility	Well-defined learning projects Fixed learning schedules	Flexible learning schedules Self-paced Learning
Accommodation of Individual	Well-organized learning courses Well-planned learning curriculum	Have access to a wide array of supplemental learning materials

Differences		Use a wide variety of learning Materials
Learner Control	Instructor directs learning Instructor gives the deadline for assignment	Manage their own learning Assess their own learning.
User Activity	Instructor controls entire learning process Have class learning skills rigidly specified in advance on the class syllabus	Be actively involved in their own learning Initiate their own learning
Cooperative Learning	Work by themselves without interaction with their classmates Prefer individual learning	Perform class projects in small groups Cooperate with classmates
Cultural Sensitivity	Believe learners' cultural backgrounds really effect learning achievement Interested in my classmates' Cultural background	Ready to accept cultural differences of both the instructors and classmates Ready to listen attentively to others' opinions regardless of their cultural backgrounds

Source: Adapted from Morris (2009, pp.182-184)

This study used Morris' (2009) adaptation of Henderson's (1996) Multiple Cultural Model (MCM) to the online learning environment as its theoretical underpinning. The study is conceptualized as an analysis of culturally appropriate instructional design for online learning environments for the specific Eastern cultural of South Korea. Situated in the South Korean culture, the study proposes that Korean students may encounter learning distractions and barriers in online courses when culturally inappropriate instructional design is used. Through application of its 15 dimensions of learning preferences, Henderson's Cultural Model provides a theoretical framework and a tool for identifying and discussing best practices for constructing online courses that are appropriate and culturally sensitive to the learning needs of South Korean students. This will lead to better learning outcomes for these students in the online environment. While actually testing the learning outcomes created by

culturally appropriate online course design is beyond the scope of this study, outcomes are included in the theoretical/conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 to show the ultimate end of this line of inquiry. This study focused on the central component of this diagram as indicated by the dotted-line box: identification of the online learning preferences of South Korean students and recommendations for best practices in instructional design based in these preferences.

In this study's conceptualization, the learning preferences of MCM will filter through the cooperative interactions of Moore's (1983) Transactional Distance theory. Learning is strengthened through effective handling of transaction distance between learner and teacher when students are allowed learning-preference flexibility of use of physical distance, learner autonomy, dialog, and structure. Moore (1983) does not suggest a predetermined degree of the four variables to be practiced per class, but rather suggests that the instructor allow the appropriate amount of transactional distance per course based on the needs of the learner and desired goals of the instructor. Each will vary depending on the desired outcomes as the transactional distance is global.

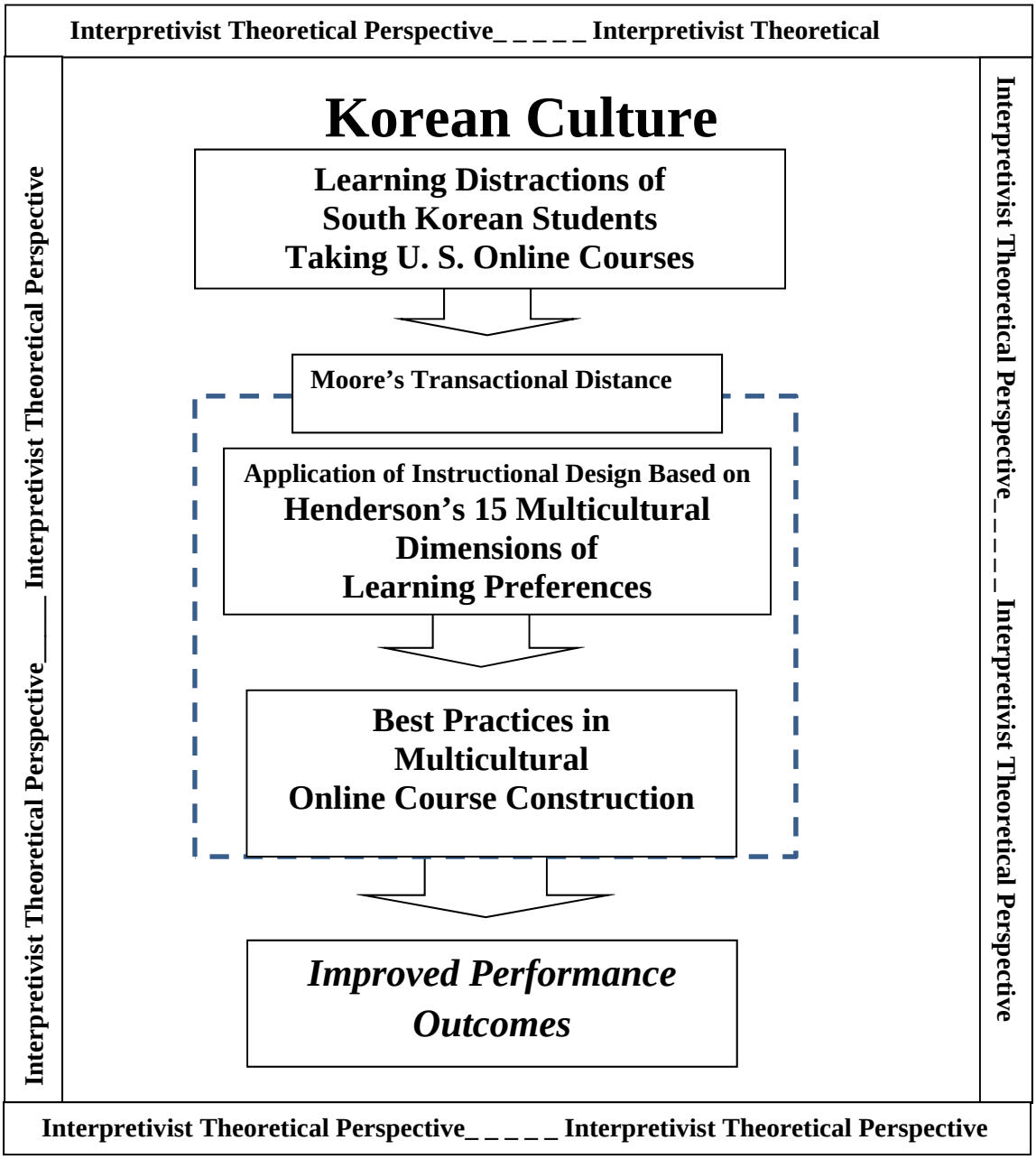


Figure 1.Theoretical and conceptual framework for this study.

Statement of the Problem

The problem for this study is that information is currently limited regarding culturally-specific learning preferences of various cultural groups and how these preferences translate into design of online courses. This problem fits a pattern identified in the literature.

Liaw (2008), Liu, Liao, and Pratt (2009), Pituch and Lee (2006), and Sánchez-Franco, Martínez-López and Martin-Velicia (2009) all concluded that while many studies have researched success factors and benefits of online course construction, there is still a lack of empirical studies focusing on learners' acceptance.

Lack of information about learning preferences and acceptance of online course design by Korean students-particularly in courses mounted by U. S. designers and instructors, is important for several reasons:

1. Both the government and the rapidly-growing information technology industry in Korea currently support e-learning growth (Lee, et al., 2009). However, cultural learning preferences may not be reflected in online course construction.
2. With its dense population and its high rates of technology fluency, literacy (over 97%), and higher education enrollment (90%), South Korean culture presents a cost-effective context for research on improving culturally-appropriate online course design (Lee, et al., 2009). Current online courses offer distractions.
3. An increasing number of international students, including Korean students, are taking online courses from abroad and are earning, post-secondary degrees. (Hannon & D'Netto, 2007; Huynh, Umesh, & Valacich, 2003). These suggest that information about designing online courses to maximize their success is required.
4. Research has demonstrated that online courses designed by U. S. designers are not always successful for learners from other cultures. Online course distractions have been identified by Asians, including Korean students taking online courses that were constructed by U. S. design (Aragon, Johnson, & Shaik, 2002; Catterick, 2007; De Vita, 2001; Edmundson, 2003; Jaju, Kwak, & Zinkhan, 2002; Kim,

2001; Liu 2007b; Marcus & Gould, 2000; Marinetti & Dunn, 2002; McLoughlin, 1999, 2000; Morris, 2009; Pincas, 2001; Tu, 2001; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). For example, research conducted by Jon (2009) found many Korean students felt confused by international students' different behavior and complained that other students acted rudely by asking seemingly basic questions thereby wasting time and the professors' efforts (p. 442). Korean students were perplexed by whether the behavior was culturally appropriate. Thus, while the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered education may be successful, it is dependent on addressing learners' needs and educational objectives (Cantoni et al. 2004; Engelbrecht, 2003; Kelly & Bauer, 2004; Liaw, 2008; Liu et al. 2009; Pituch & Lee, 2006; Sánchez-Franco Martínez-López, & Martin-Velicia, 2009). This includes culturally-based needs and expectations, which required research to identify and apply to online course design.

All these factors support the problematic nature of the current lack of information about the learning preferences of Korean students taking U. S. -designed online courses. For educational institutions to successfully accommodate international students, U. S. course construction must be sensitive to diverse students' cultures, learning styles, similarities and dissimilarities. Suitable teaching techniques, appropriate colors, icons, symbols, activities and learning preferences must be considered in the online course construction. Currently, multicultural online students in U. S. learning environments must transfer the cultural differences into their own applications in order to overcome native cultural differences. As Jon (2009) concluded, "The more people understand cultural differences and accommodate them, the more developed they are regarded in intercultural sensitivity" (p. 443). Information

about the learning preferences of Korean students in online courses will benefit acquisition of this sensitivity for an important group of international learners in American institutions. Without this information, it is not possible to appropriately target online instructional design to maximize learning potential for any cultural groups.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe cultural dimensions and online learning preferences that Korean students taking online courses in the Western identify as distractions in U. S. -constructed web-based courses. This information can be used to construct more culturally friendly web-based courses. Henderson's multiple-cultural model (MCM) guided this study by providing a structure of 15 dimensions of cultural learning preferences for analysis. Morris' (2009) study used the MCM to describe the online preferences of several East Asian cultures, their learning preferences, cultural characteristics, similarities, and dissimilarities. This research narrowed and refined this line of inquiry by focusing on the technologically advanced country of South Korea, their learners, their preferred learning approaches, and cultural dimensions in online course design.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this research:

1. What is the demographic profile on selected variables of the Korean students taking online courses, in the United States
2. Based on Henderson's Cultural Dimensions model, what are the self-identified educational learning preferences of Korean students taking online courses?

3. Based on Moore's Transactional Distance theory, what are the self-identified educational learning preferences with regard to student/instructor distance, learner autonomy, dialog, and course structure of Korean students taking online courses?
4. What problems are identified by Korean students taking online courses?
5. What benefits are identified by Korean students taking online courses?
6. What recommendations do Korean students offer for improving U. S. -constructed online courses?

Definitions of Key Terms

Conceptual Definitions

- Cognitive style: One's information processing habits (Meredith, 1978)
- Culture: "The beliefs, philosophies, traditions, values, perceptions, norms, customs, arts, history, experiences, and patterns by individuals and groups" (Collis, 1999, p.204).
- Demographic profile: Population or consumer statistics regarding socioeconomic factors such as age, income, sex, occupation, education, and family size (The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, 2009); data that describe basic characteristics of a selected group.
- Eastern culture: Basically synonymous with Asian culture, as Eastern culture focuses on harmony, conformity, and interdependency. Geographically the Eastern cultural area represents most of Asia, specifically China, Japan, and Korea. Easterners are relation-oriented, give emphasis to group goals over

personal goals, respect elders, and value authority (Fink & Laupase, 2000; Hofsteede & Hofstede, 2005; Liu, 2007a).

- Interpretivism is an epistemological stance for qualitative inquiry. Interpretivism is an interpretive approach to qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln 1995). Interpretivism is characterized as theoretical perspectives and the foundations of social research (Crotty, 1998; Patton, 2002, Schwandt, 2000).
- Korean Culture: A cultural system that is generally based on Confucian thought and shares perceptual and linguistic characteristics with China and Japan. All three countries have a collectivist culture, which means pursuing group maintenance and harmony and using shame to achieve goals rather than self-actualization (Liu, 2007a; Morris, 2009). For the purpose of this research, Korea will refer to South Korea.
- Learning preferences: Preferred ways of perceiving, processing, and understanding information; preferred approaches to learning tasks (Sadler-Smith, 1996b).
- Learning style: The composite of characteristic cognitive, affective, and physiologic factors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment; is often assessed through learning-style inventories (Stradley, Buckley, Kaminski, Horodyski, Fleming, & Janelle, 2002).
- Online learning: Learning accomplished through Internet-based course presentation that may or may not be combined with classroom-based experiences.

- Western Culture: Refers primarily to "mainstream North American culture" and represents individuality, democracy, freedom of speech, self-advancements, and equal human rights (Nisbett, 2005, p.169). Western equals Western for the purpose of this study.

Operational Definitions

- Demographic profile: Seven demographic variables used to describe the sample for this study, including gender, age, Korean decent, number of online courses taken, self-rated technology skills, college major, college degree pursuing or pursued including Bachelor, Masters, or Doctorate degree.
- Online course: Internet or Web-based distance learning where students take courses without attending a brick-and-mortar facility and students and teachers interact over the Internet (Price, 2010). Hybrid online courses, where students work online through a course-management system but meet with the instructor in person as needed, were also considered eligible for this study. Moore and Kearsley (2005) stated, "The web format can be immediately available for viewing by anyone in the world who has an Internet connection and a Web browser" (http://www.ehow.com/facts_5022637_definition). This research welcomed South Korean participants from any location in the world that had taken at least one online course. The survey instrument was posted online and could be accessed from any location.
- Online learning preferences: Henderson's Multicultural Learning Dimensions was used to define and assess the study participant's learning preferences on 15 cultural dimensions via an online survey questionnaire. The survey elicited

preferred approaches to learning objectives based on culturally-related learning styles while taking online courses. The Henderson dimensional model defined online learning preferences in a structure that provided theoretical support for the study and a framework for discussing its findings.

- Transactional Distance: Several teaching variables that affect learning including: distance, learner autonomy, dialog, and structure thereby increasing the distance and influencing the dialog between student and instructor (Moore, 1983; Moore & Kearsley, 2005).

Overview of the Study

General Approach

This study used descriptive methodology in a mixed-method design combining descriptive demographic and learning preference quantitative data with richer qualitative data obtained from personal interviews. Gay (1987) and Gay and Airasian (2000) identified descriptive research as obtaining information concerning the current status of a phenomenon to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (p. 275). This study focused on documenting the preferences and perceptions of Korean learners regarding online courses. While it analyzed some data statistically in the post-positive theoretical tradition, its underlying theoretical perspective was the social constructivist interpretivism that underpins much qualitative research, particularly that which focuses on group settings and cultures (Creswell, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Patton, 2002). The integration of quantitative and qualitative theoretical and methodological perspectives, as well as data sources and types, is important in developing mixed-method research designs.

The study's methodology combined a web-based electronic survey or questionnaire with qualitative interviews. The questionnaire was developed and validated by Morris (2009) in her

dissertation study of the online learning preferences of Asian students. It was based on Henderson's Multi-Cultural Model of 15 dimensions of learning preferences. The questionnaire consisted of 65 demographic, open-ended and force-choice questions. In addition to demographic data, the questionnaire elicited information on learning preferences using Likert-type scales for quantitative analysis, plus three open-ended questions about online learning. Deep and rich qualitative information to extend and triangulate the quantitative data from the questionnaire were obtained from personal interviews with selected Korean participants.

The participants in the study were a group of Koreans (N=41) who were at least 18 years of age, had taken an online course and had lived in the United States for no more than 15 years. These criteria are discussed in Chapter III. Qualitative interviewees were a sub-set (N=9) of these participants who voluntarily agreed to be spoken with.

The data submitted from the electronic survey were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The quantitative data were extracted from the electronic survey and imported into the SPSS statistical software for analysis with descriptive statistics. Participant profiles were developed, and learning preferences were identified and compared across demographic groups and with data reported by Morris (2009).

Thematic analysis using constant comparative methods was used on the qualitative data to analyze comments about online learning preferences and experiences offered by the Korean participants.

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

Assumptions

This study accepts the following assumptions:

1. The participants understood the survey questions, knew how to respond correctly, and answered truthfully. Steps taken in the development of the instrument by

Morris (2009) helped assure its understanding by Asian participants; these steps are described in Chapter III.

2. Because the subjects had the opportunity to participate in the study or decline, it was assumed they wanted to be involved in the success of the study and to provide accurate and useful information.
3. Online courses within the United States and experienced by the study participants were constructed by Western designers, applying Western culture, values, and philosophies.
4. This study accepted Morris' (2009) assertion that Henderson's Multicultural Model is an appropriate theoretical and operational paradigm to represent multi-cultural dimensions of Korean online students and is a sound theoretical foundation for the study of online learning preferences of East Asian learners in online courses. Henderson's model and conceptualization of learning preferences are well suited to the qualitative interpretive perspective on the study of groups and cultures (Patton, 2002) that underpins this study.

Delimitations

Delimitations put boundaries on a study to focus on specific people or a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2003) by limiting it scope. Morris' (2009) dissertation was delimited to Asian students from several countries in describing the culturally-based learning preferences of online learners. The present study builds on Morris' study by further delimiting the focus to South Koreans. It focused specifically on South Koreans aged 18 or greater who had been in the United States no more than 15 years and had taken at least one Western-designed online course. This delimitation allowed for greater depth of analysis, but

at the same time limited the generalizability or external validity of the study. Given the study's strong qualitative perspective, the benefits of narrow focus and internal depth of data were perceived by the researcher as more important than external generalizability.

Limitations

Limitations were imposed on this study by its instrument. The study used an instrument developed recently by Morris (2009) for her dissertation study of culturally-related online learning performances of Asian students. Morris developed her instrument because no appropriate instrument existed to assess such learning preference based on cultural factors. She based her instrument on the theoretical frame work provided by Henderson's 15 bi-polar dimensions that are defined and supported by known cultural perspectives and beliefs; the premise of the instrument (and Henderson's model) was that social and cultural traditions are echoed in learning preferences (Morris, 2009).

In developing her instrument, Morris (2009) used several statistical procedures including correlation analysis, factor analysis, and coefficient alpha to assess validity and internal consistency. She also used expert input, focus groups, and field trials to improve the instrument's readability and clarity. Those procedures are described extensively by Morris and are summarized later in this study in Chapter III. However, despite Morris' initial work on her instrument, it is still very new and not yet established in the research literature.

The use of this not-yet-fully-established instrument does impose internal validity limitations on this study. However, the alternative was an instrument that was neither theoretically nor empirically compatible with the constructs of interest in this study. Morris' instrument was also compatible with the interpretivist theoretical perspective of the qualitative component of the study's mixed-method research design. The study also offers

opportunity to contribute to the theoretical and empirical validity of the instrument. For these reasons, the limitations imposed by its instrumentation were accepted for this study.

Another limitation to the study was the sample size of 32 participants for the online survey instrument, thereby limiting the descriptive. The targeted population of South Koreans was limited in size with additional narrowing of South Koreans that had taken online courses, causing the sample size be very small. The qualitative interviews were facilitated for the purpose of adding additional data. Patton (2002) indicated that qualitative research typically focuses on relatively small samples. No set number of qualitative interviews was required as long as the information obtained is rich and meaningful and the topic is well saturated (Bogden & Bicklen, 1982; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Significance of the Study

Equal learning opportunities for academic results are a strong marketing technique used by colleges and universities. The institutions compete for business and attempt to attract high-achieving students, including international students. An attractive marketing technique is availability and convenience of classes, and online courses provide an appropriate solution. However, if online courses present distractions to multi-cultural students, the effectiveness can be negated.

American quality education is delivered based on the premise of equal learning opportunities for everyone. When U.S.-constructed online courses do not accommodate multi-cultural learning styles, discord can occur in the learning process. Equal learning opportunity may not be present. Dovetailing cultural learning preferences with online course design provides for multicultural learning and learning improvements may support the convenience of online study and provide additional educational opportunities for students in

a cultural minority. Linburg and Clark (2006) stated, "We can positively transform the educational experience of the majority of minority students. …education should be an empowering process for all students. No student can benefit from education if she or he resists it for whatever reason" (p. 6). Students' cultural learning needs should be equally accommodated as much as sports accommodations, assistive disability accommodations, and advance academic placements. Kincheloe (2004) stated, "Critical pedagogy is about alleviating the human suffering that is propagated in societal institutions" (p. 7). Accommodating international students' diverse cultures could support the goals of critical pedagogy and alleviate stress of uncertainty in online curriculum.

More than eight in 10 Asian households, 81%, had broadband cable service as early as 2004, according to Horowitz (2004). Horowitz (2009) also reported more recently that online activities of Americans aged 15-34 indicate that Asians rank the highest in visits to social or professional networking sites, visit blogs or chat rooms, and upload user-generated content. These statistics reflect strong Asian technology use and suggest strong potential for online learning. To facilitate online learning among these technology-savvy learners, online courses need to be proactively written to accommodate diverse cultures.

Learning institutions offering online courses that understand cultural dissimilarities and their effects on learning preferences possess the potential to maximize best practices in learning outcomes and minimize the risk of learning failures and ultimate drop outs for culturally diverse students. As diversity in student populations continues to grow, learning institutions practicing student-centered accommodations will be likely to prosper financially and academically.

This study can provide valuable data for helping Western institutions better meet the learning needs and preferences of Korean students who want to take advantage of online learning opportunities. This study can also contribute to the validation of Morris' instrument for assessing culturally-based online learning preferences. Considering the absence of such an instrument in the research literature on online learning, further evaluation of Morris' instrument is an important contribution of this study.

Finally this study offered deeper insight into some of the differences in online learning preferences between American and Asian students. These insights may eventually lead to design guidelines for online course designers that can maximize the appeal and effectiveness of their course offerings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Thomas Friedman's (2005) prediction of a "flattening world" narrows distances among countries by encouraging and facilitating collaborations for making business economics more efficient and acknowledges outsourcing for stimulating the stock market. The business of *education* also becomes more economically practical by reducing miles between countries with technology, breaking paradigms, and searching best practices for course delivery. Ausburn, Ellis, and Washburn (2011) referred to "Disruptive technologies as driving multiple concurrent revolutions in areas such as social networking e-collaboration and information social learning; virtual environments; multi-purpose communication devices; globalization; Internet economics and e-commerce; mass customization; anywhere/anytime learning; and nontraditional forms of education" (p.21).

Certainly, Western-constructed online courses can accommodate logistically international students from as far away as Korea by reducing travel, cost, scheduling problems and reducing conveniences. But how well do Western-constructed courses accommodate international students' culture and, more specifically, how well do Western-constructed courses deliver Korean students' learning preferences?

The mixed method research reported in the present study drew conceptually from the four elements of Moore's Transactional Distance Theory (1983) and Henderson's

Multiple Cultural Model (1996) of the students' 15 culturally-based dimensions of learning preference and focused specifically on Korean students.

Culture and Behavior

According to Lee, Joshi, and McIvon (2009), awareness of cultural differences is important in a globalized world because, "Understanding cultural divergence and issues related to it are vital for enhancing international relations. With the global reach of Internet, it is important to study consumer behavior across cultures related to online (p. 209). Shiraev and Levy (2010) explained culture as ". . . a form of existence that provides for fundamental human needs and subsequent goals" (p. 14). Triandis (1996) further defined culture as ". . . the pattern, or combination, of shared attitudes, beliefs, categorizations, definitions, norms, and values that is organized around a theme that can be identified among those who speak a particular language, during specific historic period, in a definable geographic region" (p. 14).

Cultural values, norms, and practices are extremely important regulators of human behavior (Shiraev & Levy, 2010). For example, the South Korean culture is considered to be hierarchical as Koreans consider social, gender, ethnic and other groups to be unequal and this leads to differentiated behavior (Matsumoto, 2007; Shiraev & Levy, 2010). Oh (2012) associated age, culture, and behavior found "age proved to have a significant impact on the differences between Asian American and European American females" (p. 85). Ausburn, Martens, Washington, Steele, and Washburn (2009) discussed the culture of gender and urged "instructors wishing to implement desktop VR in their curricula to be aware of potential gender-related learning issues and take steps to maximize the learning benefits of this technology for everyone" (p.78).

Henderson's Multi-Cultural Model

Henderson's Multicultural Model (1996) served as a major theoretical foundation for this study. Henderson's MCM details student's culturally–based learning preferences on 15 dimensions. While 14 dimensions relate to specific elements of instructional design, one dimension runs through or across the other 14. Each dimension has a continuum with two ends that are polar opposites. The 15 dimensions discussed below in regard to their constructs and their opposite poles to provide understanding of the extremes within each dimension.

Epistemology (Objectivism vs. Constructivism)

Epistemology is the study of knowledge and justified belief that is concerned with what constitutes the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge, what are its sources, what is its structure, and what are its limits. As the study of justified belief, epistemology aims to answer questions such as: How we are to understand the concept of justification? What makes justified beliefs justified? Is justification internal or external to one's own mind? Understood more broadly, epistemology is about issues having to do with the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006). Epistemology is considered to be reflected in all the variables of the Henderson multicultural model.

Epistemology is how adult students prefer to learn or make meaning of learning. They may enjoy pursuing theoretical knowledge or simply pursue knowledge for its own sake. Those students that prefer to obtain practical knowledge may often do so through *synchronicity* (online courses). Drozdowski (2009) explained synchronicity when he discussed the convenience of taking courses online on your own time, in your own place,

and, to a certain extent, at your own pace. According to Drozdowski, “Gaining practical knowledge would benefit people with little or no experience and would prove valuable knowledge in the workforce. They'll also gain a credential that demonstrates their commitment to the field and gives them some advantage in the hiring process” (para. 11).

Drozdowski (2009) predicted that those students seeking to obtain practical knowledge (or credentials) online will soon be in greater demand than the current market can accommodate. He felt that people will keep discovering the benefits of career advancement — the opportunity to make a difference, the abundance of jobs, the relatively high salaries, and the freedom to travel. They will seek knowledge and, in this credential-seeking society, will want to gain a head start in the hiring race.

Drozdowski (2009) further predicted that colleges might be wise to create programs to meet growing demand, and may want to consider online-learning options as part of that strategy. He asserted colleges would very likely find a willing audience for their offerings.

The range of comparison of epistemology in Henderson’s MCM is from objectivism at one pole to constructivism at the other. *Objectivism* promotes the belief of one true and correct reality. Vrasidas (2000) stated that objectivists, “. . . believe that knowledge consists in correctly conceptualizing and categorizing things in the world and grasping the objective connections among those things and those categories” (p. 342). In order for learning to take place in the objectivist epistemology, familiar abstract symbols must correspond to the one and only real world. Burgmann, Kitchen, and Williams (2006) researched the influences of culture on symbols in graphical user interface in web pages and concluded that “culture does indeed influence design, but only to a certain

context" (p.75). In the objectivist view, learning reflects a change in behaviors and/or change in the learner's cognitive composition. Curriculum should be designed to effectively impart objective knowledge to the learner and promote students' ability to apply this knowledge to the real world. In terms of objectivism, it is the role of the instructor to interpret the world for students, while students are not encouraged to draw their own interpretations of what they perceive (Jonassen, 1991; Morris, 2009).

Objectivists apply a behavioral approach to learning and assessment through clear goals and objectives, using specific skills, observable behaviors and conditions. Assignments and readings with strict, predetermined deadlines are used to promote learning. The instructor's responsibility is transferring knowledge with criterion-referenced evaluation, measuring progress using comprehensive test and requiring students to demonstrate knowledge (Carson, 2005; Jonassen, 1991; Morris, 2009; Vrasidas, 2000).

Constructivist epistemology is sharply different from objectivism. Rezaei and Katz (2002) listed the three most referenced schools of thought within the constructivist paradigm to be: (1) cognitive (personal) constructivism, (2) social or sociocultural constructivism, and (3) radical constructivism. The belief of *personal constructivists* posits that knowledge is constructed through previous experiences or cognitive scaffolding. *Social constructivists* postulate that knowledge is created through social interaction, social experiences, communities of practices, and shared sociocultural experiences (Geelan, 1997; Morris, 2009).

Radical constructivists, as denoted by the name, offer a much different perspective with widely varying viewpoints and authors. Their platform indicates that

there is no real world and no objective reality that is separate of human mental activity. Reality is what the individual makes of it with his/her opinion. Rezaei and Katz (2002) indicated that radical constructivism views "knowledge as a form of mental representation and a construction of the human mind" (p. 369). Shapiro and Carlson (2009) stated, "Reality does not exist separately from the observer" (p.7). Knowledge is a computation of cognitive skills and, according to Doolittle and Camp (1999) is based on the individual's experiences and environment.

The epistemological dynamics of constructivism is explained by Jonassen (1991) by saying, "The meaning is a function of how the individual creates meaning from his or her experiences. We all conceive of the external reality somewhat differently, based on our unique set of experiences with the world and our beliefs about them" (p. 10).

The instructor, from a constructivist view, would provide problematic situations or ill-structured knowledge rather than predetermined curriculum. Multiple perspectives of the curriculum would be used as opposed to providing simple conceptual illustrations. Self-evaluations are preferred (Kashima, Yamaguchi, Kim, Choi, Gelfand; Yuki, 1995; Kim, 1994; Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994; Vrasidas, 2000).

Pedagogical Philosophy (Instructivist vs. Constructivist)

Two opposite extremes for comparing pedagogical philosophy in Henderson's MCM, are instructivist versus constructivist. *Instructivists* believe an accumulation of knowledge has been archived and it is the role of the instructor to facilitate passing that knowledge and skill through clear goals and objectives (Rezaei & Katz, 2002). *Constructivists* believe learners build new knowledge from prior knowledge (Huang, 2002). Rezaei and Katz (2002) supported this stance, asserting that "people construct

meaning through their interpretive interactions with and experiences in, their social environment" (p. 369).

Morris (2009) claimed that Instructivists believe, "A body of knowledge has been developed and archived by generations of scholars, and the purpose of instruction is to enable students to acquire this knowledge and skill" (p. 60). The instructor's responsibility in the instructivist pedagogical philosophy is transmitting knowledge via designing specific learning goals and objectives and does not consider learner-centered learning or discovery learning. Instructor-centered teaching would be categorized as instructivism (Rezaei & Katz, 2002). Instructivists would defend the theory that "carefully designed direct instruction is more effective than less structured constructivist learning (Rezaei & Katz, 2002). An instructivist instructor would break topics into discrete skills while considering learners as empty vessels to be filled.

Numerous educational theorists have espoused constructivist pedagogy. Huang (2002) reported that theorists Dewey (1938/1972), Piaget (1896/1980), Vygotsky (1896/1934), and Bruner (1960) all theorized that learners could learn actively and construct new knowledge based on their prior knowledge. Constructivism, placing emphasis on the process of learning rather than the product, theorizes that "people construct meaning through their interpretive interactions with, and experiences in, their social environment" (Rrezaei & Katz, 2002, p. 369). A constructivist educator would present authentic knowledge as opposed to abstract knowledge by providing multiple perspectives, authentic activities, and real-world environments (Morris, 2009).

Some students have an instructivist preference for creating knowledge by listening to instructor led lectures as the instructor is considered the expert. Some

researchers have supported lectures when they are combined with more constructivist techniques. Lang (2006) justified lectures as being successful, but only by combining a variety of teaching techniques along with lectures. She also indicated that lectures allow the instructor to identify students who do not follow the curriculum and give students the relief of having the instructor rescue them from mistakes. Breslow (2006) asserted that, "excellent lecture sessions raise questions in ways that inspire students to seek answers together," and offer "the possibility of being 'plugged in' to a learning process that is shared in reaching understanding" (p. 1).

According to Kuh (2010), one constructivist technique that is effective and appropriate for workforce or career education is, making work relevant to learning and vice versa. Kuh stated:

> Research suggests that working during college is related to acquiring such employer-preferred skills as teamwork and time management. Employment also has the potential to deepen and enrich learning, as is the case when students participate in such "high impact" activities as learning communities, student-faculty research, study abroad, capstone seminars, and internships both paid and unpaid. When done well, those and other high-impact activities require students to connect, reflect on, and integrate what they are learning from their classes with other life experiences. Doing so helps students see firsthand the practical value of their classroom learning by applying it in real-life settings—which, additionally, often helps to clarify their career aspirations. (p. 3)

Kuh's reference is an example of constructivist curriculum delivery where students layer learning over prior experience, developing and increasing cognitive knowledge. Working students would actively learn and construct new knowledge layering on their prior knowledge, while placing emphasis on the process of learning rather than the product. The real-world working experience helps students/employees to

construct meaning through the social interpretive interactions of authentic activities (Rrezaei & Katz, 2002).

The college work experience is so effective for constructing knowledge that the U. S. Department of Education provides funding through Work-College Programs made available to colleges that integrate learning with work and service. Students working at least five hours a week have their on-the-job performance as well as classroom performance recorded as part of their total record. The desired results are to provide learning opportunities for the students to manage balancing study, service and career demands (Kuh, 2010). Many other educational institutions promote low-cost, potentially high-reward internships and pilot work programs as constructivist learning (Kuh, 2010).

Underlying Psychology (Behaviorism vs. Cognitive)

Behavioral psychology and cognitive psychology are the opposite poles of underlying instructional psychology in Henderson's MCM. Behaviorism is illustrated by programmed instruction, computer facilitated instruction, performance-based learning and mastery learning (Elias & Merriman, 1995; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). It focuses on controlling and shaping human behavior and performance. By contrast, cognitive psychology deals with how humans collect, store, modify, and interpret information (Heckman, 1993).

Observable behavior, instructor control, sequentially learned hierarchies, and learning outcomes are all characteristics of behaviorism. While learning objectives are clearly stated, measurable, and individualized, the psychology of behaviorism emphasizes instructor control, sequential learning hierarchies, programmed instruction, mastery learning, computer assisted instruction, outcomes, and performance-based learning (Elias

& Merriman, 1995; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Learning should progress through behavioral changes and in linear sequential order (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Cognitive psychology is concerned with mental abilities such as perception, learning, memory, reasoning, problem solving, and decision making and concentrates on learner control, knowledge structure, active self-regulation, and the learning process. Cognitive theory is based on the premises of how humans collect store, modify, and interpret their information (Heckman, 1993). Learning is viewed as whole patterns with perception, insights and knowledge as key characteristics (Merriman & Caffarella, 1999; Morris, 2009). The learner engages in self-examination, which is often accompanied by "feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 22). Merriam (2004) argued that "mature cognitive development is foundational to engaging in critical reflection and rational discourse necessary for transformational learning" (p. 65).

Mezirow (2000) asserted that, "A cognitive point of view is constructed from meaning schemes, which are sets of immediate, specific beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and value judgments" (p. 18). He related meaning schemes to culture in his claim that a resulting point of view may be the specific beliefs one has regarding particular groups of people outside one's own group (Mezirow, 1997). Points of view change more easily than habits of mind because we receive feedback on points of view and are more aware of them than we are of habits of mind (Mezirow, 1997).

Kegan (2007) wrote about how online students practiced cognitive learning as they "worked through the problems of the relationship of the individual to the group, and the transformative processes and dynamics associated with this learning and development" (p. 114). Conclusions from their research indicated that individuals valued

collaborative online learning but also preferred to be individually evaluated. They felt the online format did not promote social connections as well as the face-to-face classes. They expressed a lack of connection to fellow online classmates

Goal Orientation (Sharply Focused vs. Unfocused)

The extreme poles of goal orientation are sharply focused as compared to unfocused. *Sharply focused knowledge creation methods* apply clear, precise learning objectives, direct instruction, predetermined learning goals, tutorials, drills, practice, and rote memorization techniques.

Sharply focused goal orientation mirrors much of the same characteristics as what is sometimes called *high power distance*. Marcus' (2006) research concluded that high power distance cultures prefer complex, highly organized, highly categorized, highly populated structures and reference data with little or no relevancy. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) defined power distance as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (p.46). High power distance cultures believe that power, prestige, wealth, laws, rights, and rules, are distributed unequally (Marcus & Gould, 2000). Subordinates consider the hierarchy as a benevolent autocrat. They read few newspapers and rarely discuss politics with little dialogue and negotiation between hierarchy and subordinates. High social status and class have more privileges due to unequally distributed incomes, family background, and class (Marcus & Gould, 2000; Morris, 2009). Students are expected to be obedient and respect their instructors and elders (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

In contrast to sharply focused goal orientation, some instructors facilitate learning with unfocused goal objectives when they want to promote general and broad objectives.

Learning is promoted by students' practice of discovery learning through broad and open-ended learning goals (Edmundson, 2003). Those who prefer unfocused goal objectives favor general and broad goals with inductive ways to learn such as discovery learning, virtual reality, and conceptual methods (Edmundson, 2003). Grinnell (2000) explained the unfocused goal orientation by detailing discovery learning from the basis of prevailing scientific beliefs:

> . . . the goals of discovery assume that previous knowledge is incomplete or wrong. Discovery takes place at the edge of knowledge, an ambiguous place where no one has been before. At the edge, one must make risky choices and address hard questions: What should be done first? How does one recognize data, especially when one is searching for something never seen before? And when experimental results do not meet one's expectations, is it because one's original idea was wrong, or because the methods used to test the idea were wrong? Scientists have a saying: Don't give up a good idea just because the data don't fit. (p. B11)

Marcus (2006) indicated that cultures with a low power distance might prefer simple, informally organized and categorized structures and less structured data with some or much relevancy (p.34). Marcus and Gould (2000) described how low power distance cultures view subordinates as closer and more interchangeable roles. The hierarchical organizational and political power is more level with fewer differences in salaries and status. In learning environments with low power distance, instructors and students are considered equals with educational goals to let children take control of their own affairs as soon as they can. Students, preferring unforced learning goals, desire independence, don't ask for permission on important decisions from superiors, and seldom show formal respect or deference (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, Morris, 2009).

Hofstede's (2001) research found South Korea to be high power distance culture as compared to the United States as a low power distance culture. High power distance cultures consider students and instructors to be unequal with formal respect and deference. Instructor-centered teaching is dominant. Low power distance promotes social equality between instructors and students with student-centered learning promoted. Students manage and control their own learning, asking questions when they need assistance and are encouraged to actively discuss ideas with instructors, express disagreements, and give criticism in front of the instructor (Morris, 2009). The role of the instructor is facilitator, guide, and mentor. Unfocused goal orientation resembles Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) low power distance culture.

Instructional Sequence (Reductionism vs. Constructivism)

The extreme poles of instructional sequence are reductionism as compared to constructivism. *Reductionism* applies teaching techniques where ideas are reduced into a small, discrete set of ideas to test (Creswell, 2003). The curriculum is provided in small parts and is organized in logical order with the total picture coming together at the end of the semester. This approach is often referred to as scaffolding. "Reductionism postulates that learning is a complex process, and its proponents believe effective learning occurs only in a rigid and hierarchical progression with linear instruction. The curriculum is often divided and ordered into unrelated parts" (Morris, 2009, p. 62). Edmundson (2003) and Poplin (1988) asserted that the fundamental premise of reductionism is that as students are unable to learn higher-order skills unless they master lower-order skills first.

In contrast to reductionism, constructivist theory views learning as personal, with new meaning constructed with only a few prerequisites. Haney, Lumpe, and Czerniak,

(2003) supported the belief that students construct understanding for themselves. In this model, the instructor organizes new information meaningfully and presents it to the students through their previous experiences through whole pictures and the students break down knowledge components (Jonassen, 1991). Cubero and Ignacio's (2011) research described; "how teachers create an account to narrate certain events, how teacher and students use what they consider to be the culturally valid sources of knowledge, and how students appropriate collective constructions of meanings" (p. 245). The application of critical thinking by questioning concepts and explanations for the purpose of reasoning is encouraged by constructivist instructors (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Taylor and Willis (2000) documented a form of constructivist learning that is in clear contrast to externally-controlled reductionism in their description of changing how one learns in developmental terms. They explored movement along five dimensions. First, learners move "toward knowing as a dialogical process" (p. 160). They learn how they construct knowledge in light of new experiences and reflections. Second, learners move "toward a dialogical relationship with oneself" by learning who they are and the options of choosing to be another way (p. 163). Third, individuals move "toward being continuous learners" (p. 163). They become aware that learning is up to them. Next, they move "toward self-agency and authorship," where they "increasingly recognize their responsibility for their own actions, choices, and values and for the decisions they make based on those values" (p. 163). Finally, they move "toward connections with others," where they learn in community but retain their individuality (p. 163).

Experiential Value (Abstract vs. Concrete)

The extreme poles of experiential value in learning are abstract as compared to concrete. Ndoye (2003) and Kolb (1984) theorized the importance of learning through practical, contextualized, learning situations with hands-on learning experiences. *Abstract learning* emphasizes the value of theoretical knowledge while *concrete learning*, encourages real-life experiences. Instructors favoring abstract learning lecture using theories, textbooks, and accumulated knowledge. Alternatively, experiential learning would develop from apprenticeships, contextualized learning, service learning, and community learning.

Concrete learning is knowledge gained from real life or learning from external situations (Illeris, 2007; Reeves, 1994). An instructor using concrete learning would structure and organize a series of experiences that would positively influence each student's potential learning experience (Reeves, 1994). Mezirow (1997) asserted that engaging the life experience in a critically reflective manner is a necessary condition for learning. He maintained that, "the learner must critically reflect on his or her experience, talk with others about his or her new worldview in order to gain the best judgment, and act on the new perspective" (p.22).

Conner (2004) documented Knowles' practice of concrete learning through experience as integral to learning. Knowles' (1980) Adult Learning Theory Assumptions of Andragogy clearly relates experience to adult learning. The theory holds that adults bring with them a depth and breadth of experience they use as a resource for learning and that learning experiences exit in different dimensions. For example Knowles (1998) identified "direct embodied experience" as "an immediate encounter in the here-and-now,

planned or unplanned, involving us physically, emotionally, sensually, mentally, and perhaps spiritually" (p. 13). Other dimensions of experience include vicarious experiences, simulated experiences, collaborative experiences, and introspective experiences. However experience is construed, the ways in which it can be used in learning differs according to one's theoretical orientation. Tennant (2006) identified several uses by teachers: "First … teachers can link their explanations and illustrations to the prior experiences of learners…Second, teachers can attempt to link learning activities to learners' current experiences at work, home, or in the community" (pp. 196-197). Teachers can also create activities such as simulations, games, and role-plays based on experience. These activities can lead to learners' critical reflection on assumptions, but most importantly will build concrete knowledge (Kegan, 2007).

Instructor's Role (Didactic vs. Facilitative)

The extreme poles of instructor's role are didactic as compared to facilitative. Students that prefer the instructor to provide the knowledge and believe an instructor should be an expert on the subject matter would be considered to have a preference for didactic teaching (Smerdon, Burkam, & Lee, 1999). *Didactic instructional methods* place teaching as the primary focus of the classroom rather than learning, with curriculum delivery being rigid transmission of facts and knowledge. Students are considered passive receptors. The lecture format is prominent, with instructors supplementing learning content and materials for students while students absorb the knowledge and reflect learning content when evaluated. The didactic process is instructor-centered learning and does not place importance on the student's previous experiences (Smerdon, Burkam, & Lee, 1999).

By contrast, facilitative curriculum promotes authentic, student-centered teaching by guiding the learning process. The facilitative instructor would be a constructivist by helping and guiding the learning while building on students' experiences rather than from pre-determined facts (Singer & Moscivici, 2008). Smerdon, Burkam, and Lee (1999) stated, "The theory of constructivism is based on the idea that people learn better by actively constructing knowledge and by reconciling new information with previous knowledge" (p.8).

Facilitative instruction promotes learning as contextualized, interactive, and culturally constructed (Mooris, 2010). Instruction in this role assist students with creating knowledge from previous learning experiences, encourage goal setting, create various teaching techniques, promote self-regulated learning, and provide continuous feedback (Holly, Legg, Mueller, & Adelman, 2008).

Didactic and facilitative are combined for online learning. While the main responsibility of online instructors is teaching, they must also design curriculum and be a consultant, lecturer, evaluator, resource manager, and technical assistant. While teaching is primary, knowledge facilitation is required for the success of the students and class. By promoting student success, the instructor must also guide the students to develop autonomy, critical thinking, progressive attitude, and stellar organizational skills for effective online learning (Holly et al., 2008).

Research indicates that Korean students believe the role of the instructor is to guide the class and that the didactic instructor guides the students as a group. Students' initiatives are discouraged while they rely mainly on preexisting group relations or in-group ties. Harmony, face-saving, and shaming are used by the collectivist didactic

instructor and students do not speak up readily in class or large groups for fear of sanctions. The purpose of a Korean education is learning “how to”, earn diplomas, and provide entry to higher-status groups. A degree entitles the degreed to associate with high-status social groups, including the privilege of a more socially attractive marriage partner (Hofstede, 2001; Morris, 2009).

Students who believe the instructor is there for the purpose of guiding the learning and helping student to construct new knowledge based on previous learning; encouraging students to set personal learning goals; and providing feedback have a preference for facilitative teaching (Holly et al., 2008; Morris; 2009).

Value of Errors (Errorless Learning vs. Learning from Experience)

The extreme poles for value of errors teaching and learning philosophy are errorless learning as compared to learning from experience. *Errorless learning*, as indicated by its name, refers to avoiding and eliminating incorrect answers but, more importantly, encourages reducing the errors while learning (Mueller, Palkovic, & Maynard, 2007). Instructors who favor errorless learners encourage programmed instruction and believe that eliminating mistakes and answering questions correctly is preferable and beneficial to learners.

Instructors who have *learning from experience* encourage students to learn from their mistakes and regards making and collecting errors as a process of learning (Reeves & Reeves, 1997). Hofstede’s (2001) research showed a cultural basis for use of errors in learning with individualistic societies preferring to learn how to learn rather than how to do. The United States is considered an individualistic culture and educational system with

the belief that learning occurs from experience and never ends as a promotion for life-long learning.

Several researchers have addressed the relationships between discourse and learners errors. Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) found that students learned through their mistakes when they were allowed to engage in discourse with their peers. They defined discourse as primarily a way of sharing knowledge and subjecting ideas to criticism, as in formal publications, oral presentations, and question-and-answer sessions after presentations. Lakatos (1976) challenged this idea, maintaining that discourse could play a creative role as opposed to being negative critique by actively improving on ideas, rather than merely acting as a critical filter. This type of learning through creative discourse would accommodate students who prefer to learn from errorless processes. Coleman, Brown, and Rivkin (1997) concurred that cooperative discourse, as an errorless process, was much more relevant to learning.

Origin of Motivation (Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic)

The extreme poles of learning motivation are extrinsic as compared to intrinsic. *Extrinsic motivation* stimulates from outside the individual, such as grades, parents' encouragement, praise, and earning more money (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Keller (2008) related at-distance learning to extrinsic motivation provided by instructors and reported that e-learning or blended learning students responded with increased confidence and achievement after receiving positive reinforcement from instructors. In contrast, "Intrinsic motivation originates from within in regard to particular academic tasks" (Walker, Greene, & Mansell, 2006, p. 4). Factors such as internal satisfaction, a desire to learn, a desire to perform well, and succeed stimulate and drive intrinsic motivation.

Shiraev and Levy (2010) related motivation to background and social cultures. They referred to a study by McClelland (1998) that reported that achievement motivation is conditioned during childhood and is acquired from parents who stress excellence and provide affection and emotional rewards to their high-achieving children. Social norms may also be linked to motivation. A cross-cultural survey completed in nine countries and facilitated by Ng, Hossain, Ball, Bond, Hayaski, and Lim (1982) found a high correlation between students' achievement motivation and economic growth within the students' country. The greater importance placed on student's achievement produced more rapid economic development as the students became adults. Furnham, Kirkcaldy, and Lynn (1994), in similar research, found a strong correlation between individual achievement motivation and economic growth.

Wellman and Ehrlich (2003) analyzed earned credit hours as extrinsic motivation and found that students, employees, government workers, and others had their success measured by credit hours as a standardized measurement for increased potential. As a consistent measurement throughout business, industry, and education, credit hours surfaced as the most dependable dimension for comparison. According to Wellman and Ehrlich (2003) while credit hours validate the student with extrinsic reward, accumulated credit hours do not measure learning based on specific goals or results. On the contrary, industry's reliance on accumulated credit hours as a measurement for rewarding incentives with increased salaries and bonuses curbs participants' creativity and willingness to seek innovative classes. Wellman and Ehrlich claimed that students were reluctant to take service-learning courses as an intrinsic motivator because they didn't think their work would be adequately rewarded as measured by credit hours. Wellman

and Ehrlich found that some colleges and universities were working to correct the extrinsic motivator reporting, “California State University-Monterey Bay uses an outcomes-based approach: Students must develop a defined set of abilities – ‘university learning requirements’ -- to obtain certain credits” (p. B16).

McCormack (2011) studied learning motivation by assigning motivation projects to his students, one intrinsic and the second an extrinsic. He concluded that motivation differs, but the goal should be for each student to discover what makes his or her own success most likely. McCormack also maintained that achieving a difficult goal can have a permanent motivational effect:

> When you do something you didn't know you could do, or even thought you couldn't do, it changes the way you look at yourself. Those who succeed in achieving one seemingly impossible goal are more likely to believe that they can do anything else they set their minds to. (p. A8)

Program Flexibility (Instructor proof vs. Easily modifiable)

Extreme poles of instructional program flexibility vary from instructor proof as compared to easily modifiable. *Instructor-proof curriculum* does not allow flexibility or varied adaptations. It does not allow changing learning objectives or evaluations of increased knowledge, and restricts all learning content, materials, and processes. Students that prefer to learn from the strictness of instructor proof programs enjoy creating knowledge from well-defined learning projects and fixed learning schedules.

The opposite extreme pole of *easily modifiable instructional process* allows flexibility as needed for increased learning and effectiveness such as varied learning methods, lectures, experiments, inquiry learning, field trips, and authentic assessment (Reeves, 1994). Students that enjoy easily modifiable program flexibility appreciate flexibility of learning schedules and self-paced learning.

Henderson's (2007) pedagogical philosophy of the multicultural model considers that some students may prefer to learn from individuals or fellow students and often through socialization which promotes flexibility. While online courses promote student flexibility and convenience, they are also a very practical mechanism for socialized learning. Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) found that the Internet becomes more than a desktop library and a rapid mail-delivery system. It becomes the first realistic means for students to connect socially while knowledge building.

Regarding Korean preferences in classroom rigidity versus flexibility, Reeves (1994) reported that Korean students learn curriculum with rigid schedules and instructor-centered lectures. Theories, practices, and content are not questioned or challenged by the students. According to Reeves, the Korean classroom is a strict environment with ultimate respect for the instructor.

Accommodation of Individual Differences (Non-Existent vs. Multifaceted)

The extreme poles of the instructional accommodation of individual differences are non-existent as compared to multifaceted. An instructor using multifaceted accommodation curriculum recognizes the different learning attitudes, previous knowledge, experiences, motivations, cognitive styles, and learning styles of students. The instructor would also acknowledge and accommodate the ways each individual accepts, processes, organizes, and retrieves information. While many instructors acknowledge and accommodate the multifaceted instructional process, others do not believe in accommodating individual differences. Scaffolding and metacognitive approaches are two excellent and practical ways to accommodate individual differences

with multifaceted practices (Edmundson, 2003; Reeves & Reeves, 1997; Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld, 2004).

Shiraev and Levy (2010) reported cultural differences in preference for accommodating individual differences. They reported that Westerner cultures view their population as independent of each other while Asians view each other's as fundamentally connected. However, East Asians typically do not actively engage with fellow students for problem solving or coping with stress (Kegan, 2007; Taylor, Sherman, Kim, Jarcho, Takagi & Dunagan, 2004).

Kegan (2007) identified a wide array of learning materials and processes that promote accommodative learning with the connection of relationships in the classroom. Several researchers have studied accommodation of differences through reflection and discourse. Taylor and Willis (2000) asserted the importance of "trust, friendship, and support" (p. 306), claiming them to be critical for effective reflective or rational discourse. Taylor further indicated that the transformational process of building knowledge includes receiving support, connecting with family, and developing trust. According to Chua (2008), "Trust exists when there is a belief in the good intent of exchange partners as well as a belief in their competences and capability and their perceived openness" (p. 445). Choy (2010) proposed that students become more open, inclusive, reflective and willing to change when they critically reflect on their predetermined assumptions and examine their beliefs.

Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) theorized different accommodations through the use of authentic, creative knowledge materials to build understanding while students

dovetail knowledge with practical applications rather than simply emulating scholastic practices. They stated:

> Knowledge building pedagogy is based on the premise that authentic creative knowledge work can take place in school classrooms—knowledge work that does not merely emulate the work of mature scholars or designers but that substantively advances the state of knowledge in the classroom community and situates it within the larger societal knowledge building effort. This is a radically different vision from contemporary educational practice, which is so intensely focused on the individual student that the notion of a state of knowledge that is not a mental state or an aggregate of mental states seems to make no sense. (p.112)

Learner Control (Non-Existent vs. Unrestricted)

The extreme poles of learner control in instruction are non-existent as compared to unrestricted. An instructor using *non-existent learner control* believes that learners achieve better performance with greater degrees of learning control, so the instructor dictates the learners' entire learning process. Most Asian countries, including Korea, prefer non-existent learner control (Edmundson, 2003; Liu, 2007a; Reeves, 1994).

Less supervision is required of an *unrestricted learner-control* instructor, as the learners establish their own path, pace, sequences, flow, and decisions concerning their learning (Chou & Liu, 2005). In this model, learners control their own learning content and often establish their own assessments. Self-regulated learning or self-directed learning is supported by online learning, hypermedia learning, and web-based learning in the unrestricted learner control model. Student selected learning pacing, learning sequences, learning modules, and learning assessments are guided by students' own judgment (Chou & Liu, 2005; Morris, 2009; Reeves, 1994; Scheiter & Gerjets, 2007).

When unrestricted learner control is practiced, the teacher serves as a mentor to guide, challenge, and encourages the learning process. The teacher/mentor challenges

students' conclusions and uses a Socrates method, to question students to examine their conclusions and push them to formulate new perspectives.

Students who are directed by *non-existent learner control* developed a distinctive characteristic. This characteristic is reported by Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) as a feeling that the more they learned and understood, the less they had to learn. These researchers claimed this assumption stemmed from the fixed curriculum that dictated their work (Scardamalia & Berester).

Unrestricted learning lends itself to "epistemic agency" which means taking responsibility for one's beliefs or understanding how we learn what we learn (Bereiter& Scardamalia, 2000; Reed, 2001). Epistemic refers to the amount of control learners have over the process of their own knowledge building, including goals, strategies, resources, evaluations and more. Students or groups of students may work to improve their effectiveness in the classroom, to eliminate redundancies and produce efficiencies (Reed, 2001; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006). The more students learn, the more they realize they need to learn.

User Activity (Mathemagenic vs. Generative)

The extreme poles of user activity in learning are mathemagenic as compared to generative and are descriptive of learning environments. *Mathemagenic learning environments* are restricted and are usually based on instructivist pedagogy. Rothkopf (1970) described the concept of mathemagenic environments to reflect the idea that there are activities the learner can carry out that will promote learning. The activities are relevant to learning objectives, and to specified situations or places. The instructor establishes instructional objectives and learning tasks in a mathemagenic learning

environment, while students accept and comply with the instructional process without question. Instructors manage the learners by observing, controlling behavior, answering questions, reading textbooks, using software as opposed to directing cognitive practices. A mathemagenic instructor would direct the class with learning activities and textbooks but would also emphasize important facts and concepts of particular relevance (Morris, 2009; Ray, 2005). Mathemagenic learning environments offer activities that promote learning, that are relevant to specified instructor-designated objectives, and specific situations or places (Rothkopf, 1970).

Patel and Kaufman (2001) drew a parallel between mathemagenic and John Dewey's teachings of problem-based learning, as both concepts have students solve problems. They also pointed out that the approach has been tried in a range of academic settings, from secondary schools to business schools (Patel & Kaufman, 2001).

Contrasting with mathemagenic learning, *generative learning* emphasizes the learners' involvement and control of their own academics via creating, elaborating, and educational engagement (Reeves, 1994). Prior learning is the platform on which learners assign, build, and construct learning in a generative environment, as the emphasis is learner-centered. The students' involvement in their own learning process is encouraged by focusing on intrinsic motivation, creating, elaborating and presenting the newly-gained knowledge (Reeves, 1994). Learners' engagement is considered to be their method of procedure into active learning. While generative instructional strategies are considered to be learner-centered (Jonassen, 1985), the activities promote actual creation of meaning in learning and stimulates metacognition.

Katz (2002) expressed a controversial opinion about university faculty demands for producing research and its effects on curriculum, dialogue, instructor-centered teaching, and how students may not receive the faculty's encouraging involvement that influences generative teaching philosophy by stating the following:

> . . . most faculty members in universities confine their teaching to their own increasingly narrow research fields. Less and less effort goes into constructing intellectually comprehensive and coherent curriculums to help students make sense of the highly sophisticated knowledge they are taught. The dominance of research as the primary criterion for faculty hiring, reward, and promotion has increased the pressure for professors to publish -- more and more frequently in narrowly professional areas. Contributions tend to be framed in technical jargon and sharply focused. More and more, specialists address other specialists. Not only does that lessen the chance that they will reach general audiences, but it also means that the very language they use in their written work is different from their speech to students, who are not up to or interested in the publishable production of their teachers. And, of course, this problem is exacerbated by the increasing proportion of teaching done by graduate students (who are shooting for a professional foothold) and by non-tenure-track adjunct professors. (Katz, p.B7)

Cooperative Learning (Collaborative Learning vs. Unsupported Learning)

The extreme poles of cooperative learning are collaborative as compared to unsupported learning. Gokhale (1995) described *collaborative learning* as, "an instruction method in which students at various performance levels work together in small groups toward common goals" (p.1). Collaborative instructors engage active exchange of ideas among students in hopes of increasing interest and practicing critical thinking. Team projects and discussion promoted socialized learning, help students take responsibility for their own learning, stimulate higher achievement, greater long-term retention, and a greater degree of intrinsic motivation. Learning benefits result in more frequent use of higher-level reasoning, applying knowledge learned by transferring the applied knowledge from one situation to another, and greater time on task (Yazici, 2005). Cooperative/collaborative learning demands much preparation in time, persistence,

practice, responsibility, sensitivity to design, observation, and processing the collaborative learning experiences (Jehn & Manmix, 2001; Miller, 2003; Morris, 2009). Online learning promotes cooperative learning through group discussions (Smith, 2001).

Marquardt (2004) referred to action learning as a similar concept, defining it as a process involving small groups engaged in the resolution of real problems, taking action, and working to resolve the issues as teams and in an organization. Action learning is most often applied in the work force with real problems, whereas the classroom would be engaged in hypotheticals for critical thinking. Both are very effective for problem resolution (Cho & Bong, 2010).

Taylor and Willis (2000) examined learning environments by researching 23 empirical studies that reviewed the practice of fostering learning in the classroom. They found that these studies supported Mezirow's ideal conditions for fostering collaborative learning, including providing a trusting environment for learning, promoting autonomy and collaboration, and utilizing activities that "encourage exploration of alternative personal perspectives and critical reflection" (p. 9). Taylor and Willis reported other themes that arose from their research included "fostering group ownership and individual agency, promoting value-laden course content, recognizing the interrelationship of critical reflection and affective learning and the need for time" (p. 10).

Smith and Dirkx (2008) also researched collaborative learning and examined how people "worked through the problem of the relationship of the individual to the group, and the transformative processes and dynamics associated with this learning and development" (p. 30). Findings suggested that while individuals valued collaborative online learning, they also wanted to be evaluated individually. This supported the

contention of Elias (1997) that students build relationships with others when they work in groups but still retain their individuality. Participants in the Smith and Dirkx study related collaborative learning to the online environment. They noted that the online format did not lend itself as well to social connections as a face-to-face course would have; they did not feel as connected to each other as they would have in a face-to-face course.

In contrast to cooperative or collaborative learning, *unsupported learning* would encourage *individual* development, including and especially critical thinking. Elias (1997) commented on individual learning in adulthood, pointing out how individuals, practicing life-long learning move on a continuum "toward self-agency and authorship" as they "increasingly recognize their responsibility for their actions, choices, and values for the decisions they may make based on those values" (p. 163).

Cultural Sensitivity (Not Integrated vs. Integrated)

Extreme poles of cultural sensitivity in Henderson's MCM are not integrated as compared to integrated, meaning that cultural considerations are either integrated with the curriculum or they are not integrated. Cultural contextualization requires that the facilitator of learning should acknowledge multicultural realities, be aware of cultural divergences, understand multicultural ways of learning and teaching, and reflect sensitivity for multicultural differences. Integration of cultural sensitivity requires the instructor's knowledge of differences in learning, learners' needs, preferences, communication channels, and cultural values. Effective integration requires multiple perspectives and learning resources, flexible learning goals, collaborative projects, and varying assessments (Marinetti & Dunn, 2002; McLoughlin, 1999; Reeves & Reeves, 1997).

Culturally-influenced preferences in website aesthetics are a topic often neglected by scholars in human-computer interaction but highly relevant to online learning. Kim (2001) and Lee, Roehl, and Choe, (2000), identified aesthetic design factors of web home pages that elicited particular responses from South Korean web users based on 13 secondary emotional dimensions. Lee, Roehl, and Choes' study extended Kim's work to U.S. participants, comparing the original South Korean findings with U.S. findings. Results showed that U.S. participants reliably applied translations of the emotional adjectives used in the South Korean study to the home pages. However, factor analysis revealed that the aesthetic perceptions of U.S. and South Korean participants formed different aesthetic dimensions composed of different sets of emotional adjectives, suggesting that U.S. and South Korean people perceived the aesthetics of home pages differently. These results indicated that website aesthetics can vary significantly between cultures (Faiola, Ho, Tarrant, & MacDorman, 2011).

Taylor (2005) studied acceptance of cultural norms and found that people in cultures different from their own developed new habits and uncritically accepted many of the routines and norms of the adopted culture. They "absorbed" cultural norms without trying to make meaning of them. Yet, despite this uncritical acceptance of a new culture, participants reported experiencing a perspective transformation" (p. 368). Johnson-Bailey and Alfred (2006) explained that this perspective is "grounded in oppositional spirit" because Blacks and other minority cultures live in opposition to the cultural norm. The race-centric perspective focuses on the transformative learning of the group in an effort to raise race consciousness.

Summary of Henderson's Multicultural Model

Extreme poles, definitions, beliefs, and appropriate teaching methods for the 15 dimensions of Henderson's Multicultural Dimensions' learning preferences are summarized in Table 2 based on information from the literature.

Table 2

Henderson's Multicultural Dimensions of Learning Preferences:
Extreme Poles, Definitions, Beliefs and Applicable Teaching Methods

Learning preference Dimension	Definition Extreme poles	Beliefs	Teaching methods
1. Epistemology The study of Knowledge & how knowledge is constructed.			
	Objectivism	One true and correct reality	Goals, Assignments Objectives, & Readings
	Constructivism	Knowledge is constructed from cognitive skills	Taught with individual experiences and environment
2. Pedagogical Philosophy The belief of how knowledge should be taught			
	Instructivist	Accumulation of knowledge has been archived	Instructor-centered to recall student's achieved knowledge. goals and objectives
	Constructivist	Construct new knowledge based on	Instructor use of real-world

			prior knowledge or cognitive theory.	applications
3.	Underlying Psychology Foundational platform for building knowledge			
		Behaviorism	Ills. by program med instruction, computer facilitated instruction	performance based learning, Hierarchies, learner outcomes
		Cognitive	Concerned with how Humans collect, store, modify & interpret	Mental abilities such as perception, learning, memory, information problem solving, self-Examination.
4.	Goal Orientation Methodology for achieving educational goals.			
		Sharply Focused	Prefer complex, highly organized, highly categorized structure	Apply clear, precise learning objectives, direct instruction, rote memorization, goals, tutorials, drills, practice
		Unfocused	Prefer general, broad objectives	Broad, open ended goals, conceptual methods, inductive, discovery learning, virtual reality
5.	Instructional Sequence Process of Curriculum delivery			
		Reductionism	Reduce teaching into small, discrete Techniques-ideas for students to organize in logical manner	Curriculum order presented in Chunks

		Constructivism	Teach with whole Picture	Curriculum presented as a whole and students dissect Critical Thinking
6.	Experiential Value Learning from Experience			
		Abstract	Theoretical Knowledge	Contextualized learning experiences Lectures with Textbooks theories,
		Concrete	Learning from Real Life Experiences	Series of Life experiences, critically reflective
7.	Instructor's Role Purpose of the Instructor in facilitating learning			
		Didactic	Instructor-centered Teaching	Lecture Students reflect learning Construct meaning from lecture
		Facilitative	Student-centered teaching by guiding the learning process	Contextualized, interactive, goal setting, self-regulated learning, continuous feedback
8.	Value of Errors Learning from errors			
		Errorless Learning	Eliminating Errors	Programmed inst.
		Learning from Experience	Learn from Mistakes	Errors are a Process of Learning, Students engage in discourse

				with their peers, Question & Answers
9.	Origin of Motivation Stimulation to cause desire to learn			
		Extrinsic	Motivation originates from outside factors	Grades, parents, praise, encouragement earn more money
		Intrinsic	Motivation originates from within	Desire to perform well, success stimulates drives
10.	Program Flexibility adjustable as needed			
		Instructor Proof	Does not allow flexibility or varied adaptation-changing objectives.	Restricts Content & materials Creating Knowledge from well-defined learning projects and fixed learning schedule
		Easily Modifiable	Allows flexibility as needed to increase learning	Field Trips, authentic assessment, flex-schedules and self-paced learning
11.	Accommodation of Individual Differences Meeting the student's learning pref.			
		Non-Existent	Does not accomm-odate individual learning preferences	Instructor-centered Lectures
		Multifaceted	Recognize student's different learning attitudes	Scaffolding and Metacognitive Methods

12.	Learner Control The extent to which the learner controls his/her own progress			
		Non-Existent	Believes that learners achieve better with instructor-dictated Processes	Instructor dictates the learner's entire learning process.
		Unrestricted	Learner-control	Student self-regulated Learning, Online learning, web-based learning, hypermedia
13.	User Activity Varied techniques and methods of curriculum application			
		Mathemagenic	Restricted learning Environments Instructivist Pedagogy Instructional Objectives	Instructor observe, control, answer quest-ions, read books emphasizing facts & dates
		Generative	Learners control their own Academia Creat-ing, elaborating, and educational engagement	Students solve Problems
14.	Cooperative Learning Working together for the purpose of learning			
		Collaborative	Working together Learning	Socialized Learning Exchange of Ideas Critical Thinking Group Discussions
		Unsupported Learning	Individual Learning	Small Group Projects

15.	Cultural Sensitivity The degree to which cultural is influenced in learning.			
		Integrated	Cultural considera-tions built into prefernces learning curriculum	Acknowledge cultural divergences Flexible Learning Goals
		Non-integrated	Not considered in Curriculum	Learning Requires Translation/adoption

Cultural Sensitivity is a learning preference that is characteristic throughout all learning preferences with the opposite poles varying from integrated (extreme influence) to non-integrated (no-influence). All teaching methodology would still apply to each dimension in the same manner but would vary to the degree of extreme sensitivity to no influence based on the individual learner.

Morris' Adaptation of Henderson's Multicultural Model to Online Learning

Morris (2009) developed an electronic survey instrument based on Henderson's multiple-cultural model, measuring epistemology, pedagogical philosophy, instructor's role, program flexibility, learner control, motivation, accommodation of individual learner preferences, and cultural sensitivity. Her population (N=82) was Asian students who had taken online courses at Oklahoma State University in the United States but the study was limited to East Asian students who were Chinese (including Taiwanese), Korean, and Japanese.

Morris' instrument was developed and refined through statistical field test and the results of a pilot study. Validity refers to the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). To establish validity for the

questions in the study, both content and construct validity were addressed. The instrument was composed of 15 dimensions; each dimension consisted of two tendencies resulting in 60 high-correlated questions. They were selected for sampling content validity. The correlations of each item to total scores indicated that "content validity of the instrument was solid" (Morris, 2009).

Through the process of confirming construct validity, Morris concluded limitations of the instrument and recommended further studies. The instrument's construct validity could be further validated with additional culturally sensitive field tests, and additional Asian students; responses; however the limitations of the instrument were considered acceptable because it was newly developed and an exploratory research (Morris, 2009).

The electronic survey instrument included questions of demographics, forced-choice learning preferences on a Likert scale, and three open-ended qualitative questions, offering participants to acknowledge online complications and offer suggestions. Morris' findings concluded with the following:

> Asian students preferred to be deeply involved in their own learning activities.
> Participants seemed to prefer collaborative learning.
> Participants favored integration of cultural sensitivity in their learning.
> The overall learning preference showed similar scores between instructivism and constructivism tendency.

Additional complications associated with online courses that were recognized by participants of Morris' study were:

> Procrastination, self-control, time management, lack of feedback, lack of interaction, English problems, and communication problems, not able to ask questions to professors during online courses, self-control, English problems, lack of immediate feedback, online learning gives too many assignments and requires a lot of work, online learning is expensive, and does not save any money.

As recommended by Morris in her research conclusions and recommendations and coupled with the fascination of the Korean culture; this study validated Morris' findings, but focused on South Koran culture only. The research extended the study by adding multiple qualitative interviews for a mixed-method process and added triangulation to strengthen the findings.

Korean Cultural Characteristics

Henderson's Multicultural Model Considering Korean Learning Preferences

(1) Epistemology is how adult students prefer to learn or make meaning of learning. Burgmann, Kitchen, and Williams (2006) "culture does indeed influence design, but only to a certain context" (p.75). Curriculum should be designed to effectively impart objective knowledge to the learner and promote students' ability to apply this knowledge to the real world. The instructor's responsibility is transferring knowledge with criterion-referenced evaluation, measuring progress using comprehensive test and requiring students to demonstrate knowledge (Carson, 2005; Jonassen, 1991; Morris, 2009; Vrasidas, 2000).

Morris (2009) stated, "Asian students preferred constructivism slightly more than objectivism as a [epistemological] learning preference" (p. 117). The epistemological dynamics of constructivism is explained by Jonassen (1991) by saying, "The meaning is a function of how the individual creates meaning from his or her experiences. We all conceive of the external reality somewhat differently, based on our unique set of experiences with the world and our beliefs about them" (p. 10).

Korean youth believe that in order to be successful, the English language is the educational channel to successful globalization, prosperity, modernization, and power (Hofstede, 2001). Their identity is constructed around the strong influence of the English language as the powerful international mechanism for success. Kim (2005) stated, "Korean youth engage in constructing their identity in relationship to the global society in which English has become a powerful medium of international communication." Korans believe the English language is the mechanism for students' success, and this belief is strongly engrained in their educational, social, and cultural practices.

(2) Pedagogical Philosophy is the belief of how knowledge should be taught. Instructivists promote instructor-centered, accumulation of knowledge, goals and objectives. Constructivists construct new knowledge based on prior knowledge/cognitive theory and apply real-world applications.

Morris (2009) stated, "Korean culture has low masculinity and high individualism scores, and Korean students prefer stability and continuity. They tend to value order and are inclined towards the flow of relationships" (p. 10). She also stated, "Asian students preferred constructivism slightly more than Instructivism as a learning preference" (p. 119). Davis and Ginsburg (1993) stated, "Koreans found little difference in performance on informal life-related mathematical problems. However, on formal problems, Koreans performed best" (p. 358).

Morris (2009), states, “The United States culture tends to be a low power distance culture. The instructors treat students as equals and simply provide the learning materials” (p. 9). The role of instructor is facilitator and guide (Hofstede, 2001; Jaju, Kwak, & Zinkhan, 2002; Morris, 2009). Kim (2002) stated, “Americans tend to be different in terms of using speech while solving reasoning problems. Talking is apparently more helpful to Europeans than it is to Asians because, as researchers suggest, Asians tend to use internal speech less than do European Americans.

(3) Underlying Psychology is a foundational platform for building knowledge. The characteristics are behaviorism; performance based learning, programmed instruction, and computer facilitated learning (Elias & Merriman, 1995; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). By contrast, cognitive psychology deals with how humans collect, store, modify, and interpret information (Heckman, 1993). Cognitive learning also includes perception, learning memory, problem solving, and self-examination. It focuses on controlling and shaping human behavior and performance.

Observable behavior, instructor control, sequentially learned hierarchies, and learning outcomes are all characteristics of behaviorism of underlying psychology (Elias & Merriman, 1995; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). While learning objectives are clearly stated, measurable, and individualized, the psychology of behaviorism emphasizes instructor control, sequential learning hierarchies, programmed instruction, mastery learning, computer assisted instruction, outcomes, and performance-based learning (Elias & Merriman, 1995;

Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Learning should progress through behavioral changes and in linear sequential order (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Cognitive psychology is concerned with mental abilities such as perception, learning, memory, reasoning, problem solving, and decision making and concentrates on learner control, knowledge structure, active self-regulation, and the learning process (Heckman, 1993).

Kim, J. (2010) review of media choice found Korean students preferred clear pre-designed learning performance and that they valued learning outcomes. They chose the more preferred communication of face-to-face as showing a higher level of respect. This culturally-based learning preference might lead Koran students to find Western courses that relied heavily on email for student-to-student teacher communication.

Morris' (2009) study concluded, "Asian students prefer behaviorism learning theory" (p. 119). Yoo, and Huang's (2011) study focused on the content communication. They found that Korean students were intimidated by instant messaging and felt the need to understand the context as well as content. IM was not formal enough for Koreans as they were concerned about miscommunicating due to the lack of contextual cues.

(4) Goal Orientation is a methodology of achieving goals. Characteristics are sharply focused; students prefer complex, highly organized, highly categorized structure, and unfocused; students prefer general broad objectives. Nicholls (1989) stated, "Task orientation is a form of achievement motivation that involves the goal of developing one's ability to learn and grow" (p. 182). Cho and Kim (1993) stated, "In Korea . . . there is a special kind of work ethic, according to which future-

oriented and harmonious interpersonal networks are essential for success" (p. 1982). Morris' (2009) research concluded that Korea belongs to strong uncertainty culture. Hofstede (2001) found that students who come from a strong uncertainty avoidance culture prefer structured learning situations with precise objectives, detailed assignments, and strict timetables.

Yoo and Huang (2011) stated, "Uncertainty avoidance in a society is often reflected in formal educational systems. Students who are in strong uncertainty avoidance cultures prefer structured learning situations with well-organized objectives, timetables, and assignments" (p. 250).

Morris (2009), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) found that South Korean students showed very high scores in uncertainty avoidance. People in these cultures felt that unstructured situations were surprising, different, unknown, and uncomfortable.

(5) Instructional Sequence is the process of curriculum delivery and is characteristic of reductionism; reducing teaching techniques into small, discrete ideas or step-by-step detailed learning, and constructivism; curriculum presented picture as a whole and students dissect critical thinking.

Morris (2009) found "Asian students prefer reductionism with rigid and hierarchical instructional sequence" learning (p. 119). Asian students prefer instructor controlled learning which is also associated with behavioral learning and didactic process.

Asian students that grew up high power culture show a tendency to prefer constrained and hierarchical learning. The South Korean culture is

considered to be hierarchical as Koreans consider social, gender, ethnic and other groups to be unequal and this leads to differentiated behavior (Matsumoto, 2007; Shiraev & Levy, 2010).

Hofstede (2001) and Morris (2009) believe Korea, is a high power distance culture. Generally, in high power distance countries, curriculum, teaching, even learning materials are assigned from the department of education (Liu, 2007). Thus, these results supported a conclusion that learning is a very detailed, hierarchical instructional sequence.

(6) Experiential Value refers to learning from experience. Abstract learning emphasizes the value of theoretical knowledge, using textbooks, theories, memorization, and accumulated knowledge. Concrete learning, encourages experience-based learning. Learners who prefer to learn through abstract conceptualization mainly use analytical and conceptual approach in learning.

Asian students typically prefer abstract learning and are culturally accustomed to abstract lectures, memorization, and textbook (Morris, 2009). However, Morris' (2009) research found ". . . students who were studying in the US preferred real life learning, experiential learning, and practical learning" (p. 121). These learners rely on logical thinking and rational evaluation. They perceive objects or contexts analytically and less dependent on people. (Barmeyer, 2004; Pithers, 2000; Yamazaki & Kayes, 2007).

(7) Instructor's Role-The purpose of the instructor is facilitating learning. Didactic; instructor-centered teaching, lecture students, reflect learning, construct meaning from lectures, and facilitative; student-centered teaching by guiding the learning process, goal setting, self-

regulated learning and contextualized, are characteristic of instructor's role.

Research indicates that Korean students believe the role of the instructor is to guide the class and that the didactic instructor guides the students as a group. Students' initiatives are discouraged while they rely mainly on preexisting group relations or in-group ties. Harmony, face-saving, and shaming are used by the collectivist didactic instructor and students do not speak up readily in class or large groups for fear of sanctions. (Hofstede, 2001; Morris, 2009).

Regarding Korean preferences in classroom rigidity versus flexibility, Reeves (1994) reported that Korean students learn curriculum with rigid schedules and instructor-centered lectures [didactic]. Theories, practices, and content are not questioned or challenged by the students. According to Reeves, the Korean classroom is a strict environment with ultimate respect for the instructor.

Korea students believe the instructor is there for the purpose of guiding the learning and helping student to construct new knowledge based on previous learning. Instructors encourage students to set personal learning goals and provide feedback as a preference for facilitative teaching (Holly et al., 2008; Morris; 2009).

(8) Value of Errors is the belief of andragogical strength from errors. Errorless learning is learning from experience while eliminating errors is actually learning from mistakes. Students engage in discourse with their peers,

through question and answer, and consider errors to be an important part of the learning process.

Morris (2009), “Asian students prefer learning from experience theory” (p. 120). Hofstede’s (2001) research showed a cultural basis for use of errors in learning with individualistic societies preferring to learn how to learn rather than how to do.

Kelley, (2009) stated, “mistakes can be gifts, providing great grist for the mill of teaching and learning. I would suggest that mistakes may benefit the experience of classroom teaching and learning” (p. 285).

(9) Origin of Motivation refers to the stimulation that creates a desire to learn. Extrinsic refers to learning through motivation originated from outside factors such as grades, parents, praise, encouragement and earn money. Intrinsic motivation originates motivation from within and stimulates a desire to perform well for ultimate success. Lei (2010) stated, “Extrinsic motivated individuals rely solely on rewards and desirable results to act as a catalyst for their motivation” (p. 153). Morris (2009), “Asian students prefer extrinsic motivation theory” (p. 120).

Lei (2010) stated, “Intrinsically motivated individuals have a number of advantages over extrinsically motivated individuals because there is evidence showing that intrinsic motivation can promote student learning and achievement better than extrinsic motivation” (p. 153). Previous research studies have indicated that intrinsic motivation can promote student learning and achievement better than extrinsic motivation” (Schunk , Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). Origin of

motivation is an individual preference. “Apparently, intrinsic interests and satisfactions are the ideal sources of motivation in the [U.S.] college classrooms.

10. Program Flexibility refers to the ability to adjust as needed. Instructor proof instructional process dictates well-defined learning projects and fixed learning schedules. The process does not incorporate any adaptation of preferences or allow for flexible learning guidance. Instructor proof process restricts learning content, materials, and methodology. Learning objectives and evaluations of concepts are also restricted. Easily modifiable instructional program offers flexibility, flexible learning schedules, and self-paced learning. Multiple learning approaches and effectiveness of learning are additional characteristics of easily modifiable curriculum.

Morris (2009) stated, “Asian students prefer instructor controlled learning program theory” (p. 120). Easily Modifiable process incorporates lectures, experiments, inquiry learning, and field trips (Reeves, 1994).

11. Accommodation of Individual Differences is meeting the student’s learning preference. The extreme poles accommodation of individual differences in instruction is non-existent as compared to unrestricted. An instructor using non-existent learner control believes that learners achieve better performance with greater degrees of learning control, so the instructor dictates the learners’ entire learning process. Multifaceted is characteristic of recognizing the student’s different learning attitudes and promotes learning with scaffolding and metacognitive methods.

Most Asian countries, including Korea, prefer “. . . regimented and well-organized learning instead of self-regulated learning theory” (Morris, 2009, p.120; Edmundson, 2003; Liu, 2007; & Reeves, 1994).

12. Learner Control refers to the extent that the learner controls his/her own progress. Non-existent believes that learners achieve better with instructor-dictated processes. The instructor dictates the learner's entire learning process. Unrestricted promotes learner-control where students self-regulate their learning, online learning, and web-based learning with hypermedia.

Morris (2009) believes most Asian countries such as China, Korea, and Japan believe non-existent learner control is better than unrestricted learner control (Edmundson, 2003; Liu, 2007; & Reeves, 1994). Unrestricted learner control refers to instructional designs where learners make their own decisions concerning the aspects of the path, flow, or events of instruction (Chou & Liu, 2005). In other words, the learner controls and manages his or her own learning contents, pace, sequences, and even assessments. This view is related to self-regulated learning or self-directed learning. Morris (2009) stated, "Asian students prefer disciplined learning or instructor-led learning [non-existent]" (p. 120).

13. User Activity is characterized by mathemagenic and generative learning styles. Instructors control a Mathemagenic classroom and have class learning skills rigidly specified in advance on the class syllabus. Generative applies when the student is actively involved in and initiates their own learning.

Morris (2009), stated, "Asian students prefer generative learning theory" (p. 120). Hofstede (2001) found uncertainty avoidance in a society to be reflected in formal educational systems. Cultures of strong uncertainty avoidance prefer structured learning assignments with well-organized objectives and timetables.

Morris (2009) stated, ". . . most of East Asian countries such as Korea are strong power distance and strong uncertain avoidance countries. Research indicated that students who came from East Asian countries preferred authoritarian instructor's role, behavioral learning instruction, regimented learning and cooperative learning" (p. 125).

14. Cooperative Learning is group work for the purpose of learning. The dimensions of cooperative learning are collaborative learning and unsupported learning. Collaborative learning encourages socialized learning, exchange of ideas, critical thinking and group projects. Unsupported curriculum encourages students to work by themselves individually and work in small groups.

Bemak and Chung (2008) found collaboration and the exchange of ideas to promote learning and problem solving. Hofstede (2001) found Korea is a collectivistic culture. Morris (2009) stated, "Asian students showed a higher score in cooperative learning theory" (p. 120).

According to Hofstede (2001) countries with high-individualistic scores tended to score low in power distance, whereas highly collectivistic countries tended to score as having high power distance. High power distance cultures consider students and instructors to be unequal with formal respect and deference. Instructor-centered teaching is dominant. Low power distance promotes social equality between instructors and students with student-centered learning promoted. Students manage and control their own learning, asking questions when they need assistance and are encouraged to actively discuss ideas with instructors, express disagreements, and give criticism in front of the

instructor (Morris, 2009). The role of the instructor is facilitator, guide, and mentor.

15. Cultural Sensitivity- The 15th dimension of Henderson's Multicultural Model considers the cultural perceptions of student's sensitivity; how they accept/adapt different cultures into the mainstream society, the meaning of how they translate the cultural differences, and how students incorporate the dimensions of that cultural differences into the appropriate application Integrated refers to the culture considerations built into preferences of curriculum learning and acknowledges cultural divergences and flexible goals. Non-integrated does not consider the culture in curriculum. Learning requires translation and adoption.

Shiraev and Levy (2010) stated, ". . . Westerners tend to view a person as independent and separate from other people, while Asians tend to view a person as fundamentally connected with others" (p. 280). Morris (2009) found, "Asian students prefer culturally integrated learning theory" (p. 120).

Shiraev and Levy (2010) stated,

> Any given group (or individual), in reality, falls somewhere between the two hypothetical extremes and are relative to different social contexts. A person may be individualistic within their own culture, yet much more collectivistic as compared with other cultural groups. A person might strongly favor collectivism, but the culture in which he lives may be somewhat more individualistic than other cultures. (p. 45)

Hofstede (1980) stated, ". . . [Korean students] tend to express culturally approved emotions more frequently, have a stronger desire for group consensus, and are less tolerant of those who are different, and have a greater need to follow formal rules of behavior" (p. 61).

In a study regarding student's aesthetic responses of U.S. and South Korean web home pages, Faiola, Ho, Tarrant, and MacDorman (2011) stated the following about participants:

> The aesthetic perceptions of U.S. and South Korean participants formed different aesthetic dimensions composed of different sets of emotional adjectives, suggesting that U.S. and South Korean people perceived the aesthetics of home pages differently. These results indicated that website aesthetics can vary significantly between cultures. (p. 148)

Kim (2005) studied the impact that language brings to the different cultures, specifically Korean, and the educational impact of the English language. Kim concluded:

> Whereas the Korean language is associated with young Koreans' traditional values and culture, English becomes a place where their new identities and roles in society are constructed and defined in relation to the larger, global society. Because English is a powerful tool for social and economic success, Korean youth view the language as a privilege that they have over their previous generations. Therefore, they want to be associated and identified with the power represented by the language and the privileges available only for those who know and use the language. They are also well aware that the privilege and power are not equally accessible for all. Opportunities for learning English are not equally provided for all Korean youngsters since private foreign language schools are costly for most Korean families. More importantly, they understand that English itself does not guarantee education, social, and economic success even though it is a useful, essential tool. (p. 3)

English Language and Korean Culture

Korean youth believe that in order to be successful, the English language is the educational channel to successful globalization, prosperity, modernization, and power (Hofstede, 2001). Their identity is constructed around the strong influence of the English language as the powerful international mechanism for success. Kim (2005) stated, "Korean youth engage in constructing their identity in relationship to the global society in which English has become a powerful medium of international communication." Korans

believe the English language is the mechanism for students' success, and this belief is strongly engrained in their educational, social, and cultural practices.

This complex and conflicting social reality causes cultural issues, particularly for younger Koreans. Conflicting linguistic and social norms presents identity confusion for Korean youth. Kim (2005) asserted, "Korean students are socialized into their national culture as Koreans while becoming socialized into the global society and culture through learning English." This reality is intuitively relevant in the learning preferences in both classrooms and online learning. However, this relevance has not yet been demonstrated empirically, a fact that supports the significance of studies such as the one reported here.

Media and English Language Education

Kim (2005) has studied education, language, and social studies in Korean culture and has claimed that Education determines South Koreans' highest social status. According to Kim, "One's ability to use English in both written and spoken forms can be directly associated with the individual's position in society." As a result, school becomes the socialization of young Koreans. Kim reported that in Korea, "English is the primary foreign language in the school curriculum and is viewed as an essential means to social and economic upward mobility. Those who are knowledgeable and fluent in English have an advantage in academic and career."

Students actively practicing a language tend to take ownership in and develop association with the attitudes and culture of that language. As a result of the blending of one's native and linguistically-adopted culture, one's identity is at risk of changing. Kim (2005) reported that the English language is taught in Korea through numerous different curriculum delivery avenues such as educational institutions, social organizations, and

cultural activities. Regardless of venue, learning resources are most readily available through mass media such as the Internet, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, movies. Kim maintained the latter two have been particularly influential, claiming that "Among all the cultural forms, television and movies has become a major channel for cultural exportation and the widespread use of English" (p. 7).

The popularization and curriculum use of English-language media stimulated much interest among Koreans in American language, culture, and traditions but also presented cultural confusion. Kim (2005) reported,

> The Korean students in the English classroom felt that the United States is portrayed in the media as a nation of power and prosperity, which has a large impact on how Korean youth perceive and interpret messages transmitted. They understand how language can play a powerful role in constructing the mind of human beings and the way they perceive the world around them. For Korean youth, English symbolizes values, beliefs, and norms of a more civilized, modernized culture. These attitudes and perceptions are vital for constructing identity in association with the English language. English is not perceived only as a tool for communication; rather, it has become an ultimate end in itself that Korean youth are striving to achieve in their education. (p.5)

Identity Conflicts and Construction

While English offers prosperity and globalization for Korean students it also sends confusing messages and gives rise to potential identity conflicts than may require construction of a new identity for some Koreans. English presents a threat to the Korean language which is part of the national identity. English language is discussed with both resistance and acceptance among Koreans. Kim (2005) observed that they believe, Korean students are not provided with appropriate opportunities to learn about the cultural, social, and historical contexts of the English language as it relates to Koreans.

However, Korean students consider the cultural clash as inevitable and simply consider themselves as participants. Kim further stated:

> Whereas the Korean language is associated with young Koreans' traditional values and culture, English becomes a place where their new identities and roles in society are constructed and defined in relation to the larger, global society. Because English is a powerful tool for social and economic success, Korean youth view the language as a privilege that they have over their previous generations. Therefore, they want to be associated and identified with the power represented by the language and the privileges available only for those who know and use the language. They are also well aware that the privilege and power are not equally accessible for all. Opportunities for learning English are not equally provided for all Korean youngsters since private foreign language schools are costly for most Korean families. More importantly, they understand that English itself does not guarantee education, social, and economic success even though it is a useful, essential tool.

Kim (2005) also expressed additional conflicts within the Korean culture and identity related to language and learning that appear to give cause for both interest and concern. The following were noted regarding Korean adaptation to English language and American culture:

- They [Korean students] respond to a conflicting, confusing reality of Korean society in many different, unique ways.
- Some are resistant to English, but favor American culture.
- Some are devoted to learning English, but do not want to be assimilated into American culture.
- There are also those whose motivation to learn English comes from their fascination with American culture.

- They have come to learn how to reconcile the conflicts and define their own meaning of English education within the given reality**.**
- The struggle that Korean youth are experiencing in the world of conflicting values and cultures truly reflects their socialization process as members of both local and global societies.

Cultural Equality and Multiculturalism

Seeking equality for all social and cultural groups has become a standard value in education, work places, and society (Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Sears, 1996). Equality-seeking practice would most importantly apply to education as each student desires to be treated fairly and in accordance with the norms and standards with which they have been raised. In work places, employees also desire the same fairness in advising career opportunities (Huang, Huang, & Chiu, 2011). As a tool for gaining culturally equality, the concept of multiculturalism has emerged. Shiraev and Levy (2010) defined multiculturalism (et al.) as a psychological and theoretical view that encourages recognition of equality for all cultural and national groups while also promoting ideas that various cultural groups should follow their own unique paths of development through their own self-exploration.

Acceptance of multiculturalism and the valuing of cultures other than one's own is largely a matter of deliberate choice and attitude. Attitudes are formed early in life and are rooted in their given social system (Lee, Pratto, & Li, 2007; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). With their deep roots in both one's cultural system and individual experiences and identify with a cultural attitudes can be difficult to change, and can intrude into one's instructional design practice. This includes the design of online courses. To achieve a sense of the cross-cultural equality and fairness implicit in Shiraev and Levy's (2010)

definition of multiculturalism, it is necessary to understand that different cultures may vie learning-including online learning-quite differently and may reveal these differing vices as variations in learning preferences. Providing a scheme for identifying the variables of culturally-based learning preferences was Henderson's (1996) goal in developing the Multicultural Model. Creating a usable instrument for measuring and describing multicultural learning preferences in an online environment was the goal of Morris' (2009) research.

Culture and Online Learning

Technological medium of course delivery offers many conveniences and economical attributes but can also promote cultural discord from lack of multiculturalism. Waldschmidt (2002) identified several educational challenges in online learning across cultures, including the lack of adequate preparation, language loss, cultural identity conflicts, and limited access to technology. Cultural differences in preferred course terminology and methodology can differ widely from formats used in Western-constructed courses. For example, online courses can employ e-mail, video conferencing, group discussion, and blogs for course communications. Lee's (2000) review of media choice found that Korean employees perceived e-mail as less appropriate for use in communicating with superiors in the work force. They chose the more preferred communication of face-to-face as showing a higher level of respect. This culturally-based learning preference might lead Koran students to find Western courses that relied heavily on email for student-to-student teacher communication.

As online learning increases in availability and use, the question arises: At what point do the conveniences and value of online courses outweigh the cultural unsettling

and confusing differences and to what extend are international students expected to compromise their culture needs and expectations to learn from Western-constructed online courses?

Americanization of Cultures

The degree to which international students have become Americanized is another delicately balanced factor that must be considered to achieve excellent online course construction. *Americanization* is the term used to refer to the movement of immigrants to the United States and their assimilation of American traditions, speech, and way of life (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2000-2007). America's culture was the dominant global culture for most of the 20th Century, however that has increasingly changed with politics, media, fast food restaurants and theme parks (Pells, 2009, p.B4). Mirel (2010) stated, "Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding for teaching citizenship and English to adult immigrants constituted the largest such program backed by the New Deal Agency and witnessed the birth of the intercultural education movement" (p.368). The strong influence promoted the sense of "becoming white" (Mirel, 2010, p.368).

American cultural icons that have mesmerized consumers and influenced youth worldwide include: Bruce Springsteen, Walt Disney's theme parks, Broadway musical *Rent* (translated into more than 20 languages), Hollywood's Blockbuster movie sales, and international film festivals (Pells, 2009, p.B5). America's cultural exports have less allure today than they once did. Pells (2009) reported, "In 1998, American films accounted for 70 percent of the tickets sold in South Korea. That figure has fallen to less than 50 percent" (p. B8).

Americanization is a term popularly used to describe the adaptation from one culture, conforming to American traditions and culture. This transformation often results from listening to American music, watching Hollywood movies, and becoming fascinated by American pop culture. The term and concept of Americanization was derived during the first quarter of the 20th century to describe the phenomenon whereby immigrants into the United States assimilated American traditions and behaviors such as speech, ideals, clothing, trends, traditions, and culture (The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2011). Americanization began when local governments, business, industrial regions, and social workers wanted to improve slum conditions surrounding immigrants, and organized to form, propagandize, and agitate aid from municipal, state, and federal governments in an effort to indoctrinate immigrants into American ways. Subsequently:

> The coming of World War I with the resultant heightening of U.S. nationalism strengthened the movement. The Federal Bureau of Education and the Federal Bureau of Naturalization joined in the crusade and aided the private Americanization groups. Large rallies, patriotic naturalization proceedings, and Fourth of July celebrations characterized the campaign. When the United States entered into the war, Americanization was made an official part of the war effort. Many states passed legislation providing for the education and Americanization of the foreign-born. The anti-Communist drive conducted by the Dept. of Justice in 1919–20 stimulated the movement and led to even greater legislative action on behalf of Americanization. Virtually every state that had a substantial foreign-born population had provided educational facilities for the immigrant by 1921. (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2007)

Because language provided a significant role to one's identity, it has played an important role in Americanization. Kim (2005) stated, "People who are using or speaking a language tend to develop attitudes toward the language in association with its culture (p. 1). Kim (2005) reported that Korean youth build their own personal identity in relationship to the global society. English became a powerful medium of international

communications, international business, politics, education, culture, communications, and is strongly reflected in Korean educational, social, and cultural meaning. Kim (2005) stated, "English is associated with globalization, prosperity, modernization, and power; therefore, English language education is highly promoted and forcefully encouraged among Korean youth" (p. 30).

This same language revolution is strongly promoted through the media in pop culture, clothing, music, and entertainment. The conflicting social reality and values presents identity challenges for Korean students while the English language appears to become more important than their academic major (Kim, 2005). The media provides a very convenient, efficient, popular, and accessible means for learning English, but certainly presents concerns for Korean students' identity. According to Kim:

> They understand how language can play a powerful role in constructing the mind of human beings and the way they perceive the world around them. For Korean youth, English symbolizes values, beliefs, and norms of a more civilized, modernized culture. English is not perceived only as a tool for communication; rather, it has become an ultimate end in itself that Korean youth are striving to achieve in their education. (2005, p. 2)

In an effort to prevent biasing the results of this research by the influence of Americanization on Korean students, the time limit of 15 years for Korean participants to have lived in the United States was applied as a criterion for the population. Despite a lengthy search, this research had to conclude the research literature does not indicate a given or set number of years for Americanization to affect the cultural norm. The presumption in the literature appears to be that students would vary individually in the number of years that their cultural preferences and expectations change due to exposure to American culture. Using techniques described in Chapter III, this study attempted to

present unbiased data free of conflicting social reality and values from Korean students compared to American students as described by Kim (2005).

Americanization

Lee (2007) stated "As a culturally diverse group usually interacts with the mainstream culture, cultural modes and values slowly evolve" (pp. 47-84). Padilla (1980) believes that individuals conform to different levels of attachment and involvement in the mainstream culture. Individuals slowly adapt and conform to the new practices, behavior, and cultures, often attracted through pop-culture.

The literature does not designated a specific time frame that promotes degrees of Americanization, nor does it set a length of time that determines a full conversion of Korean culture change to full American cultural practices. Research conducted by Tsai, Ying, and Lee (2000) found that the relationship between being American and being Asian was influenced by age of immigration more than length of time spent in the United States. A qualitative interviewee expressed the same belief by saying, "Believe Americanization is different depending on age when come to U.S. Late teenager or early 20s will stick more to Korean culture. Language barrier big problem" (personal interview,12.02.2011).

For the purpose of this research, the limit of 15 years to have lived in the United States was used to prevent the total conversion of Korean culture to Americanization. Without literary reference sources and since Koreans keep their culture identity, the 15 year limit was selected in an effort to prevent skewing the results of the study. Koreans have adopted many U.S. cultural habits even while still living in their native home of Korea, but they still possess an attitude and cultural habits that are considered native to

Korean culture and much different than those of Americans even after living in the United States for a considerable length of time. The hopes of the time limit was to not extend the length of time to the degree that the participants would be totally Americanized, but also to not shorten the length of time to such that many qualifying participants would potentially be eliminated.

Suggestions for time limits and their opinions of a time limit of 15 years were solicited from qualitative interviewees. A Korean volunteer was asked how long they thought it took for Korean students to become Americanized while living in the United States. They were also asked to reflect on the 15 year mark to determine if that would be a fair benchmark. The reply was,

> The kind of culture within Korean culture is quite deep and we do not change. We do adopt clothing, music, entertainment. What they do not adopt manners, personal attitude between people from Americans. Korean manners different from American culture and define how we behave from Americans. America-everything is equal. Women have more priority. Men in America respect women better. They know that they have to follow if they can adapt things in America. Fifteen years ago, Korean and Americans really different-now quite similar. Will be more different but not like real big cause Koreans keep their culture. (personal interview, 12.2.2011)

The interviewee felt the conservation of their native practices of manners and attitudes were still very reflective in the curriculum and methods of learning. She did not feel the Americanization would change their preferences of learning. While many changes take place with pop culture in 15 years, Koreans, in her opinion, conserve their culture as it is deeply engrained in their cultural pride.

The literature does, however, document conversions of American practices even in the country of Korea as an important practice of their educational process, workforce, and language. Brender (2006) stated, “Fed up with the resistance of academics, the

government has begun a huge overhaul of higher education, hoping for a more democratic system but raising the ire of professors, administrators, and students who resent the top-down approach" (p. A50). Among many changes in the colleges and universities, the Korean government also proposes American-style graduate programs.

Youn Dae Euh, President of Korea University, in an effort to increase research and University publications, increased English language in his university's classrooms (Brender, 2006, p. A55). President Euh, hoping to increase two-thirds of the classes taught in English by 2010, "increased the amount of classes taught in English by 5 percent to 30 percent" (Brender, 2006, p. A56).

Another qualitative interviewees were asked how long he thought it took for Korean students to become Americanized when they come to the United States and what his opinion was of using 15 year time limit. His reply was, "No set time. . . Asian cultures already wear clothing, listen to music, and practice American way while still living in Korean. Not that so different in my country" (personal interview, 12.2.2011).

Yet another Korean student that has been in the United States for 10 years as a student was asked his opinion of Americanization and the 15 year time limit. He offered a totally different perspective that he believed students did not easily change their culture and that the change, in his opinion, would possibly take one and a half generations to even compromise half Korean and half American. He also believed the age of entrance into the United States was an important factor that would juxtapose the process. He stated,

> Early on, in the study-struggle. Some things in his Korean culture lost-a little bit Americanized [meaning that he lost some Korean culture and gained some

> American culture]. Over 30 or late 20 [referring to age of Koran at the time of entrance into U.S.] will stick to more Korean culture. Korean still like Korean church, shopping [he enjoyed shopping Wal-Mart], and food- still big thing. Korean have desire to meet friends but language barrier big thing. Korean people still don't understand language after many years. (personal interview, 12-2-2011)

They recognized that their Korean culture has already adapted many of the American cultural practices without even leaving their home county. They could not recognize a difference in Korean preferences from native country to the United States with regard to entertainment, clothing, media, and pop culture. However, their preference for their native food made a very large difference. Korean interviewees did not recommend a set time as a measurement for Americanization conversion and did indicate that it would vary with age, but did recognize that they value and conserve much of their native Korean culture as a matter of pride and obligation.

Transactional Distance

All 15 learning preference dimensions of Henderson's Multi-Cultural Model were proposed in this study to filter through Moore's Transactional Distance Theory (1983) as a logical component in online learning. Transactional distance (Moore, 1996; Moore & Kearsley, 2005) was proposed to influence all 15 learning preference dimensions by theorizing the need for appropriate social and psychological distance between teacher and learner based on learner autonomy, distance, dialog, structure preference and research. As a prime example of challenging students to advance the frontiers of knowledge as recommended by Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) and Stone (1996), transactional distance is established by the course structure and learner autonomy preferences (Moore & Kearsley, 2005). The four elements of Moore's Transactional Distance Theory (1983)

and Henderson's Multiple Cultural Model (1996) of students' 15 learning preferences are further explained below with emphasis focusing on Korean students.

Chen (2001) explained transactional distance by saying, **"**Moore's Theory of Transactional Distance hypothesizes that distance is a pedagogical, not geographic phenomenon. It is a distance of understandings and perceptions that might lead to a communication gap or a psychological space of potential misunderstandings between people" (p. 459).

Transactional Distance refers to the social and psychological phenomenon related to the space between or among teachers and students. Distance exists in all educational relationships, including online, classroom, correspondence courses, and other educational processes. Transactional distance is established by the learner's autonomy and course structure (Moore, 1983; Moore & Kearsley, 1996). Elements of transactional distance theory are described by Moore (1973), Moore and Kearsley (1996), and Stein, et al. (2005) as follows:

Distance:	Psychological and communications gap that is a function of the interplay among structure, dialogue, and autonomy.
Structure:	Elements of the course's design, such as learning objectives, activities, assignments, planned interaction, and evaluation.
Dialogue:	Communication between the instructor and learners
Autonomy:	Characteristics of learners who control and manage their learning in a self-reliant way.

Low levels of dialogue and high levels of well-structured support materials increases learner autonomy and produces greater transactional distance (Moore 1993). Success requires more responsibility from the learner to be autonomous.

Transactional distance is decreased with high levels of dialogue and weakly structured objectives, requiring greater levels of ongoing dialogue with the instructor.

Instructors can reduce transactional distance by providing dialogue and structure. Stein, et al. (2005) concluded that when learners receive guidance through a high degree of course structure and high dialogue level, a low level of transactional distance results, dereasing learners' need to be autonomous.

Low levels of transactional distance result from high levels of course structure and high levels of dialogue.

Chen (2001) further explained that learners perceive four essential dimensions of transactional distance in distance learning environments:

1. Learner-instructor transactional distance involves the psychological distance of understandings and communications that learners perceive as they interact with the teacher.
2. Learner-learner transactional distance refers to the psychological distance that learners perceive while interacting with other learners.
3. Learner-content is the distance of understandings that learners perceive as they study the course materials and the degree that the materials meet their learning needs and expectations to the course.
4. Learner-interface transactional distance is the degree of user friendliness/difficulty that learners perceive when they use the delivery systems. (p. 462)

Chen (2001) proposed a transactional distance model, illustrating distance and the relationships among learners, instructor, and content as shown in Figure 2.

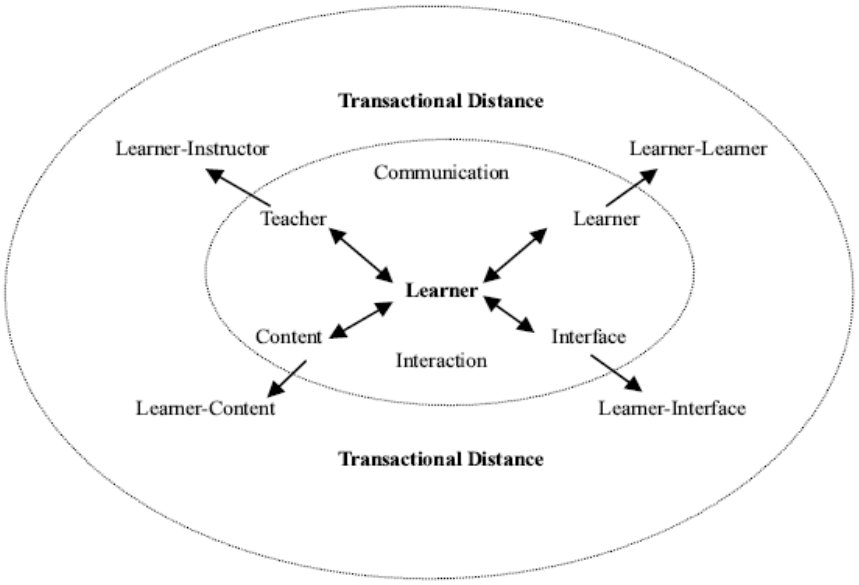


Figure 2

. Transactional distance and typology of interaction in distance learning environments by Chen (2001). Adapted from "Dimensions of Transactional Distance in the World Wide Web Learning Environment: a Factor Analysis. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 32*(4), p. 462.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

General Approach

This study used a descriptive mixed-method design that combined survey methodology to collect quantitative i.e. data with qualitative interviews to collect data for content analysis. Gay (1987) and Gay and Airasian (2000) asserted that descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of a phenomenon and to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Gay & Airasian, p. 275). This model fits the purpose of this study, which was to describe the currently perceptions and preferences of Korean learners regarding online learning.

One type of descriptive study is survey research. A survey is used in descriptive research to obtain information about the current status of a population or sample on one or more variables (Gay, 1987). According to Babbie (2004), there are four types of surveys: (1) self-administrated questionnaires; (2) face-to-face interviews; (3) telephone surveys; and (4) electronic surveys.

> This descriptive research combined two of Babbie's (2004) survey categories and used a self-administered electronic questionnaire delivered via the Internet. The questionnaire was based on an instrument developed and used in an earlier multicultural study by Morris (2009) to collect quantitative data about learning preferences in online courses held by Asian students. Morris' electronic survey instrument is based on Henderson's multicultural model and conceptualizes learning style preferences in terms of the cultural dimensions of the Henderson

Using this questionnaire as an online survey, accurately and conveniently accommodated participants because the instrument could be accessed via the world-wide web from any location, at any time. Use of survey methodology as appropriate for the

goals of this descriptive study was supported by deMarrais and Lapan (2004). They referred to Alreck and Settle (1995) as they suggested surveys as a process for understanding and predicting human behavior, and also referred to Rea and Parker (1997) to promote surveys as a method of understanding people's interest, concerns, and process the data as descriptive reflection of behavior, or preferential characteristics of respondents (p.285). These characteristics of survey research were congruent with the purpose of this study.

The mixed-method design of this study sought to confirm or refute Morris' (2009) findings regarding Asian learners' learning preference in online learning, which was enabled by using her instrument. However, the study also extended her research by adding qualitative interviews which narrowly focused on South Korean students taking online courses. The quantitative questionnaire instrument provided speedy responses, low cost, ease of scoring for most questions, and relatively fast data collection (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). The qualitative face-to-face interviews with volunteer Koreans promoted dialogue about open-ended questions and solicited depth, detail, and richness in their descriptions of preferences in online learning and their concerns in Western-based online courses.

Quantitative Component of the Study

The quantitative component of this mixed-method research used a web-based, survey questionnaire that provided quantitative data for descriptive analysis. This questionnaire was developed and validated by Morris (2009) in her dissertation study of the online learning preferences of Asian students in which she conducted a trial study and a pilot study. The questionnaire and itsvalidation are discussed below in the

Instrumentation section. The questionnaire consists of 65 demographic, open-ended, and forced-choice questions. The questionnaire was based on Henderson's Multicultural model and comprises both categorical and open-ended demographic questions, learning preferences questions based on Henderson's Cultural dimensions answered in 5-point Likert-type scales, and 3 open-ended questions about online learning. The instrument was web-based so that it was accessible to participants from any location. The quantitative component of this study provided data for direct comparison with the results of Morris' study.

Qualitative Components of the Study

The qualitative component of this study's mixed-method design came from qualitative interviews. Transcribed data collected from the interviews were thematically coded for analysis of emerging patterns of opinions, meaningful declarations, learning styles, and clarifications of Korean's learning preferences in online courses (Creswell, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Patton, 2002). After the completion of coding, the same data were open coded (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) for clusters and patterns of meaning. The results were dovetailed with Henderson's MCM and filtered through Moore's Transactional Distance theory to draw conclusions. The qualitative data were analyzed thematically using a process suggested by Creswell (2013). The participants' responses were organized into thematic categories formed by "open coding," defined as "coding the data for its major categories of information" (Creswell, p. 86). Each response was placed in its appropriate category or theme through the data analysis method of "constant comparison," defined by Creswell as "the process of taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories" (p. 86).

Additional qualitative data were obtained from three open-ended questions on the online questionnaire relating to problems, benefits, and improvements to online courses. Participants' responses to these questions were useful in developing questions for the face-to-face interviews. The qualitative component of this study provided depth and richness of detail to the description of Korean learners' preferences in online courses. It also brought to the study the interpretivist theoretical perspective that guided the study.

Variables of the Study

Because this study was purely descriptive, the concept of independence and dependence of its variables is somewhat meaningless (Blalock, 1961). However, the following variable classifications were proposed:

Independent- The independent variables for the study were those used to classify and describe its participants and the sample sub-groups. One set of independent variables were the demographics: (1) gender, (2) age group, (4) nation of origin (5) number of online courses taken, (6) level of technology skills, and (7) level of academic degree major (grade classification). These variables provided independent groups for causal-comparative cross-tabulations with the dependent variables discussed below. The second independent variable might have been the culture of the participants. However, because the study was limited to South Koreans, culture was actually a constant rather than a variable.

Dependent- The dependent variables were Korean responses to the online questionnaire. One set of variables was subjects' learning preferences as defined by Henderson's model of 15 different preference dimensions and Moore's (1983) concept of

subjects' transactional distance preference, including variables of distance, learner autonomy, dialog, and structure. Transactional distance is a relative variable rather than absolute and is continuous as compared to a discrete variable.

A second set of qualitative dependent variables were Koreans' perceived self-reported problems, benefits, and recommendations for online courses. These variables were derived from the 3 open-ended questions on the end of the electronic questionnaire. An additional source of data was face-to-face qualitative interviews that offered participants the opportunity to report suggestions and opinions not provided in the questionnaire.

Population and Sample

The population of interest was Koreans who had taken at least one Western-constructed online course. Participants were at least 18 years of age. The age criteria were selected based on the age limit of the Internal Review Board to practice research without special juvenile permissions. However, and most importantly, the age was also selected based on research by Newman (2012) which promotes the opinion of students as an important element of a quality of life. He stated, ". . . children have a right to live a good life with substance of beliefs and ways of life that gives relative value. This same right protects valuable ways of life from external pressures to change" (p.91-106). This interpretivist research will reflect the desires of Korean students without super imposing external change. In the same effort and in order to promote Korean students' valuable ways of life in the educational online courses, the number limit of 15 years was chosen for Korean students to have lived in the United States. To have lived in the United States more than 15 years could possibly skew the results.

In an effort to control the influences of Americanization, Koreans that have lived in the United States for no more than 15 years were considered eligible participants. Americanization is not determined by a set number or range of years that international students have lived in the United States. While much research has been performed to investigate the phenomena (Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000; Lee, 2003; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), results conclude that individuals' mainstream Americanization vary greatly based on age, gender, and many other factors. ". . . students may seek different levels of attachment to and involvement in the mainstream culture and their culture of origin" (Padilla, 1980). This population was represented in this study by; a volunteer sample, other participating secondary-educational institutions, and referred volunteers.

Instrumentation

Choice of Instrument

Morris (2009) constructed and validated a questionnaire to examine the characteristics and online learning preferences of Asian students in three parts: (1) demographic data; (2) online learning preferences on the 15 dimensions of Henderson's MCM (Henderson, 1996); and (3) perceptions about online learning problems, benefits, and recommendations for improvement of online learning.

Morris (2009) developed her instrument because there was no instrument available to measure Asians' learning preferences as conceptualized and defined by the 15 cultural dimensions identified by Henderson's MCM. Morris reported she was unable to locate any instrument that framed learning preferences in terms of cultural characteristics and differences and therefore had to develop such an instrument to be able to conduct her study as she conceptualized it and framed it with Henderson's model.

In determining whether to use Morris' (2009) instrument in the present study, this researcher considered the following:

- Using a new and not yet fully established instrument is acknowledged to be subject to risks of invalidity and/or unreliability.
- This study was conceptualized as an extension of Morris' study. It used the same theoretical support and cultural interpretations of learning preferences (i.e., Henderson's Multicultural Model).
- This study shared the contextual frame for which Morris developed her instrument (i.e., online learning in Western-designed courses) and the cultural background of the participants (i.e., Asian learners).
- No other instrument could be found that fit the constructs and theoretical stance of this study. Use of a different, inappropriate instrument would result in internal validity problems for the study.
- Using Morris' instrument provided baseline data against which to make direct quantitative comparisons with data from the present study.
- Morris' instrument focuses on interpreting learning preferences in a cultural context, thus supporting the interpretivist theoretical perspective that underpins much qualitative research on cultures or other social groups. This fully integrates the qualitative component of this study with the quantitative, permitting a true mix-methods design.
- Morris used acceptable procedures for initial checks on the validity and reliability of her instrument. This process is discussed below.

- Using Morris' instrument would give the present study opportunity to make a contribution to the validation process of a potentially valuable theoretically-grounded new instrument for researching cultural effects on learning preferences and instrumental design.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Gay et al., 2006). Reliability refers to, "The quality of a test such that it is consistent" (Salkin, 2008). Content validity and internal consistency reliability of her instrument was established by Morris (2009) through statistical tools, multiple field tests, and pilot tests. Morris first generated a pool of 94 items based on Henderson's 15 learning preference dimensions and the related literature. She then used correlation analysts to select questions from the pool of 94.

Correlation coefficient determines the degree of relationship between two or more existing quantifiable variables (Gay, 1987). This means, "Scores within a certain range on one measure are associated with scores within a certain range on another measure" (Gay, 1987, p. 316).

Correlation was performed by Morris by correlating in a sample of 60 high-correlation items selected for sampling validity, representing two items for each of the 30 tendencies (two extreme poles per 15 dimensions). Sixty items were chosen from 94 original items for the final instrument by selecting those with the highest correlations. A statistical field test and a pilot study were also conducted to establish validity. Additionally, Morris (2009) explained, "To check the underlying structure of the

instrument, exploratory factor analysis was also performed" (p.136). Internal consistency was tested with coefficient alpha. The coefficient alpha was 0.90 for the 60 question items, which shows a high level of internal consistency for the instrument (Morris, 2009). Morris' correlations are listed in Table 3:

> To establish content validity of test items for each tendency, the correlation (r) for the individual items in each tendency with the tendency or scale score was calculated (see Table 3). The 60 items had correlations to total scores that were distributed as follows: 0.90 to 1.00 - - 16 items, 0.80 to 0.89 - - 36 items, 0.70 to 0.79 - - 5 items, and 0.60 to 0.69 – 3 items. As shown Table 3, correlations of each item to total score scale was quite strong. This strong relationship indicated that content validity of instrument was solid (Gay, 1987, Morris, 2009).

Table 3

Correlation of Individual Scale Items to Total Score for Scale

Scale	First Item		Second Item	
	Item	*r*	Item	*r*
Objectivism	Item 1	0.84	Item 2	0.87
Constructivism	Item 3	0.87	Item 4	0.88
Instructivism	Item 5	0.81	Item 6	0.82
Constructivism	Item 7	0.83	Item 8	0.83
Behavioral theory	Item 9	0.87	Item 10	0.85
Cognitive theory	Item 11	0.75	Item 12	0.86
Reductionism	Item 13	0.84	Item 14	0.88
Constructivism	Item 15	0.91	Item 16	0.91
Sharply focused	Item 17	0.87	Item 18	0.92
Unfocused	Item 19	0.81	Item 20	0.60
Abstract	Item 21	0.89	Item 22	0.90

Concrete	Item 23	0.89	Item 24	0.81
Objectivism	Item 1	0.84	Item 2	0.87
Constructivism	Item 3	0.87	Item 4	0.88
Instructivism	Item 5	0.81	Item 6	0.82
Constructivism	Item 7	0.83	Item 8	0.83
Behavioral theory	Item 9	0.87	Item 10	0.85
Cognitive theory	Item 11	0.75	Item 12	0.86
Reductionism	Item 13	0.84	Item 14	0.88
Constructivism	Item 15	0.91	Item 16	0.91
Sharply focused	Item 17	0.87	Item 18	0.92
Unfocused	Item 19	0.81	Item 20	0.60
Abstract	Item 21	0.89	Item 22	0.90
Concrete	Item 23	0.89	Item 24	0.81

Source: Morris (2009), *Cultural Dimensions and Online Learning Preferences of Asian Students,* (p. 90-91).

Seven forced-choice questions were used to collect demographic data. Sixty questions with bi-polar, five-point Likert-type responses were used to measure Korean students' online learning preferences. The scale for these responses measuring learning preferences were; 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=no preference, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. Three additional questions in open-ended format were used to discover the participants' personal experience, recommendations, and benefits of taking online courses. A copy of the instrument is presented in Appendix B.

Description of the Instrument

Based on consideration of all the evidence benefits, and limitations, it was decided that Morris' instrument was appropriate and acceptable for the study and thus was selected for use. The entire instrument comprised demographic, questions, Morris' 60 items on learning preferences, and three open-ended questions also developed by Morris.

The learning preference questions covered the 15 dimensions of Henderson's MCM on bi-polar scales. These scales are defined as follows:

1. **Epistemology**-The theory of knowledge. It attempts to answer, "What is the nature of knowledge" and how is knowledge constructed (Vrasidas, 2000, p. 342). Epistemology is considered to be reflected in all of the variables of the Henderson scale as well as in a specific dimension of its own. The two poles on this dimension are Objectivism and Constructivism.
2. **Pedagogical Philosophy**-Concerned with how people learn and is divided into two extreme poles-Instructivist and Constructivist. Instructivists believe an accumulation of knowledge has been archived and it is the role of the instructor to facilitate that knowledge and skill through goals and objectives (Rezaei & Katz, 2002). Constructivists believe students build new knowledge from prior knowledge (Huang, 2002). An example would be from Rezaei and Katz (2002), which asserts that "people construct meaning through their interpretive interactions with and experiences in, their social environment" (p.369).

3. **Underlying Psychology**: The two extreme poles are Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology. Behaviorism is illustrated by programmed instruction, computer facilitated instruction, performance-based learning and mastery learning (Elias & Merriman, 1995; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). It focuses on overt performance. Cognitive psychology deals with how humans collect, store, modify, and interpret information (Heckman, 1993).
4. **Goal Orientation**: Sharply focused students prefer clearly stated learned objectives and direct instruction, rote memorization, tutorials, drills and practice. Those who prefer unfocused goal objectives favor general and broad goals with inductive ways to learn such as discovery learning, virtual reality, and conceptual methods (Edmundson, 2003).
5. **Instructional Sequencing**: Some students may prefer to learn with step-by-step, detailed instructions. Others learn best in an unstructured way. They begin with an unstructured process by learning general principals first and transition to specific knowledge later.
6. **Experiential Value**: Some students prefer to learn from experience and doing rather than other resources and enjoy learning from situations emphasizing practical, contextualized, and application learning (Kolb, 1984; Ndoye, 2003). Apprenticeship, community service learning, and contextualized learning are included in learning that values experience (Reeves, 1994). Other learners may prefer more abstract, experiences such as theoretical knowledge, and classroom learning where instructors largely

teach theories, build on accumulated knowledge and use mainly lectures with textbooks (Kolb, 1984; Ndoye, 2003; Morris, 2009).

7. **Role of Instructor**: Didactic and Facilitative approaches. Students that prefer the instructor provide the knowledge and believe an instructor should be an expert on the subject matter would be considered to prefer didactic instruction (Smerdon, Burkam, & Lee 1999). Students that believe the instructor is there for the purpose of guiding the learning and helping student to construct new knowledge based on previous learning; encouraging students to set personal learning goals; and providing feedback prefer facilitative teaching (Holly, Legg, Mueller, & Adelman 2008, Morris 2009).

8. **Value of Errors**: Errorless Learning or Learning from Experience. Some students prefer to repeat the learning process before being tested until they can produce correct answers and do not want to make any mistakes on their tests (Mueller, Palkovic, & Maynard, 2007, Reeves, 1994). At the opposite end of the spectrum are students who believe that making mistakes is part of learning and learning from one's mistakes is important (Reeves & Reeves, 1997).

9. **Origin of Motivation**: Extrinsic and Intrinsic. Students who are extrinsically motivated are motivated from outside stimuli such as good grades, parents' praise, and earning money (Merriman & Caffarella, 1999). Intrinsic motivation is derived from within the student (Walker, Greene, & Mansell, 2006, p.4).

10. **Program Flexibility**: Instructor Proof or Easily Modifiable. Students who prefer Instructor Proof instruction like environments in which they are not allowed flexibility and use restricted learning content, materials, and processes (Morris, 2009). Students who prefer easily modifiable instruction like flexibility and various learning methods such as lectures, experiments, inquiry learning and field trips (Reeves, 1994).
11. **Accommodation of Individual Differences**: Non-Existent and Multifaceted. Students who prefer Non-Existent instruction like curriculum presented without consideration of individual differences. Students who prefer Multifaceted instruction want acknowledgment that students have various learning styles and likes teaching that lets each student accept, process, organize, and retrieve information in different ways (Edmundson, 2003; Reeves & Reeves, 1997; Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld, 2004).
12. **Learner Control**: Non-Existent and Unrestricted. Students who prefer Non-existent learner control like total control by the instructor as he/she manages the learning process (Edmundosn, 2003; Liu, 2007a; Reeves, 1994). Students who prefer Unrestricted methods like teaching that allows students to facilitate their own learning through flow, events of instruction, pace, sequences, assessments, and path (Chou & Liu, 2005).
13. **User Activity**: Mathemagenic and Generative. Students who prefer Mathemagenic learning environments like teaching that offers activities that promote learning that are relevant to specified instructor-designated

objectives, and specific situations or places (Rothkopf, 1970). Students who prefer Generative learning like teaching that emphasizes the learners' involvement, and control of their own academia via creating, elaborating, and educational engagement (Reeves, 1994).

14. **Cooperative Learning**: Collaboration Unsupported or Integrated. Students who prefer Collaborative, cooperative learning like environments in which students work together in small groups and for common goals even though they may be at different levels supported for cooperative learning (Gokhale, 1995; Yazici, 2005). It can be unsupported or fully integrated.

15. **Cultural sensitivity**: Not Integrated to Integrated. Multi-culture sensitivity is necessary in order to produce effective andragogy, however often cultural differences are excluded in curriculum (Henderson, 1996). Henderson's model infuses the cultural sensitivity dimensions into the other dimensions.

Three open-ended questions completed the online questionnaire, offering the participants the opportunity to voice their suggestions, problems, benefits, and improvements for online courses. The first question asked, "What was the most difficult problem that you personally experienced when you took an online course?" The second question offered the participant the opportunity to voice, "What is the best benefit you personally experienced while taking online course?" The third questions presented the opportunity for students to provide suggestions by saying, "In order to improve online courses, what do you want to recommend?" Responses provided guidance for additional

qualitative, face-to-face interviews. The qualitative component of this study provided depth and richness of detail to the description of Korean learners' preferences in online courses. It also brought to the study the interpretivist theoretical perspective that guided the study.

Qualitative Interviews

Deeper understandings of the perceptions of the study's Korean participants were obtained from qualitative interviews. Questions were derived from the data obtained from the questionnaire and were designed to probe deeper into these responses.

Additional questions of learning preferences covering Moore's Transactional Distance model were used during the qualitative interviews. The four factors of Moore's Transactional Distance model are defined as follows:

1. **Distance**: The social and psychological phenomenon related to the space between teachers and students and between or among students. Distance exists in all educational relationships, including online, classroom, correspondence courses, and other educational processes. Transactional distance is established by the learner's autonomy and course structure (Moore, 1983, Moore & Kearsley, 2005).
2. **Learner Autonomy**: In an educational process, learner autonomy is the extent to which learners establish their own goals and learning experiences, and make decisions and evaluations as opposed to the instructor (Moore et al., 2005).
3. **Dialog**: Within the transactional distance theory, dialog refers to the discussion of a student with a singular fellow student, or among multiple

fellow students, and instructors. Dialog reduces distance. Transactional distance decreases as dialog increases because the learner is engaged with teachers and other learners. Conversely, transactional distance increases as dialog decreases (Moore et al., 2005).

4. **Structure**: Within the theory of transactional distance, structure refers to the rigidity or flexibility of a course's educational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods. Greater structure decreases autonomy and dialog, promoting more transactional distance (Moore et al., 2005).

Procedures

The first level of subject solicitation began with informing University International Student Services Directors (ISSDs) in detail of this study and its methodology, while requesting their support in promoting the process and encouraging participation by South Koreans. ISSDs and subjects were offered the opportunity to participate as they deemed appropriate and meaningful. Others contacted to elicit support included Korean professors, Korean club sponsors, Korean educational blogs, and Korean qualitative interviewees. All appropriate contacts were requested to notify their Korean populations taking online courses and encourage participation. Participants were completely volunteer and the survey was administered confidentially.

The ISSD of each participating post-secondary educational institution was requested to forward a letter via e-mail or list-serv to all South Koreans, inviting their participation and indicating the web address that transfers the student directly to the survey website, detailing procedural instructions and informed consent information. Participants that were eligible for the study were South Koreans, 18 years old and older

who had taken at least one Western-constructed online course. ISSDs identified potential subjects via their computer database. At the survey website, subjects viewed procedural options and could have declined if they wished. The instructions clearly indicated that the participant's act of electronically opening the questionnaire and completing it conveyed, by performance, informed consent to participate in the study and to have the information they provided included in the data analysis and reporting.

A gentle reminder letter was forwarded one week later via list serves and e-mailed from the ISSD. At the close of the questionnaire, subjects were given an additional option for a face-to-face interview. They could have declined or provided their personal contact information for further qualitative interview.

Korean born volunteers that are at least18 years old and have lived in the United States no longer than 15 years and have taken at least one Western constructed hybrid online or strictly online course, were purposefully selected for further qualitative interviews based on their points of view, opinions, and online experiences as obtained from the quantitative data. The narrowly focused population produced a small quantity of participants which best dovetails with snowballing sampling.

Snowballing or chain sampling research techniques were used to solicit participants. Patton (2002) and Seidman (2006) recommend snowballing as a successful sampling process to obtain information-rich descriptions by asking well-situated participants for referrals. The process suggested by Patton was used by asking, "Who knows a lot about _____? Whom should I talk to?" The process started with a select few subjects who completed the electronic survey and identified a number of subjects that were anticipated to be good participants. The snowball effect accumulated larger and

larger numbers of new information-rich cases. The referrals of recommended participants promoted an accumulation of valuable importance and experiences.

At the second level of snowballing, volunteers were also asked to refer other Koreans who participated in the electronic survey and qualitative interviews. The referral process continued for patterns of rich meaningful data. Preliminary inquiries for available Korean participants taking online courses indicated limited numbers available for the population. Patton (2002) indicated that qualitative research typically focuses on relatively small samples (p. 46). No set number of qualitative interviews was required as long as the information obtained is rich and meaningful and the topic is well saturated (Bogden & Bicklen, 1982; Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Patton (2002) and Seidman (2006) both recognized the snowballing sampling process as successful for broadening the line of significant data collection. This in-depth chain sampling was complete when the patterns of qualitative data repeat or reach saturation (Patton, 2002; Seidman, 2006).

The survey for this study was posted at http://frontpage.okstate.edu/coe/earlenewashburn. This was the website supported by Oklahoma State University (OSU) for use by the students of the College of Education. When participants "submitted" their responses, the data were forwarded by the OSU College of Education web-designer to the researcher's OSU e-mail address. The data were downloaded from the survey website to an Excel spread sheet and forwarded to the researcher in order to maintain confidentiality. Data from the Excel file were uploaded to the SPSS computer program for analysis. Strict data security was used according to IRB guidelines to ensure subject confidentiality.

Volunteers for the qualitative interview were given the researcher's contact information where they could e-mail, offering to continue the research project. The researcher scheduled a time to meet for a face-to-face interview with each volunteer. Open-ended questions were asked that encouraged the subjects to offer any information that they felt was necessary to improve online courses. Questions for the interviews were developed based on the responses obtained on the questionnaire and were designed to probe for deeper understanding of the quantitative data.

Data Analysis

The data submitted from the electronic survey were both quantitative demographics and learning preference Likert-type scales and qualitative open ended questions in nature. The quantitative data were extracted from the electronic survey and imported into the SPSS statistical software for analysis. Data analysis included descriptive statistics and inferential analysis as appropriate for comparing demographic groups and for contrasting and comparing data from this study with data reported by Morris (2009)using the same instrument and a similar sample of Asian subjects.

Qualitative data for this study came from the open questions on the questionnaire and the interviews. Patton (2002) referred to qualitative data as the primary focus in naturalistic inquiry and explained how qualitative data capture and communicate someone else's experiences/feelings/opinions (p.47). These data tell a story and give insight into open-ended interviewing. In this study the qualitative data were used to add depth and detail to the quantitative data. They met Patton's goal of capturing and giving voice to the experiences and opinions of Korean learners about online learning. The

qualitative data also provided a triangulation tool for the quantitative data and supported the interpretivist frame that enclosed the study and its theoretical perspective.

Thematic analysis was used on the qualitative data to analyze comments about online learning preferences and experiences offered by Korean students. Immersion of the data analysis included searching details and specifics that led to identification of important patterns, themes, and interrelationships. Patton (2002) recommends Inductive Analysis and Creative Synthesis as a productive theme of qualitative inquiry thru describing the process by saying, "Immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelation; begins by exploring, then confirming; guided by analytical principles rather than rules; ends with a creative synthesis" (p. 41).

Exploration of the data guided by inductive analysis and principles provided an ending with creative synthesis and conclusions of meaningful patterns. The process started by totally immersing in the qualitative face-to-face interviews and open-ended questions from the electronic survey instrument. Emergent into the data, reflected themes of learning preferences from the comments and developed patterns of meaning, repeating from one Korean volunteer to another.

As a precaution to prevent biases and increase the probability of accuracy and credibility, two other experienced Ph.Ds. also reviewed the data using the Inductive Analysis and Creative Synthesis approach of data analysis. Data were analyzed a total of three times, once each per person, in order to promote consistency and accuracy. Patton (1999) recommends "triangulation of data sources and analytical perspectives to increase the accuracy and credibility of findings."

Investigator triangulation strengthened the study by using more than one opinion of the analyzed data (Denzin, 2000). Triangulation of the data and varying analytical perspectives increased the accuracy and credibility. Denzin (1978) and Patton (2002) recommend data and investigator triangulation as the use of several different researchers or evaluators review the data for consistency of the conclusions (p. 247).

Patton (2002) describes Empathic Neutrality by saying, ". . . an empathic stance in interviewing seeks vicarious understanding without judgment (neutrality) by showing openness, sensitivity, respect, awareness, and responsiveness; in observation it means being fully present (mindfulness)." Empathic Neutrality was used to mitigate the researcher's bias, help maintain neutrality and avoid too close involvement or remaining too distant (p.50). While researcher bias potential in qualitative inductive analysis is often criticized. Patton (2002) pointed out that, "Unconscious bias in skillful manipulation of statistics to prove a hypothesis in which the researcher believes is hardly absent from hypothteical deductive inquiry" (p. 50).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Quantitative and qualitative data speak for the South Korean volunteer participants and indicate their learning preferences for online course construction. Rich, meaningful qualitative comments are generalized to the population and provide answers to the research questions.

Research Question #1

What is the demographic profile on selected variables of the Korean students taking online courses in the United States?

A demographic profile was constructed of the South Korean students who participated in this study. The participants were 18 years old and older, had taken at least one Western-constructed online course, and had not lived in the United States more than 15 years. Participants identified their gender, age, nationality, number of online courses taken, self-assessed level of technology skills, major, and level of degree program. In a mixed method research design, a volunteer sample of N=32 completed an online quantitative survey; a smaller group of N=9 offered contributions through face-to-face qualitative interviews. The electronic research survey did not disclose the location or institution in which the students are currently enrolled. However, of the nine interviewees; five students were attending a nationally accredited theological seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; one was attending a theological seminary in Oklahoma, two were

attending a university in Arkansas, and one was attending a career and technology school in Oklahoma. Thus, the locations represented were somewhat regionally dispersed.

As explained in Chapter III, it was impossible due to the sampling method used and the anonymity of the online survey, to determine whether any participants took part in both the online survey and the face-to-face interviews. As a result, the online survey group of *N*=32 and interview group of *N*=9 were treated as separate or discrete groups for the purpose of descriptive analysis, and no attempt was made to analyze a hypothetical total sample of *N*=41, which may or may not have existed. Allowing for possible overlap of participants in the survey and interview groups, the actually total number of participants could not be determined and could have been anywhere between 32 and 41.

The following demographic profile of Korean students taking online courses was based on the sample (*N*=32) who completed the online survey in this study.

Gender

Of the 32 electronic survey participants, 18 (56%) were female and 14 (44%) were male. Thus, the gender distribution was relatively equal for this group.

Age Distribution

The age group of 18-20 years old comprised 25% (8 students) of the sample, age group 21-30 years old comprised 25% (8 students) , age group 31-40 years old comprised 37.5% (12 students) and 41-50 years old comprised 12.5% (4 students), with no participants 50 years old or older. The largest group of participants was 31-40 years old, while the smallest age group of participants was 41-50 years old. The modal age was 21,

but this age only reoccurred four times which is only 12.5 % of the total electronic survey sample. The mean age was 29 years. As the age varied from 18 to 43 years old, the participating sample could be considered relatively young campus students.

Nation of Origin

This research focused exclusively on Korean students. The question of nation of origin was included in the electronic survey instrument as a validation for nationality authenticity of the participants. The researcher sought Korean student participants through university student services directors and personal contacts leads. All volunteers did confirm Korea as their nation of origin. Therefore, nation of origin was treated as a constant rather than as a variable in this study.

Time Lived in the United States

The electronic survey instrument was made available to students in the beginning of the fall (2011) semester, causing two students to indicate that they had been in the United States less than one year. They arrived in the United States just before the fall semester started. The modal frequency (n=7; 21.9%) occurred at both one and two years of U. S. residency. The bi-modal residency data suggest that most of the Korean students entered the United States specifically for the purpose of obtaining college degrees in the United States.

Number of Online Courses Taken

The number of courses taken was grouped into the ranges of 1 to 3, 4 to 6, and more than 6 courses taken. Of the 32 online participants; the frequency of 1 to 3 courses

taken was 12 students or 37.5%; 4 to 6 courses, the frequency was 17 students or 53.1%; and more than 6 courses was 3 students or 9.4%. The data suggest these students were relatively experienced and familiar with online courses and practices. Thus their comments should be informed and add value to this research.

Self-rated Level of Technology Skills

Almost two-thirds of the sample, (19 students or 59.4%) considered themselves "fairly skilled" in their personal level of technology skills. Only 6 participants (18.8%) considered themselves to be "novice" technology users, and 7 participants (21.9%) considered themselves to be "power users". This was unexpected from students whose native country provides high-speed Internet to 90 % of the homes, making their country aggressive for innovative technological practices as reported by Wang and Choi (2002):

> The Korean government identified advancement in the Information Age as critical for the nation's long-term growth by planning an information infrastructure plan for 2001-2005. The goal is to provide 20 Mbit/s Internet access to most households…at an affordable rate for high-speed Internet services. Korea invested US$10 billion for infrastructure build-out between 1995 and 2000. This plan laid a solid basis for providing high-speed Internet services, a telecom luxury available to Koreans as much due to population density as government initiative. Mobile phones have been taken up by 70% of the population. In addition, the number of wireless hot spots is claimed to be the largest in the world, 90% of homes are located within 4km of the telephone exchange and 60% of households are high-rise apartments as of 2001. (p. 49-50)

Academic Major

The majority (67% or 6 participants) of the nine face-to-face interviews (*n*-9) were from a theological seminary. Of the 32 electronic survey responders, the largest number of declared majors, (*n*=10; 31.2%) planned to develop a career in theology; with

many planning missionary work. The second most frequently declared major (*n*=9 28.1%), was education which perhaps suggests that some of the nine responders were planning to teach through missionary work. Science, the third most frequent major (*n*=9; 28-1%), included nurses and medical technicians of theology. Several qualitative interviewees expressed their desire to become missionaries during the face-to-face interviews. Only 3 students (9.4%) planned to work in business and only 1 student (3.1%) planned to promote the arts.

Level of Degree

Bachelor's degrees were most prominent among the participants (*n*=14; 93.8%). However, master's degrees were a close second (*n*=13; 40.6%). Doctoral degrees were relatively sparse (*n*=5; 15.6%).

Research Question # 1

What are the demographics of Korean students taking online courses in the United States?

Table 4 summarizes the demographics of the sample and its profile:

Table 4

Demographic Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32)

Demographic Variable	Number	Percent
Gender		
Male	14	43.8
Female	18	56.2
Total	32	100.0
Age of Participants		
17	1	3.1
18	2	6.2
19	3	9.4
20	2	6.2

21	4	12.5
23	1	3.1
28	2	6.2
29	1	3.1
31	2	6.2
33	1	3.1
34	3	9.4
35	1	3.1
36	1	3.1
37	1	3.1
39	1	3.1
40	2	6.2
41	2	6.2
42	1	3.1
43	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
Nation of Origin		
South Korea	32	100.0
Total	32	100.0
Length of Time Lived in the United States (in years)		
0	1	3.1
0.08	1	3.1
1	6	18.8
1.5	4	12.5
1.92	1	3.1
2	7	21.9
3	3	9.4
4	3	9.4
5	2	6.2
7	1	3.1
14	1	3.1
15	1	3.1
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
Number of Online Learning Courses Taken		
1-3	12	37.5
4-6	17	53.1
More Than 6	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0
Self-Assessed Level of Technology Skills		

Novice	6	18.8
Fairly Skilled	19	59.4
Power User	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0
Academic Majors		
Education	9	28.1
Business	3	9.4
Science	7	21.9
Health	2	6.2
Theology	10	31.2
Arts	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
Level of Degree Program		
Bachelor	14	43.8
Master's	13	40.6
Doctoral	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0

Females dominated the research (*n*=18, 56.2%) as compared to males (*n*=14, 43.8%). The participants had a mean age of 29 years old and a confirmed origin of South Korea. The dominant group of this research had lived in the United States for three years, taken 4 to 6 online courses (*n*=17, 53.1%), considered themselves to be technologically fairly skilled *(n*=19, 59.4%), and majored in theology (*n*=10, 31.2%). Bachelor students (*n*=14, 43.8%) only slightly outnumbered Master's students (*n*=13, 40.6%) which could suggest that younger students are more willing to take online courses.

Research Question #2

Based on Henderson's Cultural Dimensions model, what are the self-identified educational learning preferences of Korean students taking online courses?

Table 5 through 11summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of the Korean students taking online courses in Henderson's 15 dimensions.

Table 5 summarizes the self-identified epistemology preferences of the Korean students taking online courses.

Table 5

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32) **Epistemology:**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Epistemology		
I prefer to pursue theoretical knowledge.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	7	21.9
Agree	18	56.2
Strongly Agree	6	18.8
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to pursue knowledge for its own sake.		
Strongly disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	20	62.5
Strongly Agree	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to obtain practical knowledge.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preferences	3	9.4
Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	14	43.8
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to acquire factual knowledge.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	3	9.4
Agree	18	56.2
Strongly Agree	9	28.1
Total	32	100.0

Data show the epistemological learning preferences for Korean students taking online courses in descending order; prefer to obtain practical knowledge (90.7%, 29), students prefer to acquire factual knowledge (84.2%, 27), students prefer to pursue knowledge for its own sake (78.1%, 25), and students prefer to pursue theoretical knowledge (75%, 24). The results are consistent with the literature that indicates a strong cultural influence in Korean students as they are very focused on learning practical and factual knowledge.

Table 6 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of Korean students' preference for pedagogical philosophy while taking online courses

Table 6
Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Pedagogical Philosophy**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Pedagogical Philosophy		
I prefer to listen to lectures.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	4	12.5
No Preferences	6	18.8
Agree	8	25.0
Strongly Agree	13	40.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer instructor to lead the class.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	4	12.5
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	11	34.4
Total	31	96.9

No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I believe learning is derived from one's individual and social experience.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	13	40.6
Total	32	100.0

I prefer to learn through real-life experiences.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	2	6.2
Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	15	46.9
Total	32	00.0

The data of Pedagogical Philosophy reflect slightly changing preferences of Korean students from the traditional instructor-centered classroom to student centered learning as they prefer to learn through real-life experiences (83.8 %, 30), prefer instructor to lead the class (84.4 % , 27), believe learning is derived from one's individual and social experience (81.2%, 26), and prefer to listen to lectures (65.6 %, 21).

Table 7 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of Korean students' preference for underlying psychology while taking online courses

Table 7

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Underlying Psychology**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Underlying Psychology		
I prefer instructor specify designated learning performance in advance.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	3	9.4
Agree	14	43.8
Strongly Agree	15	46.9
Total	32	100.0
I value learning outcomes		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	1	3.1
Agree	19	59.4
Strongly Agree	10	31.2
Total	32	100.0
I value the learning process.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	4	12.5
Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	11	34.4
Total	32	100.0
I value reorganizing my thoughts vs. changing external behavior.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	4	12.5
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	17	53.1
Strongly Agree	6	18.8
Total	32	100.0

Korean students still place their greatest emphasis on cultural beliefs of academic success by valuing learning outcomes *(n*=29, 90.6%) while also focusing on the learning process (*n*=26, 81.3%). This is consistent with the literature.

Table 8 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of goal orientation for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 8

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Goal Orientation**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Goal Orientation		
I prefer clearly stated learning objectives		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	2	6.2
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	15	46.9
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer predetermined learning goals.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	14	43.8
Strongly Agree	11	34.4
Total	32	100.0
I prefer flexible learning goals.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	4	12.5
No Preference	9	28.1
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	6	18.8

Total	32	100.0
I prefer broad open-ended learning goals.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	5	15.6
No Preference	7	21.9
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	5	15.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Korean student prefer clearly stated learning objectives (*n*=28, 87.5%) and predetermined learning goals. (*n*=25, 78.2%), which is their traditional cultural and is also consistent with the literature. An increasing percentage of students prefer flexible learning goals (*n*=19, 59.4%) and broad open-ended learning goals (*n*=18, 56.2%) which is representative of changing traditional and cultural learning values.

Table 9 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of instructional sequence for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 9

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): ***Instructional*** **Sequence**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Instructional **Sequence**		
I prefer to learn step by step.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	1	3.1
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	18	56.2
Total	32	100.0

I prefer to learn in detail.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	2	6.2
Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	13	40.6
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to learn in an unstructured way.		
Strongly Disagree	3	9.4
Disagree	15	46.9
No Preference	7	21.9
Agree	5	15.6
Strongly Agree	2	6.2
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to learn general principles first and specific knowledge later		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	4	12.5
Agree	19	59.4
Strongly Agree	9	28.1
Total	32	100.0

A very strong majority of Korean students preferred to learn curriculum through step by step methodology (n=31, 96.8%) followed by another preference to learn in detail (n=38, 87.5%), but strongly disliked an unstructured learning environment (n=18, 56.3). This is consistent with the literature and Koran culture.

Table 10 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of experiential value for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 10

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Experiential Value**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Experiential Value		
I prefer to learn from textbooks vs. rather than any other resources.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	10	31.2
No Preference	7	21.9
Agree	11	34.4
Strongly Agree	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to learn from theory rather than experience.		
Strongly Disagree	2	6.2
Disagree	10	31.2
No Preference	12	37.5
Agree	7	21.9
Strongly Agree	0	0
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to learn by doing.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	7	21.9
Disagree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to learn through practical examples.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	5	15.6

Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	11	34.4
Total	32	100.0

The learning preference of Experiential Value were more evenly spread but did indicate that learning from practical examples (*n*=27, 84.4%) and learning by doing (*n*=24, 75%) were still most often preferred. The preference of learning by doing is also closely related to American cultural learning. Learning from textbooks rather than any other resources was nearly even for liked and disliked (*n*=14, 43.8% agree but *n*=10, 31.2% disagree).

Table 11 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of instructor role for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 11

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Instructor's Role**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Instructor's Role		
I believe the role of the instructor is providing knowledge.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	3	9.4
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	17	53.1
Strongly Agree	6	18.8
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I believe the instructor should be an expert on the subjects matter.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	1	3.1
Agree	11	34.4
Strongly Agree	19	59.4

Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I believe the role of the Instructor is for guiding the learning.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagreed	0	0
No Preference	14	43.8
Agree	17	53.1
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I believe the role of the instructor is as a mentor.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	14	43.8
Strongly Agree	12	37.5
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Korean students believe the instructor's role should be as an expert on the subject matter (*n*=30, 93.8%) and believes the role of the instructor is as a mentor (*n*=26, 81.3), providing knowledge (*n*= 23 68.7%), and guiding the learning (*n*=17, 53.1%) which is consistent with Korean cultural and traditional learning.

Table 12 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of value of errors for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 12

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Value of Errors**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Value of Errors		
I prefer to repeat my learning until I can generate the correct answers.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	4	12.5
Agree	14	43.8
Strongly Agree	13	40.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I do not want to make any mistakes in my test.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	4	12.5
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	13	40.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	*32*	*100.0*
I believe making mistakes is just a part of the learning process.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	0	0
Agree	19	59.4
Strongly Agree	10	31.2
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I believe I can learn through my mistakes.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	0	0
Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	14	43.8
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

The learning preference of Value of Errors was very strongly represented in all elements. Students believed they could learn through their mistakes (n=29, 90.7%), believed making mistakes is just a part of the learning process (n=29, 90.6%), preferred to repeat the learning until they generated the correct answers (*n*=27, 84.4%), and did not want to make any mistakes on tests (*n*=26, 81.2%). Because the numbers are so similar among the preferences, the elements represent a personal preference.

Table 13 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of origin of motivation for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 13

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): ***Origin of*** **Motivation**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Origin of **Motivation**		
I value saving time and money.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	3	9.4
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	14	43.8
Total	32	100.0

I value earning school credits more than I value enjoying the class.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	9	28.1
No Preference	10	31.2
Agree	12	37.5
Strongly Agree	0	0
Total	32	100.0

I enjoy a variety of learning activities such as threaded discussions or other collaborative activities with students and the instructor.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	10	31.2
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0

I enjoy online learning itself.		
Strongly Disagree	2	6.2
Disagree	9	28.1
No Preference	13	40.6
Agree	7	21.9
Strongly Agree	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Korean students value saving time and money (*n*=27, 84.4%) while enjoying a variety of learning activities such as threaded discussions or other collaborative activities with students and the instructor (*n*=21, 65.6%). They had no preference with online learning itself (*n*=13, 40.6%) but valued earning school credits more than they valued enjoying the class (*n*=12, 37.5%). The students' opinions are consistent with Korean culture and are also reflected in the qualitative data.

Table 14 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of program flexibility for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 14

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32):
Program Flexibility

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Program Flexibility		
I prefer well-defined learning projects.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	1	3.1
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	13	40.6
Total	32	100.0
I prefer fixed learning schedules.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	3	9.4
No Preference	10	31.2
Agree	10	31.2
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0
I prefer self-paced learning.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	10	31.2
Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	9	28.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer flexible learning schedules.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	4	12.5
No Preference	10	31.2
Agree	10	31.2
Strongly Agree	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0

Korean students preferred well-defined learning projects (*n*=29, 90.6%), self-paced learning (*n*=22, 68.7%), and fixed learning schedules. (*n*=18.56.2%) which is traditional Korean cultural learning and consistent with the literature.

Table 15 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of accommodation of individual differences for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 15

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Accommodation of Individual Differences**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
Accommodation of Individual Differences		
I prefer well organized learning courses.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	1	3.1
Agree	9	28.1
Strongly Agree	21	65.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer a well-planned learning curriculum.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	2	6.2
Agree	8	25.0
Strongly Agree	21	65.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to use a variety of learning materials.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	2	6.2
No Preference	2	6.2

Agree	11	34.4
Strongly Agree	15	46.9
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I prefer to have access to a wide array of supplementary learning materials.

Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	3	9.4
Agree	17	53.1
Strongly Agree	10	31.2
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Korean students preferred; well organized learning courses (n=30, 93.7%), preferred well-planned learning curriculum (n=29, 90.6%), preferred to have access to a wide array of supplementary learning materials (n=27, 84.3%), and preferred to use a variety of learning materials (n=26, 81.3%) which is consistent with the literature and Korean culture.

Table 16 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of learner control for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 16

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Learner Control**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Learner Control		
I prefer the instructor directs my learning.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	4	12.5

Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	11	34.4
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I prefer that the instructor gives me a deadline for my assignments.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	3	9.4
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	15	46.9
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I prefer to manage my own learning.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	5	15.6
Agree	20	62.5
Strongly Agree	5	15.6
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

I prefer to assess my own learning.

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	7	21.9
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	7	21.9
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Korean students preferred the instructor directs the learning (n=26, 81.3%), preferred to manage their own learning (n=25, 78.1%), preferred that the instructor gives a deadline for the assignments (n=23, 71.9%), and yet preferred to assess their own

learning (n=23, 71.9%). Each pole of the learning dimension is opposite and yet statistically close in data which leads the researcher to conclude that the learning dimension is a personal preference. The data appear to be reflective of the changing cultural practices.

Table 17 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of learner activity for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 17

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Learner Activity**

Learning Preference Variable	Number	Percent
I prefer that the instructor control my learning process.		
Strongly Disagree	2	6.2
Disagree	6	18.8
No Preference	7	21.9
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to have class learning tasks rigidly specified in advance on the class syllabus.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	4	12.5
No Preference	11	34.4
Agree	12	37.5
Strongly Agree	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to be actively involved in my own learning.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	3	9.4
Disagree	22	68.8

Strongly Agree	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0

I prefer to initiate my own learning.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	6	18.8
Agree	18	56.2
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

Students prefer to be actively involved in their own learning (*n*=29, 90.7%) and prefer to initiate their own learning (*n*=26, 81.2%). However, students also prefer, to a lesser degree, that the instructor control the learning process (*n*=17, 53.1%) and prefer to have class learning tasks rigidly specified in advance on the class syllabus (*n*=17, 52.1). The closely disbursed data is an indication of slowly emerging changes from traditional Korean culture to new processes of learning by taking greater control of their own learning.

Table 18 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of cooperative learning for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 18

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Cooperative Learning**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Cooperative Learning		
I prefer to work by myself without discussion with my classmates.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	8	25.0
No Preference	11	34.4
Agree	9	28.1

Strongly Agree	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0
I prefer individual learning.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	4	12.5
No Preference	10	31.2
Agree	14	43.8
Strongly Agree	3	9.4
Total	31	96.9
No Response	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to perform class projects in small groups.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	5	15.6
No Preference	8	25.0
Agree	17	53.1
Strongly Agree	2	6.2
Total	32	100.0
I prefer to cooperate with my classmates.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	5	15.6
No Preference	8	25.0
Agree	17	53.1
Strongly Agree	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Korean students preferred to perform class projects in small groups (*n*=19, 59.3%), and preferred to cooperate with classmates (*n*=18, 56.2%). The data also supported the dimension of preferred individual learning (n=17, 53.2%) and preferred to work individually without discussions with classmates. (n=12, 37.5%). The dispersion of data did not reflect adamant learning preferences but was supportive of each technique which, once again, supports a gradual change in Korean learning preferences.

Table 19 summarizes the self-identified learning preferences of cultural sensitivity for Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 19

Distribution of Learning Preferences Profile of Electronic Survey Sample of Korean Students (N=32): **Cultural Sensitivity**

Learning Preference Variable	**Number**	**Percent**
Cultural Sensitivity		
I believe learners' cultural backgrounds really affects learning achievement.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	3	9.4
Agree	10	31.2
Strongly Agree	17	53.1
Total	32	100.0
I am interested in my classmates' cultural backgrounds		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	11	34.4
Agree	12	37.5
Strongly Agree	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0
I am ready to accept cultural differences of both the instructors and classmates.		
Strongly Disagree	1	3.1
Disagree	1	3.1
No Preference	11	34.4
Agree	12	37.5
Strongly Agree	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0
I am ready to listen attentatively to others' opinions regardless of their cultural back grounds.		
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
No Preference	3	9.4

Agree	13	40.6
Strongly Agree	16	50.0
Total	32	100.0

Korean students are ready to listen to others' opinions regardless of their cultural back grounds (n=29, 90.6%). They believe learners' cultural backgrounds really affects learning achievement. (n=27, 84.3%) and are interested in classmates' cultural backgrounds (n=19, 59.4%). Cultural differences are accepted of both the instructors and classmates (n=19, 59.4). The results are very consistent with Korean culture as they are respectful.

Tables 20 through 34 address the research question with means and standard deviations of participants' rating scores on the 15 bi-polar measured tendencies on Henderson's Cultural dimensions and comparisons with results reported by Morris (2009). The response scales were five-point Likert-type scales.

1. Dimension of Epistemology

Four questions were posed to students in order to measure their epistemology preferences. The two extreme poles of objectivism and constructivism presented two questions each for assessment. The data in Table 20 show that the Korean students in the study preferred constructivism slightly more than objectivism. The results of this assessment are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 20

Epistemology-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD.*
Epistemology	Objectivism	1. I prefer to pursue theoretical knowledge.	3.88	.833
		2. I prefer to pursue knowledge for its own sake.	3.88	.751
	Constructivism	3. I prefer to obtain practical knowledge.	4.34	.653
		4. I prefer to acquire factual knowledge.	4.03	.897

2. Dimension of Pedagogical Philosophy

The extreme poles of Pedagogical Philosophy are instructivism and constructivism. Four questions were asked with two questions per extreme pole. As shown in Table 21, the Korean students preferred constructivism slightly over instructivism. These results differed from Morris' (2009) research where students slightly preferred instructivism. This could be an indication of the changing trend in Korean culture from the traditional instructivism where professors deliver course content through lectures to greater preference for individual and socialized learning through real-life experiences.

Table 21

Pedagogical Philosophy-Means and Standard Deviation of Learning Preference

			Mean	*SD*
Pedagogical Philosophy	Instructivism	5. I prefer to listen to lectures.	3.94	1.076
		6. I prefer that the instructor leads the class.	4.19	.693
	Constructivism	7. I believe that learning is	4.19	.821

		derived from one's individual and social experiences. 8. I prefer to learn through real-life experiences.	4.41	.615

3. Dimension of Underlying Psychological Theory

Four questions were asked of students to determine their preference of underlying psychological theory. The two opposite poles are behavioral theory and cognitive theory. Table 22 indicates that the Korean students preferred behaviorism over cognitive learning style. This traditional Korean learning preference is consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 22

Underlying Psychology-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Underlying Psychology	Behaviorism	9. I prefer that instructor specify the desired learning performance in advance. 10. I value leaving outcomes.	4.38 4.16	.660 .767
	Cognitive	11. I value the learning process. 12. I value recognizing my thoughts rather than changing my external behavior.	4.06 3.78	.948 .906

4. Dimension of Goal Orientation

Four questions were asked of the students about the goal orientation learning dimension with two opposing tendencies of sharply focused and unfocused. Table 23 shows that the Korean students preferred clearly stated learning objectives as indicated by the sharply focused learning dimension and predetermined goals rather than broad, open-

ended, or unfocused learning goals. This traditional Korean preference was consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 23

Goal Orientation-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Goal Orientation	Sharply focused	13. I prefer clearly stated learning objectives.	4.31	.780
		14. I prefer predetermined learning goals.	4.06	.878
	Unfocused	15. I prefer flexible learning goals.	3.66	.937
		16. I prefer broad and open-ended learning goals.	3.51	1.06

5. Instructional Sequencing

Reductionism and constructivism are the two extreme preference poles of instructional sequencing. Two questions per pole were asked. Table 24 shows the Korean students preferred the step-by-step instructional learning of reductionism. They particularly showed lack of support for learning "in an unstructured way." The findings concur with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 24

Instructional Sequencing-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Instructional Sequencing	Reductionism (step-by-step instructions)	17. I prefer to learn step-by-step.	4.53	.567
		18. I prefer to learn in detail	4.21	.832
	Constructivism	19. I prefer to learn in an unstructured way.	2.62	1.07
		20. I prefer to learn general principles first and specific knowledge later	4.15	.627

6. Dimensions of Experiential Value

The two extreme poles of experiential value are abstract and concrete. Experiential learning refers to learning by doing or from experience and also contextualized learning. Four questions were asked to identify experiential value; two questions per extreme pole. Table 25 shows the Korean students preferred concrete learning, particularly through practical examples, which is traditionally practiced in their native country. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 25

Experiential Value-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Experiential Value	Abstract	21. I prefer to learn from textbooks rather than other resources.	3.15	1.08
		22. I prefer to learn from theory rather than experiences.	2.78	.870
	Concrete	23. I prefer to learn by doing.	3.94	.878
		24. I prefer to learn through practical examples.	4.19	.692

7. Dimensions of Instructor Role

The two extreme poles of instructor role are didactic and facilitative. Didactic learning is teacher-centered; facilitative is student-centered. Four questions were asked to identify preferred instructor role; two questions per extreme poles of didactic and facilitative. Table 26 shows the Korean students had nearly equal preferences for didactic learning, which is traditionally practiced in their native country and is very teacher-centered and more student-centered facilitative role. This may indicate an area of learning

preference on which Korean students are changing. Morris' (2009) research found Asian students slightly preferred didactic learning.

Table 26

Instructor Role-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Instructor Role	Didactic	25. I believe the role of instructor is providing knowledge.	3.81	.859
		26. I believe an instructor should be an expert on the subject matter.	4.53	.621
	Facilitative	27. I believe the role of the instructor is for guiding the learning.	4.50	.567
		28. I believe the role of the instructor is as a mentor.	4.18	.737

8. Dimension of Value of Errors

The two extreme poles of value of errors are errorless learning and learning from experience. Value of errors refers to the importance of making no errors in the learning process. Four questions were asked to identify learning value of errors; two questions per extreme poles of errorless learning and learning from experience. Table 27 shows that Korean students had nearly equal preferences for learning without errors and learning from experience. This is an emerging change from the traditional practice of error-free in their native country and is not consistent with the literature. The results appear to reflect a change in Korean cultural preferences and are consistent with qualitative comments reported later. The results are also supportive of Morris' (2009) research in which she also indicated a change from the recognized norm and patterns indicated in the literature.

Table 27

Value of Errors-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Value of Errors	Errorless Learning	29. I prefer to repeat my learning until I can generate correct answers.	4.25	.718
		30. I do not want to make any mistakes in my tests.	4.18	.820
	Learning from experience	31. I believe making a mistake is just part of learning process.	4.12	.870
		32. I believe I can learn through my mistakes.	4.28	.812

9. Dimensions Origin of Motivation

The two extreme poles of origin of motivation are extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic learning is motivated by external stimuli while intrinsic motivation suggests internal incentives for learning. Four questions were asked regarding origin of motivation; two questions per extreme pole. Table 28 shows the Korean students were more motivated to learn from extrinsic stimuli which was consistent with Morris' (2009) research. However, they did rate learning variety and collaboration relatively high, which may indicate emerging change in motivation patterns.

Table 28

Origin of Motivation-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Origin of Motivation	Extrinsic	33. I value saving time and money.	4.2	.965
		34. I value earning school credits more than I value enjoying class.	3.0	.897

	Intrinsic	35. I enjoy a variety of learning activities such as threaded discussions or other collaborative activities with students and the instructor. 36. I enjoy online learning itself.	3.7 2.8	.842 .942

10. Program Flexibility

The two extreme poles of program flexibility are instructor proof and easily modifiable. Instructor proof learning refers to learning by rigid and fixed learning courses. Easily modifiable learning refers to flexible learning courses. Four questions were asked to identify program flexibility; two questions per extreme pole. Table 29 shows the Korean students preferred instructor proof learning which is traditionally practiced in their native country and is consistent with the literature. This also indicated that the Korean students preferred well-defined and fixed learning objectives and schedules. The preference is closely tied to Behaviorist theory and reflects an uncertainty avoidance culture. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 29

Program Flexibility-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Program Flexibility	Instructor Proof	37. I prefer well-defined learning projects. 38. I prefer fixed learning schedules.	4.3 3.6	.803 1.06

	Easily Modifiable	39. I prefer self-paced learning. 40. I prefer flexible learning schedules.	4.0 3.5	.782 1.07

11. Dimension of Accommodation of Individual Differences

The two extreme poles of accommodation of individual differences are non-existent and multifaceted. Non-existent does not consider individual differences. Multifaceted considers learners' individual differences and accommodates curriculum to meet those preferences with techniques such as metacognitive support and scaffolding. Four questions were asked to identify preference for accommodating differences; two questions per extreme pole. Table 30 showed Korean students prefer non-existent accommodation learning; which is traditionally practiced in their native country and reflected in the literature. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 30

Accommodation of Individual Differences-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Accommodation of Individual Differences	Non-Existent	41. I prefer well-organized learning courses. 42. I prefer a well-planned learning curriculum.	4.59 4.56	.615 .669
	Multifaceted	43. I prefer to use a variety of learning materials. 44. I prefer to have access to a whole array of supplementary learning materials.	4.16 4.09	1.051 .856

12. Dimension of Learner Control

The two extreme poles of learner control are non-existent and unrestricted. Dimension of learner control refers to students' preference for managing their own learning. Four questions were asked to identify preferences in learner control; two questions per extreme pole. Table 31 shows the Korean students had a slight preference for non-existent learner control and preferred that the instructor directed their learning which is traditionally practiced in their native country. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research. However, the preference was marginal, which may indicate an emerging change in learner-centered preference.

Table 31

Learner Control-Means and Standard Deviation of Learning Preference

			Mean	*SD*
Learner Control	Non-Existent	45. I prefer that the instructor directs my learning.	4.12	.793
		46. I prefer the instructor gives me a deadline for my assignments.	3.87	.907
	Unrestricted	47. I prefer to manage my own learning.	3.91	.689
		48. I prefer to assess my own learning.	3.91	.777

13. Dimension of Learner Activity

The two extreme poles of learner activity are mathemagenic and generative. Mathemagenic activity describes a tendency to restricted and firm learning access and instruction; Generative refers to a tendency to open and easily accessible learning

resources and content. Four questions were used to identify learner activity; two questions per extreme pole. Korean students preferred generative learning where they have access to multiple learning and engagement in their own learning. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 32 summarizes the results of mathemagenic compared to generative preferences of Korean students' taking online courses.

Table 32

Learner Activity-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
Learner Activity	Mathemagenic	49. I prefer that the instructor controls my entire learning process.	3.25	1.01
		50. I prefer to have class learning tasks rigidly specified in advance on the class syllabus.	3.56	.914
	Generative	51. I prefer to be actively involved in my own learning.	4.13	.554
		52. I prefer to initiate my own learning.	4.06	.669

14. Cooperative Learning

The two extreme poles of cooperative learning are unsupported and integrated. Unsupported learning refers to learning by oneself without cooperation through group activities or learning. Integrated learning describes the preference of students to learn through collaboration, socialized learning, and small group work. Four questions were asked to identify performance for cooperative learning; two questions per extreme pole.

Table 33 shows the Korean students did not prefer either extreme pole of the learning dimension more than the other. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 33

Cooperative Learning-Means and Standard Deviation(s) of Learning Preference(s)

			Mean	*SD*
14. Cooperative Learning	Unsupported	53. I prefer to work by myself without discussion with my classmates.	3.16	1.01
		54. I prefer individual learning.	3.50	.842
	Integrated	55. I prefer to perform class projects in small groups.	3.50	.842
		56. I prefer to cooperate with my classmates.	3.38	.907

15. Dimension of Cultural Sensitivity

The two extreme poles of cultural sensitivity are integrated and non-integrated. Cultural sensitivity in learning refers to how well minority or indigenous culture are integrated and incorporated in the mainstream of the classroom teaching Four questions were asked to identify cultural sensitivity; two questions per extreme pole. Table 34 shows the Korean students had a slight preference for cultural integration into the classroom and were ready to accept cultural differences and diverse opinions as an important part of learning. The results are consistent with Morris' (2009) research.

Table 34

Cultural Sensitivity-Means and Standard Deviation of Learning Preference

			Means	*SD*
Cultural Sensitivity	Non-existent	57. I believe learners' cultural backgrounds really affect learning achievement.	4.28	.991
		58. I am interested in my classmate's cultural backgrounds.	3.72	.958
	Integral	59. I am ready to accept cultural differences in both the instructor and classmates.	4.44	.619
		60. I am ready to listen attentively to others' opinions regardless their cultural backgrounds.	4.41	.665

Comparison of Overall Learning Preferences

Table 35 summarizes the online learning preferences of Korean students reflected in Henderson's 15 dimensions of learning preferences.

Table 35

Summary of Learning Preferences of Korean Students with Online Learning Experience.

			OL Experience (N=32)
	Dimension	Scales of Tendency	Students Prefer
1.	Epistemology	Objectivism	Constructivism
		Constructivism	
2.	Pedagogical Philosophy	Instructivism	Constructivism
		Constructivism	
3.	Underlying Psychology	Behavioral Theory	Behavioral Learning Theory
		Cognitive Theory	
4.	Goal Orientation	Sharply Focused	Sharply Focused on Learning Goals
		Unfocused	

5.	Instructional Sequence	Reductionism Constructivism	Reductionism with Rigid and Hierarchical Instructional Sequence
6.	Experiential Value	Abstract Concrete	Concrete Experiences
7.	Instructor's Role	Didactic Facilitative	Equal Preferences
8.	Value of Errors	Errorless Learning Learning from Exp.	Learning from Experience
9.	Origin of Motivation	Extrinsic Intrinsic	Extrinsic Motivation
10.	Program Flexibility	Instructor Proof Easily Modifiable	Inst. Proof-Controlled Learning Program
11.	Accommodation of Individual differences	Non-Existent Multifaceted	Regimented Learning without accommodation of learning differences
12.	Learner Control	Non-Existent Unrestricted	Instructor-led Learning
13.	Learner Activity	Mathemagenic Generative	Generative Learning with active engagement
14.	Cooperative Learning	Unsupported Integrated	Equal Preferences
15.	Cultural Sensitivity	Actioned Integrated	Culturally Integrated Learning

Open-Ended Electronic Survey Questions-Research Questions #4, #5, #6

4. What is the most difficult problem you personally experience when you take an online course?

5. What is the best benefit you personally experience when you take an online course?

6. In order to improve online courses, what do you want to recommend?

Additional open-ended questions were probed through open questions on the electronic-survey research instrument to allow the Korean students to identify problems in online courses and offer solutions. The open responses were analyzed qualitatively through thematic analysis and axial coding. Nineteen (19) problems were identified with open question 4. Twenty-six (26) students provided personal benefits and reasons that they enjoyed taking online courses on open question 5. Twenty-five (25) students provided recommendations to improve online courses on open question 6.

Question # 4

What problems are identified by Korean students taking online courses?

The major cultural problems identified with online courses were lack of communication with instructors/students, technical problems/high speed Internet, and limited resources. Students wanted more communication with their instructors and especially craved personal/face-to-face interaction. They did not like reading a book and simply reflecting content. They wanted more videos, additional learning resources, and greater technological efficiency. Technical problems were a major complaint even from the point of getting enrolled in the course. Cultural communications complications were also posed. “Lazy” was only offered once in question #1 response and was also interrupted to mean procrastination. The following comments (exactly as they were presented by the participants and with no grammatical editing) were submitted from participants that attempted to answer the open-ended electronic survey question:

Communication problems offered were:

- “I love to have a personal interaction. It gets me tired to look at the computer screen all the time. Other than text books or individual studies, it is good to have social and communal interactions in the class. However, if I have to work for full time, I'd rather take online class. Nevertheless, I have doubt how much deep I could have a communication with my instructors.”
- “Sometimes it's hard to understand other foreign because some of the sentences are not clear or not understandable.”
- “The courses tend to lack interaction between I and the instructor, especially when it is not required by the course design."
- “face to face time with an instructor in class room is very important to me. I like to ask questions and have debates about it if i don't fully understand the lesson. I believe that interaction with an instructor during the learning process is critical. Online class does offer discussion threads and the students and the instructor is allowed to exchange emails but I often find that Online class instructors lack care and concerns for online students.
- “I had difficulty getting registered online. Also the time difference made it harder to respond to other people's essays.”
- “Communication with instructor”
- "no face to face- None"

- “Communication with other classmates and director was a little difficult because as we chat, online technical service sometimes does not function well.”
- "Online courses I took are more demanding than offline courses, since it requests interaction through web boards which takes much more time than verbal interactions.”
- “not much interactions”

Technical problems offered were:

- “Technical problems like unpredictable disconnection the Internet.”
- “Technical problems.”
- “technology. for example, video lecture download taking too much time or the capacity of files too big that limits the easy access to the course material. also, late response from the instructor on email system. less interaction with instructor.”
- “The online one is kind of mess up. Too many links to click and those are all scattered.. It depends on the instructor, but sometimes it is really really hard to catch up if you are not a detail-oriented person.”
- “the distance and disconnect between actual learning and instructions”

Need for additional resources:

- “The need for additional resources in online courses:”
- “no multiple sources of the learning objects”

- “It's hard to concentrate.”
- “when I take an online course, it is hard to me that I need to read a lot, and check the HW or test by myself.”
- “While I am quite familiar with learning from reading, sometimes just reading presentations are not sufficient for grasping the idea.”

Question # 5

What benefits are identified by Korean students taking online courses?

The benefits identified by the Korean students emphasized the flexibility, convenience, and time/cost savings on learning online. Specific comments (unedited) included:

- “ I like this because I don't actually have to go to class. I mean, for this quarter, I have biology, organic chemistry, and health (online). It is much easier for me to handle health since it's not as heavy as biology and organic chemistry, and I can save time to work on other things.”
- “The pressure is lower than offline class.”
- “saving time and money”
- “Saving commuting time to school”
- “Taking the course when I am able to concentrate better.”
- “save time. when i took the online class, I don't need to go to school. so it saves a commute time. but, at the same time, it also have lots of work to do.

- “I've not done yet. I guess it could save time and flexibility.
- “I can self-leading study.”
- “only benefit i had from taking online course was that it saved me lots of time.”
- "Flexibility is the best benefit.”
- “If I am allowed to add something, learning materials provided with in online courses are much more thorough than those of offline courses. I prefer to learn the details, so this is a big plus."
- "best benefits are:
- “frees up times, flexible learning hours that students can manage
- “learn at home
- “most online classes offer open book quiz and exam."
- “I was able to take it back at home.”
- “time-flexiblity”
- “convenience of time”
- “flexible schedule. classes are easier since most exams are open book”
- “no classroon attendance”
- “I don't need to go class romm to take a class.”
- “Saving time”
- “Flexibility.”

Question # 6

What recommendations do Korean students offer for improving Western-constructed online courses?

There were a variety of recommendations put forward by the Korean students. Suggestions (unedited) included:

- "If the school provides better/professional equipment for recoding online lectures, it will be better. And, I think online class should be cheaper than normal class. The world is in change. And more people will take online classes. And most of them are cheaper than normal classes. But our school pays more."
- “Online course in Korea is 40 % cheaper than classroom.”
- “I recommend for the instructors to make some videos. Perhaps, students can understand better when they hear it rather than reading whole chunk of textbooks.”
- "well.... i think video is nice way to improve online courses. of course, it require the studio and camera and so on. but it is useful, because students can see the lecture.
- actually, when i tried to take the online class, i thought i could see the lecture video and just hand in the assignment via website. but it was not. i had to read all the instructor’s announcement and all the textbook. it it hard to me and my

friends, who is international students. in other words, plz use a technology to improve the online class"

- “Video lecture can help more effective understanding for the course rather than paper lecture.”
- “video clips of instructors' lectures”
- “technology once again and hire right instructor!!!!!!!!! Shoot”
- "Encouragement or requirement of free interaction between the instructor and the student, not in the form of assignment.”
- “need to improve interpersonal communication”
- “better feed back and develop more interactive communications tool to shorten the gap between the professor and students.”
- “Audio or video introduction to each class period of qt least 10 minutes are necessary for the students grasp the importance of main concepts and debates"
- “grade papers and homework promptly and give detailed feed back on how to improve or better oneself.”
- “plan the study and learning materials so that learning does not have to depend on the quality of online lectures and provide tutors off line. ex. learning centers or library.”
- “blended course option. a hybrid class where it's part online and part off line.”

- “increase number of interaction. more frequent emails and discussion threads to make sure students are up to speed and that they stay on top of things in the course.”
- “more care."
- “being more organized?”
- “More data for the study”
- “I prefer that the course should not require to come the specific place because I would like to take benefit in the remote place such as mission field. Thus, the course should be able to accomplished without actual place.”
- “In the light of living communication, online communicating system needs to be developed. At least, once a month, students need to meet together to check their learning improvement.”
- “Online courses are more expensive than on campus course. I wonder why it has to be that way. If the cost is lower than on campus course, I would take online more often.

Summary of Open Questions

While the open-ended questions provided opinions about problems, benefits, and recommendations, the Koran students’ comments consistently emphasized communications, flexibility, innovative technology, and costs. The students struggled with lack of communication from their professor. Their native culture traditionally dictates that the professor presents the course content, guides the learning, directs the

outcomes, and answers the student's questions as needed. This is a major change and adjustment for U. S. practices where the course content is presented and the student is required to discipline themselves through the curriculum until the course is completed.

Lack of immediate feedback was of great concern in the communication process of the online courses. Students wanted answers to their questions, immediate responses, face-to-face meetings with their professor, and a much more personal relationship with their professor. They did not appreciate delayed responses from the professor or lack an answer at all.

Other comments were consistent with the general opinions of U. S. students, indicating that the online courses should be less expensive than "bricks and mortar" classes. Online courses appear to be priced higher than traditional courses and often require greater effort with much more course requirements; i.e. discussions, blogs, major assignments, and projects. Students indicated that they would take more online courses if the cost was priced more economically. Korean students are traditionally very economical because often Korean families are financially sacrificing so that their children can attend a college or university in the United States. Cost is always an important issue as answers to the open-ended questions revealed. Students also enjoyed the convenience of working from home and appreciated saving the cost and time of traveling. They would like to take more online courses, if they were not so expensive.

Qualitative Face-to-Face Interview Data

Qualitative face-to-face interviews strengthened the research with additional comments from nine students. Comments reinforced learning preferences consistent with the quantitative data related to research question 2. The following are comments (unedited) that presented new perspectives related to research questions 4, 5, and 6.

- "Inside jokes are not understood because of the cultural differences."
- "International students must overcome cultural barriers. Assumed the responsibility of learning. Everyone pays the same amount for course-only one instructor to help students. Does not expect special consideration for adaptation because of embarrassing attention to oneself."
- "Disliked the online course. Not good at computers. Not good at technology. Dislike. Too hard for online courses."
- "Korean tradition is changing to American International way. HARD for instructor to change to flexible. Only know about domain of the major. Instructor set the program. Flexible change over 5-8 years. Education is so hard each year and with time changing president lecture is #1 issue. Tuition sooooo high want to cut cost. Member of student labor parents pay attention to education movement."
- "Like learning with other students –socialized learning"

- "The people that I have met in education are very kind. Yes, very kind. Every people is kind"
- This comment was contributed while discussing the value of errors. "Perfection kills the joy of learning and mistakes teach valuable lessons."
- A qualitative interviewee was sharing that typical Korean students do not speak up harshly and do not like to speak up during class. He stated, "Korean student have inferiority feeling. Do not want to speak up in class. Korean students speak up warmly." This same interviewee shared a story from one of his professors that his professor made a request of him by saying, "I know you have so much knowledge, I want you to speak up."
- "I don't have that fake Korean accent. I don't like to standout. If in America, one should try to stay with American. Not sure if OC (obsessive compulsive) but that is my personality."
- "If I give 100% but failed, I don't have a problem with. I do have a problem with not giving 100%. Sports do not learn first time. I do it over and over again until I learn it."
- "I don't want my parents to be disappointed. My brothers are helping paying for college and I don't want them to feel is waste. I feel like I did not do enough for my family if they are paying for my school. I took statistics course in summer, lived at lab 12 hours a day…really hard at first. I got it at the end-100 on final. Sense of accomplish."

Moore's Transactional Distance theory

All 15 of Henderson's MCM were filtered through Moore's Transactional Distance Theory (1983). Transactional distance (Moore, 1983; Moore & Kearsley, 2005; Chen, 2001) influences all 15 learning preferences by theorizing the need for *appropriate* social and psychological distance from teacher to learner based on the four factors of learner autonomy, distance, dialog, and research. Transactional distance is established by the course structure and learner autonomy preferences (Moore et.al.).

Transactional Distance refers to the social and psychological phenomenon related to the space between or among teachers and students. Distance exists in all educational relationships, including online, classroom, correspondence courses, and other educational processes. Transactional distance is established by the learner's autonomy and course structure (Moore, et.al.).

Research Question #3

Based on Moore's Transactional Distance theory, what are the self-identified educational learning preferences with regard to student/instructor distance, learner autonomy, dialog, and course structure of Korean students taking online courses?

The following qualitative face-to-face questions directly addressed the four variables of Transactional Distance theory:

- Distance-What do you enjoy about a course where you have freedom, are the facilitator, deliberate planner, disciplinarian, and are in control of how you learn in a course?
- Autonomy-To what extent do you enjoy determining your own goals, learning experiences, and evaluations of the learning process rather than the instructor?
- Dialog-How much do you enjoy dialog between/among your instructor and students?
- Research-How much do you prefer classes with rigid educational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods?

The following comments were offered for each qualitative question respectively:

Distance- **What do you enjoy about a course where you have freedom, are the facilitator, deliberate planner, disciplinary, and are in control of how you learn in a course?**

- "don't like-need more flexible-I will push harder to achieve all of the objectives"
- "If I set appointment with the professor, really great. Not much like space."
- "Like the distance, like to work on own, sometimes when I ask something to professor, I feel embarrassed caused by culture"
- "Like freedom to work on my own, schedule, and when finished each task can communicate with instructor and can get the feedback."

- "I don't like just getting syllabus and leaving it up to me because there is not interaction between me and the instructor. Instructor needs to give insight before student doing something. I can access face-to-face. Skype can see instructor."
- "I like the freedom and flexibility but if it is online I do not like online. I like to do something freely-don't like doing things online."
- "The distance is definitely there. They try to overcome that couple classes where they open forum, require active and attempt to close the gap. The distance is definitely there. I don't like the distance. Don't want any online classes; don't think you get anything from it. In Germany over the summer and had to take online courses-did not like it. 7 Hrs. ahead of the states. Contact time was different, etc. did not like it. "
- "No time to dedicate to one class creates distance."

***Autonomy*-To what extent do you enjoy determining your own goals, learning experiences, and evaluations of the learning process rather than the instructor?**

- "Yes, like flexibility"(referring to setting his own goals, learning experience, etc.)
- "Must plan own schedule"
- "Like to take course on campus, not online because very important to connect to instructor in person."

- "I need a guideline and instructions. Sometimes while I am studying, I have questions and need guideline from instruction about assignment. I love to 60/40 instruction. Discipline is 60 and autonomy is 40%. (gesturing with laughter)
- "Do not want too much autonomy-want to follow direction/instruction from teacher."
- "I like more independent study. I don't need too much meeting."
- "Yes, I prefer my own thing but it is totally the goal of the course. It is totally up to me then there must be some guideline probably much better with low goal where I can perform the goal and do better. If goal is too low, not good. Goal set by me."
- "I don't like taking responsibility. It is I guess hardcoding….learning is the responsibility between teacher and teacher."

Dialog-How much do you enjoy dialog between/among your instructor and students?

- "really like hearing other people's opinion"
- "Americans would wait until day before. He would work several days ahead and post. Others would limit the time because they would post the last minute native language." [The Korean student was referring to discussion boards and was saying that, because of the language differences, the Korean student would have to reply to the English post by preparing the reply for several days

in advance. American students would wait until the last minute to post the original comment so the Korean student did not have ample preparation time to reply to the original post.]

- "Like a lot of discussion. Short English is not healthy to the professor."
- "Want dialog, discussion, and interactive"
- "Depends on the class. If I have a lot of questions, I need to have dialog with professor and classmates."
- "None, don't need any (laugh) just whenever I have need. Want the communication channel open."
- "Like discussions, if cannot meet face-to-face, the secondary best choice we can upload and type questions. Instructor can give some question and then student can reply."
- "I prefer talking with conversation with one to one but not with a lot of people. I don't want to interrupt the people. I become very timid. I prefer talking with discussion like debating in person."
- "Being around the professor really helps, the close relationship with the professor helps."

Research-How much do you prefer classes with rigid educational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods?

- "Like strong guideline at first. I wanted to make sure the professor and guideline but think professor is standing on the tutoring side"

- "Yes, like as long as can work with instructor"
- "Oh….Love just following the instructional process with a lot of discipline."
- "Like to be rigid."
- "I think teachers need to give some outline objectives and after that I think we need a system students can connect to teacher."
- "If the professor is really, really great teacher but I cannot feel good in the course."
- "Very stressful and people should be able to think freely and flexible."
- "It is OK but the difference in classes would make a difference. Math depends on the class & stuff. I think it could be beneficial."

Transactional Distance Summary

Distance

Sixty percent of the students did not like distance between them and their instructors. They wanted the syllabus, clear objectives, rigid schedules, were willing to work on their own but, wanted to be able to communicate with their professor, if they had a questions or wanted guidance. They were willing to put distance between them and the instructor until they needed advise or wanted guidance. They liked to discipline themselves and were very focused to accomplish the task but needed clear instructions. They considered online courses to present complications and add more distance when they needed to converse with the professor. Even the students that said they liked the distance between student and professor, considered the distance freedom, but also made it

very clear that when finished with each task, they wanted to communicate with the instructor for feedback.

Autonomy

Students were equally split regarding determining their own goals, learning experiences, and establishing their own learning process rather than the instructor setting the goals for them. While they liked to be able to work independently, they wanted to follow directions/instructions from the professor. As long as they had good communications with the instructor and the instructor was available when needed, they did not. . . "need too much meeting."

Dialog

Seventy-one percent preferred dialog between/among their instructor and students. They liked a lot of discussion and felt like "short English" with the professor was, "not healthy", meaning lack of communication with the professor could lead to misunderstandings and poor grades. They wanted discussions and interaction with the professor and classmates, also indicating that the specific class would dictate the urgency for communications. They wanted, "the communication channel open."

Research

Sixty-six percent preferred classes with rigid educational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods. They did not mind the rigid requirement as long as they could work with and had access to the instructor. They "Love just following the instructional process with a lot of discipline."

Henderson's multicultural learning preferences would be most efficiently applied through a syllabus with clear objectives, rigid schedules, little distance between the student and professor where students could work on their own but, be able to communicate with their professor as needed. They want to be able to work independently but, also want good communications with the instructor and the instructor to be available when needed. They are willing to follow directions/instructions from the professor carefully and exactly. While the course subject made a big difference in the educational process, Korean students reported they actually enjoy discussions as long as they clarified and defined the course objectives. Most of all, they indicated they love following the instructional process in a very disciplined manner as long as the "communication channel is open."

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the study

Conceptualization

As colleges and universities continue to grow in multicultural diversity, the curriculum does not necessarily progressively adapt to the changing environment and students' learning preferences. Many professors continue the same curriculum and delivery practices that have been in place for years and often were the methods that were applied while they were college students. Using the traditional practices but expecting newer and innovative results with a larger diversity of cultures is unlikely to be successful. Successful andragogy should analyze classroom diversity and adapt the curriculum students' learning preferences, especially considering the rapid growth in demand for online courses. The complicated process for addressing a multiplicity of learning preferences has almost certainly delayed innovative and empirically-supported curriculum design and delivery. Yankelovich (2005) shared his opinion about the realistic practicality of educational institutions adapting to students' learning needs by saying, ". . . higher education may not be very responsive to the larger society over the next decade. It has too many constituencies to satisfy, too many traditions, too many constraints weighing on it to lend it the flexibility — or the political will" (p. B6).

Students are currently attempting to meet their educational needs and plans by taking online courses which are often the solutions to scheduling demands, overloaded classes, personal conflicts, reduction of travel cost, time saving, and overall convenience.

While the demand for online courses is out growing the availability, online courses also present challenges and are not always academically suited to a diversity of students. Professors should consider the learning styles of culturally diverse students. This study was conceptualized as an application of Henderson's 15-dimension Multicultural Model as a framework for examining the culturally-based learning preferences of Korean students in online courses. The study was enclosed in the Interpretivist theoretical perspective which frequently frames studies of cultural and other groups.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe cultural dimensions and online learning preferences that Korean students taking online courses in the United States may find to cause distractions in Western-constructed web-based courses. This information can be used to construct more culturally friendly web-based courses. Henderson's Multicultural Model (MCM) guided this study by providing a structure of 15 dimensions of cultural learning preferences for analysis. Morris' (2009) study used the MCM to describe the online preferences of East Asian cultures, their learning preferences, cultural characteristics, similarities, and dissimilarities.

Research Design

This research continued the line of inquiry into cultural factors in online learning pre4ferences of Asian students begun by Morris (2009). This study narrowed and refined this line of inquiry by focusing on the technologically advanced country of South Korea, their learners, their preferred learning approaches, online course distractions, and recommendations for online course design. Participants contributed their opinions by taking an online survey and/or volunteering for a face-to-face qualitative interview.

This study used descriptive methodology in a mixed-method design combining descriptive demographic and learning preferences quantitative data with qualitative data obtained from face-to-face interviews. This study focused on defining the learning preferences and perceptions of Korean students taking online courses in the United States.

Data Analysis

The data for the study were approached from the perspective of Social Constructivist Interpretivism. This perspective focuses on discovering and voicing the viewpoints of individuals, groups, and cultures. This perspective underpins much qualitative research particularly that which focuses on group settings and cultures (Creswell, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Patton, 2002). The integration of quantitative and qualitative theoretical and methodological perspectives, as well as data sources and types, are important in developing mixed-method research designs.

In this study, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data using SPSS software. Frequency distributions described demographics profiles and the online learning preferences of participants. Mean comparisons and standard deviations were also used for learning preferences.

Qualitative data are typically interrupted by the researcher in the process of analysis. As a method of eliminating biases, strengthening the research, and cross checking for consistency, the data were also analyzed by two other professors. Patton (1999) recommends, “Triangulation of data sources and analytical perspectives to increase the accuracy and credibility of findings” (p. 93). He also refers to qualitative data serving an important research purpose by saying, “qualitative analysis conveys a sense that you are dedicated to getting as close as possible to what is really going on in whatever setting you are studying.” (p. 93).

Deep and rich qualitative data collected from face-to-face interviews in the study were categorized by using constant comparison of key words (Mertens, 1998). The qualitative data were strengthened by triangulation using two additional PhDs. to personally analyze the data and categorize the qualitative results. The two additional analyses confirmed the researcher's original analysis, producing a total of three experienced researchers' analysis and categorizing of the qualitative data.

Instrument

The study's methodology combined a web-based electronic survey or questionnaire with a set of for qualitative interviews. The questionnaire was developed and validated by Morris (2009) in her dissertation study of the culturally-related online learning preferences of Asian students. It was based on Henderson's Multi-Cultural Model (1996) of 15 dimensions of learning preferences. The questionnaire consisted of 65 demographic, open-ended, and force-choice questions. In addition to demographic data, the questionnaire elicited information on learning preferences using 5-point Likert-type scales for quantitative analysis, plus three open-ended questions about online learning. Morris developed her instrument because no appropriate instrument existed to assess learning preference based on cultural factors. She based her instrument on the theoretical frame work provided by Henderson's 15 bi-polar dimensions that are defined and supported by known cultural perspectives and beliefs; the premise of the instrument (and Henderson's model) was that social and cultural traditions are echoed in learning preferences (Morris, 2009).

In developing her instrument, Morris (2009) used several statistical procedures including correlation analysis, factor analysis, and coefficient alpha to assess validity and internal consistency. She also used expert input, focus groups, and field trials to improve the instrument's readability and clarity (described in detail in Chapter III). However,

despite Morris' initial work on her instrument, it is still very new and not yet established in the research literature.

The use of this not-yet-fully-established instrument does impose internal validity limitations on this study. However, the alternative was an instrument that was neither theoretically nor empirically compatible with the constructs of interest in this study. Morris' instrument was also compatible with the Interpretivist theoretical perspective of the qualitative component of the study's mixed-method research design. This study also offers opportunity to contribute to the theoretical and empirical validity of the instrument. For these reasons, the limitations imposed by its instrumentation were accepted for this study.

Major Findings and Conclusions

Question #1-What is the demographic profile on selected variables of the Korean students taking online courses, in the United States?

The data indicated the mean age of Korean students in this study was 29 years old and that had lived in the United States for relatively short times. Most had been here no more than three years.

Females were slightly more numerous (*n*=18, 56.2%) as compared to males (*n*=14, 43.8%). Morris' (2009) research included a larger sample (*N*=82), however the gender distribution very closely paralleled this study: Females (*n*=43, 52.4%) and Males (*n*=39, 47.6%). This congruence in the gender composition of the two studies conducted three years apart supports a conclusion that Koreans studying online are likely to comprise males and females relatively equally.

Morris' (2009) research reported, "over 50% (N=41) participants were less than 26 years old" (p.137). She concluded, "Almost 90% of respondents were less than 35 years old, which supports a conclusion that the participating Asian students were relatively young" (p.137). The difference in ages reported by Morris and the mean age (*M*=26) in this study is very small. Both studies support a conclusion that younger Korean students are more willing to take online courses.

Twelve participants in this study had taken 1-3 online courses (n=2, 37.5%) while 17 participants had taken 4 to 6 online courses (*n*=17, 53.1%), totaling 29 of 32 total survey participants had taken online courses with the majority haven taken four to six online courses. This online course experience of the participants supports a conclusion that their responses are based on experience, which strengthens the suggestions and recommendations made by the participants of this research.

The majority of the participants in this research had taken 4 to 6 online courses (*n*=17, 53.1%), and considered themselves to be technologically "Fairly Skilled" *(n*=19, 59.4%); 7 participants considered themselves to be "Power Users" (*n*=7, 21.9%). Thus, strong technological skills were represented in the study (*n*=26, 81.3%). Morris' Level of Technology reported 85% (*N*=63) fairly skilled or power users. This researcher reaffirms Morris' conclusion that "This finding supports a conclusion that in Asian countries, Internet usage and computer skills are widespread among young educated students" (p.138).

Patterns of Learning Preferences

The quantitative data indicated that the Korean students in this study had a clear pattern of learning preferences in online courses based on the 15 dimensions of

Henderson's Multicultural Model. The mean scores on the preference questions for the 15 dimensions were higher for the more traditional teacher-centered ends of the continua. This finding was consistent with both the literature on Korean culture and the learning preferences pattern reported by Morris (2009).

The cultural traditionalism of the Korean participants was also evidence in the qualitative interviews. One example was provided by a potential interviewee who did not actually participate. This scheduled interviewee had to cancel at the last minute because the interviews took place in the conference room of the girls' dormitory. He was very regretful to not be able to participate because he was a married man. The face-to-face qualitative interviews took place in the girls' dormitory, and he did not feel that the interview would be appropriate and fitting for a married man to be there.

Analysis of the qualitative data originally produced what appeared to the researcher to be confused and contradictory. However, with greater in-depth analysis, the data made sense and were well aligned with the literature review and documented Korean behavioral practices. The subject's dialogue reflected confusion and possible misunderstanding of the questions. However, the projection of confusion by Koreans because they consider themselves to be poor at the English language and because they are traditionally anxious to please as a matter of respect to adults and superiors was strongly embedded in the literature (Lee, Yoon, & Lee, 2009p; Lee, 2007; Scardamalia, & Bereiter, 2006; Yankelovich, 2005).

These findings support a conclusion that Koreans have definite learning preferences in online courses, and their teacher-centered preferences are based on their traditional cultural values and practices.

Shifting Cultural and Learning Preferences

The quantitative data suggested that while Koreans might currently hold learning preferences based on the teacher-centered traditions of their culture, these preferences may be changing. Differences on mean preference scores on the questions representing Henderson's 15 Multicultural Dimensions generally favored the traditional teacher-centered poles, but these mean differences were small in magnitude. This suggests movement in preferences toward the less traditional student-centered poles. Further, the mean preference actually slightly favored the student-centered pole on a few questions. These findings corresponded closely with those reported by Morris (2009), which was additional evidence of a possible preference shift by Korean learners.

The data from the qualitative interviews supported the possibility of a learning preference shift. The researcher observed that Korean students provided initial answers to the qualitative questions, but as they continued the dialogue, they would answer exactly the opposite before ending the discussion. Early in the qualitative process, this researcher felt the dialogue was confusing and perhaps even leading. The researcher's body language of nodding the head or turning the head as a process of confirmation during the explanation verifying that the participants understood the questions, appeared to be leading the answers. Participants answered based on the interviewer's body language. Careful articulation and simplification of the questions verified that participants were torn between two different preferences/cultures or what appeared to be new emerging practices. These findings supported the same findings from Lee (2007) saying, "Korean American students make conscious choices about what to adopt from the mainstream culture . . . as well as what to maintain from their Korean cultural values, particularly

success and self-control" (p. 14). In the frame of Interpretivism, the cultural distractions of respect for the researcher and desire to please seemed to be creating conflict with their native cultural values. Lee (2007) believed that Korean American students show their acculturated or Americanized behaviors outwardly but still have their ethnic cultural value inwardly, which might not fit well with values inherent in conventional teaching or counseling strategies (p. 43). A review of the interview responses of the Korean participants (decoded in Chapter IV) was interpreted as evidence of shifting learning preferences and conflict between the traditional cultures and an emerging newer set of ideas.

These findings support two conclusions":

Korean learning preferences may be shifting from traditional teacher-centered cultural patterns to more Americanized patterns.

While Koreans like a new flexible, more Americanized educational process, they still feel a strong commitment and loyalty to the traditional Korean cultural educational process.

Traditional Korean Cultural Changes

Many of the Korean participants seemed to be confused about their learning preferences. They would refer to a preferred, common instructional practice but later in the interview would state the opposite. This vacillating pattern was at first confusing to the researcher but later became clear when several interviewees distinguished between the traditional Korean instructional practice and today's changing methodology. Korean classroom methodology seems to be changing from a strict teacher-centered delivery within the teacher as subject matter expert, to flexible, group interaction. The quantitative

data in this study showed a lingering slight preference for traditional teacher-centered instruction but also considerable liking for more flexible student-centered approaches. The qualitative interviews yielded data indicating that Korean students still practice the strict study habits that produce scholastic results, and prefer teacher-centered curriculum in the classroom but with personal interaction and dialogue with their professors after class. The following qualitative comment was repeated throughout the nine face-to-face interviews by the different Korean students and appears to be the primary cause for vacillation in identifying learning preferences:

> "Korean tradition is changing to American international way. HARD for instructor to change to flexible. Only know about domain of the major. Instructor set the program. Flexible change over 5-8 years. Education is so hard each year and with time changing president lecture is #1 issue. Member of student labor pay attention to education movement."

The traditional teacher-centered, subject matter expert educational system seems to be taking on flexibility with change and is being loosely referred to as the "new education". Korean students repeatedly named flexible characteristics as preferred learning preferences, but also reported that they felt a very strong commitment and loyalty to their native culture. This supports a conclusion that; Korean students' learning preferences are changing to become more flexible, student-centered, and androgogical; however, they are still devoted to the cultural learning practices of their home country.

Professor-Centered Instruction and Professor-Student Communications

In their traditional culture, Korean students hold their professor in high esteem and regard them with great respect and admiration that is equal to respect for a father image. They are willing to follow the lead of professors as they direct and anywhere they lead without question. The following qualitative comments confirmed their preference for

the “father” image of a professor that is dedicated to guiding their learning to strong scholastic results:

> “Prefer didactic it is the best way I think. In my culture teacher/student is more than just that-like father-but is changing”.
>
> “If I agree with the goal and purpose, it is right to follow him because he is the expert and he is caring about me. It is not just teacher and student in my country. Instructor is like my father. If I know he loves me and will follow me……”

The quantitative data describing the Korean participants’ learning preferences on Henderson’s dimensions also indicated that they generally favored didactic teacher-centered instruction, but that this preference may be shifting to a more student-centered model where students can approach professors for individual assistance. This was supported by numerous qualitative comments showing the students’ desire and need for personal access to their revered professor.

Both the quantitative and qualitative data supported the conclusion that, Korean students want a personal relationship with their professor and want their professor to guide the class, learning, outcomes, and communications. They also want the professor available to answer questions as needed.

A personal student-professor relationship suggests good communication between them. Indeed, many qualitative comments from the Korean students did indicate that communications, or the lack of communications, was a problem for them. Once again, the students craved the customs of their native culture. The qualitative data clearly supported the conclusion that Korean students needed greater communications with their professor; both on a personal level and in course content presentation. They wanted to be able to ask questions, obtain answers immediately, have a personal relationship with their professor, and engage with the professor for reassurance and a greater understanding of the course content and student requirements. This issue could become particularly critical in online courses where face-to-face contact is often limited or impossible.

High-Speed Internet and Innovative Technology

In agreement with Wang and Choi (2002), the Korean students appeared to be craving the high speed Internet and advanced technology that they are accustom to in their native country in their online courses. Based on the researcher's personal interview with a Korean professor whose statement, "U. S. online courses are like babies compared to Korea's", originally created the interest that led to this study, the appeal of technology to Koreans was not surprising. The Korean professor continued to indicate that online courses in Korea are filled with videos and animation to attract the student's attention and keep it (personal interview 2009). While Western constructed online courses may offer YouTube videos, PowerPoints, or other limited videos, most are not as technologically advanced as Korean courses. This could be problematic. Many qualitative comments supported a conclusion that Korean students wanted and value the high-speed Internet and innovative technology of their home country which is consistent with and reflected in the literature and qualitative data.

English Language and Errorless Learning/Mistakes

Korean students' concern for their English skills and their dislike for making errors are in some ways related. Almost every interviewee considered him/herself to be poor at English and disliked speaking up in front of a student body or presenting a speech. They also indicated concern that they might misspeak in front of the class, causing humiliation and embarrassment. This researcher understood their English very well although some were much easier to understand than others and even others. Some individuals were understood because of the dialogue surrounding their choice of words and because their body language clarified their choice of words. Because good rapport

was established, the researcher believes accurate understanding of the students' feelings was obtained.

The literature establishes (Lee, Yoon, & Lee, 2009; Lee, 2007; Scardamalia, & Bereiter, 2006; Yankelovich, 2005) that Korean students are very conscious of their English and are not comfortable that they can speak the language well. As respect to their instructor, they are not comfortable with speaking up in class and prefer to ask questions after class. They consider their questions to be interruptions in the class and wastefully consuming the professor's class time. Korean students do not want classroom presentation requirements because of the differences in language and their concern for making embarrassing mistakes in spoken English. This concern appeared in numerous qualitative comments in this study.

An occurrence in the qualitative interviews provides a particularly vivid example of the concerns of the Korean participants for avoiding embarrassment due to difficulties with English. One interviewee had only been in the United States three months and was very anxious to help. She was referred to the research project by her host family. She arrived on time for the interview appointment but with a friend. For fear of biasing the results, the researcher offered the friend opportunity to go to the lab or join other friends during the interview. He declined the offer with encouragement from the interviewee. Very early into the interview, the reason became much clearer. As the interview progressed, the interviewee continued a dialogue and increasingly struggled to understand the questions. The researcher quickly realized that, the additional effort to further explain the questions created a response from her based on what she thought the researcher wanted her to say. She followed the body language to reflect an answer. This

became an easier process for her than trying to understand the purpose of the question. She brought with her a friend to the interview for the specific purpose of clarifying the English language. It was a concern to the researcher that the interview might be biased with the additional presence, however, the subject would not interview without him. During the interview, she would touch his shoulder or look at him as a gesture for him to help provide the answer because she did not understand. She displayed a very kind willingness to help with the interview in a scholarly manner but quickly became confused with the language.

The researcher's concern was that this interview would be useless. However, as the interviews continued and an in-depth understanding of the data unfolded, the interview produced full and rich data. Reflective of the native Korean culture, this individual was very anxious to provide scholarly answers, questioned her use of the English language, did not want to misspeak, and feared potential humiliation. This experience and the literature support a conclusion that English language skills are of concern to Korean students. They fear making mistakes with English, which they view as humiliating.

Another interview experience revealed additional information about how Koreans perceive learning errors and making mistakes not necessarily related to English. The evening following the interview discussed above, the friend that came to that interview, returned to be interviewed himself. While discussing errorless learning and his opinion of making mistakes, he offered the following comment:

> "Sounds great but most Korean don't like making mistakes. An example would be my friend that was interviewed the previous evening. My friend that don't understanding. She don't like anymore and then go back home and does not want

to help. She will study more and then try. She does not accept the error, feeling of failing. She simply shuts down."

The same volunteer was explaining that when Korea students make a mistake; it is totally unacceptable; they are embarrassed and will return to their room or library, research, read, study and work hard until they master a topic. They do not like making mistakes, and making mistakes is usually not acceptable to Korean students. Few Korean students will accept mistakes and only if making mistakes promotes their learning. Korean students will embed themselves in the curriculum until they can emerge knowledgeable of the subject. The same volunteer further explained by providing the following Korean learning process:

> "Strict due date on homework assignments for Koreans. Also in class everywhere we can see competition. Setting in library 10 hours is normal and often 16 hours. See stars when go to school and see stars when come back home. [He looked up gesturing toward the sky and indicating that it would be dark outside when they go to the library [a.m.] and dark when they leave [p.m.] the library.] Koreans give overtime and do the time close to due date."

This rich and generous qualitative data supports the conclusion that: Korean students need strict due dates, clearly understood objectives, and guided learning from the professor.

This conclusion is also supported by the quantitative data showing the Korean students' preferences for structured and teacher-centered learning. The data from the research also support the related conclusion that is also consistent with Morris' (2009) research that states, "The results of this study support a conclusion that Asian students appear to have preferences that were in line with behavioral learning theory instruction, and these preferences are related to culture" (p.141).

Question #3: Based on Moore's Transactional Distance theory, what are the self-identified educational learning preferences with regard to student/instructor distance, learner autonomy, dialog, and course structure of Korean students taking online courses?

Distance-What do you enjoy about a course where you have freedom, are the facilitator, deliberate planner, disciplinary, and are in control of how you learn in a course?

Qualitative data from this study addressed this question. With every qualitative response where the student stated that they liked the distance or liked working on their own, which creates distance, they quickly prefaced the statement by indicating, "as long as they can ask the professor questions and get immediate answers", or "can get feedback". The following are examples of comments demonstrating need for immediate feedback thereby reducing the distance between student and professor:

- "Like freedom to work on my own, schedule, and when finished each task can communicate with instructor and can get the feedback."
- "I don't like just getting syllabus and leaving it up to me because there is not interaction between me and the instructor. Instructor needs to give insight before student doing something. I can access face-to-face. Skype can see instructor."
- "Like the distance, like to work on own, sometimes when I ask something to professor, I feel embarrassed caused by culture"

These qualitative comments suggest that Korean students like distance between the instructor and student only at a superficial level. This supports a conclusion that for

Korean students, physical distance and independence in online courses must be tempered with minimizing psychological distance through communications and interaction.

Autonomy-To what extent do you enjoy determining your own goals, learning experiences, and evaluations of the learning process rather than the instructor?

Students' preferences were widely diverse; some liked autonomy while others did not like it. Qualitative comments included the following:

- "Yes, like flexibility"(referring to setting his own goals, learning experience, etc.)
- "Must plan own schedule"
- "Do not want too much autonomy-want to follow direction/instruction from teacher."
- "I like more independent study. I don't need too much meeting."

Dialog-How much do you enjoy dialog between/among your instructor and students?

Most of the qualitative comments indicated the students liked discussion and interaction, however, the comments went further to clarify that they were referring specifically to the professors' dialog.

- "Like a lot of discussion. Short English is not healthy to the professor."
- "None, don't need any (laugh) just whenever I have need professor. Want the communication channel open."
- "Like discussions, if cannot meet face-to-face, the secondary best choice we can upload and type questions. Instructor can give some question and then student can reply."

While the students' comments indicated that they did like dialog, most were referring to communications with the instructor, which supports the conclusion drawn

earlier that Korean students need access to and communication with their instructor. This can be difficult in online courses.

Research-How much do you prefer classes with rigid educational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods?

The following qualitative comments all indicate a preference for rigid educational objectives and teaching strategies, however, some students still stated they wanted flexibility. The important point in the following data is that the students consistently wanted easy access to the professor and wanted to be able to work closely with their professor for guidance and answers.

- "Like strong guideline at first. I wanted to make sure the professor and guideline but think professor is standing on the tutoring side"
- "Yes, like as long as can work with instructor"
- "I think teachers need to give some outline objectives and after that I think we need a system students can connect to teacher."

The above comments reinforce Korean students' preference for ready access to the professor for guidance, which can be difficult in online courses.

Open-Ended Questions

Question #4: What problems are identified by Korean students taking online courses?

The findings related to Research Question #4-(Online learning problems) of the survey in this study were surprising to the researcher. They indicated that some problems identified by the Korean students were procrastination, self-control, time management,

lack of feedback, lack of interaction, English problems, and communication problems. The students did not like inability to ask questions of professors and get immediate answers in online courses. This agreed with what Morris (2009) reported. Also, several students felt self-control was their biggest problem related to online courses. The younger, more Americanized students reported they had stronger tendencies to procrastinate. The data support the conclusion: Culturally appropriate online courses for Korean students should be built with behavioral learning theory, clearly defined objectives, strict deadlines, easy and readily available access to the instructor, group discussions, and flexibility.

Question #5: What benefits are identified by Korean students taking online courses?

Two closely related learning preferences had high means, indicating importance to the Korean culture. Accommodation of individual differences reported a mean of 4.59 (standard deviation .615) for non-existent and 4.16 (standard deviation 1.05) for multifaceted. While accommodation of individual differences considers the student's individual knowledge, previous experience, learning attitude, motivations, and learning styles, it is also very closely related to other learning preferences that are critical to cultural differences. Korean students reported a strong preference for learning in a step-by-step process with great detail through the instructional sequence (mean=4.53; standard deviation= .567). Traditional Korean academic methodology is progressively changing as indicated by the quantitative and qualitative data in the study. The lines that once so distinctively drew the cultural differences have become harder to distinguish. The traditional Korean curriculum presents course content in an instructor-centered and rigid

process. Students are changing and appreciating change as indicated by cultural sensitivity (integrated, mean= 4.20, standard deviation= .60) where they want integration of both instructor and students and are willing to listen attentively to others' opinions and accommodations. The data indicate strong cultural influence in online course construction and support a conclusion that Learning preferences of Korean students are important to understand as a critical element to effective andragogy and appropriate online course construction.

Question #6: What recommendations do Korean students offer for improving Western-constructed online courses?

Korean students would like to see the cost of the online courses reduced and certainly equal to at least the classroom tuition cost. The price of convenience associated with the online courses is often more than practicality allows. A valuable qualitative recommendation stated, "Online course in Korea is 40 % cheaper than classroom." The Korean students still miss the innovative technology and aggressive multi-media design of their country's websites. Another recommendation stated, "I recommend for the instructors to make some videos. Perhaps, students can understand better when they hear it rather than reading whole chunk of textbooks." Almost every qualitative recommendation from the students included advanced technology and usually multi-media recommendations for online course construction that would also help to overcome the language barrier saying, "Audio or video introduction to each class period of at least 10 minutes are necessary for the students grasp the importance of main concepts and debates". The data support the conclusion that Korean students prefer use of multi-media

in the online course construction as a technique to help overcome the language barrier and promote clarity.

Implications/Significance of the Study

Empirical Implication/Significance

The study contributes to the body of knowledge on culturally-appropriate online course design for Korean study. It approached course design from the viewpoint of meeting learning preferences that are culturally based. The study supported existing research literature and a recent study by Morris (2009) in finding that Korean students have clear learning preferences, that these preferences are based in their traditional culture, and that they favor teacher-centered and structural instruction. However, this study extended the existing knowledge base by demonstrating that the learning preferences of Korean students may be shift to a more flexible, student-centered, and androgogical model. This shift, coupled with the deep respect of Koreans for their cultural heritage and traditions, can create confusion and conflict in Korean learners.

Theoretical Implications/Significance

This study supported the appropriateness of Henderson's Multicultural Model (MCM) as a theoretical framework for studying culturally-based learning preferences in online courses. Henderson's Multiple Cultural model provided successful measurement of learning preferences based on cultural traditions. Without concluding that one preference is better than the other, the model measured the Korean students' learning preferences, epistemology, philosophy, and underlying learning theory. The study concurred with Morris (2007) that the MCM assessed instructional sequences, learner control, motivation, and cultural integration (Morris, 2009, p.157). The results

based on the MCM explained preferences and suggested online course design elements that will enhance academic success for international students. The study supports a theoretical stance that cultural characteristics do manifest themselves in learning preferences and can reflect changing cultural values.

The second theoretical significance of this study is its support for the validity of the instrument developed by Morris (2009) based on Henderson's MCM. This researcher acknowledges that use of an instrument that is not fully validated is risky. Nevertheless, Morris' instrument was the only one available that was conceptually, theoretically, and empirically appropriate and thus was selected for this study. Further, use of Morris' instrument in this study provided an opportunity to make a contribution to the theoretical foundations of this line of inquiry by addressing the validity of this new instrument. The results of this study support those reported by Morris, and both studies support the literature based. This speaks well for Morris' instrument and suggests it may indeed be a valid and valuable tool for assessing culturally-related learning preferences.

Practical Implications/Significance

The findings and conclusions of this study allowed several important recommendations to be developed for constructing online courses that can improve the success of Korean students by meeting both their current teacher-centered learning preferences and ne3eds that are embedded in their traditional culture and the newer emerging patterns that are more learner-centered and andragogical in nature. These recommendations are listed below under Recommendations for Practice.

Recommendations for Practice

1. Online courses should be constructed with cultural accommodations of immediate access to the professor and most preferably through multi-media such as Skype or online conferencing.
2. Online course construction should provide the opportunity for as much communication with the professor as the student determines necessary both academically and personally.
3. Online course construction should incorporate computer technology and multi-media for varied curriculum applications combined with effective high-speed Internet in order to attract and keep the student's interest.
4. Online course construction should incorporate teacher-centered practices for online curriculum that guides the class, learning, outcomes, and communications.
5. Online courses should be built with extensive detail, explaining all assignments and processes thoroughly and should be error-free in order to prevent confusion. Word usage should be culturally appropriate and articulate complete meaning without confusion or the opportunity for distractions.
6. Online course construction should be constructed with established, strict due dates, clearly understood objectives, and guided learning, but also incorporate flexibility in such a manner that Korean students are allowed choices.
7. Online course construction should contain clear, detailed instructions in a manner that would promote success and would prevent mistakes.
8. Online course construction should incorporate cultural preferences.

9. Online course construction should require class discussions, but allow students ample time to construction or formulate their comments and replies.
10. Online course construction should incorporate multicultural learning preferences.
11. Educators should encourage multicultural students to know their learning preferences, learning styles, aptitude, limitations and capabilities in order to maximize their potential.
12. Instructors of classes with multicultural students should never give class presentation requirements whether via multi-media, online, or classroom.
13. Instructors of classes with multicultural students should never call on Korean students to speak publicly or spontaneously through multimedia, technology, or discussions. Korean students want preparation time.
14. Online courses should be error free in order to prevent distractions and complications.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Conduct the same research study at a non-theological university.
2. Facilitate research through an "ideal" online course, incorporating recommendations from this research to confirm cultural suitability and multicultural learning accommodations.
3. Conduct the same research with larger number of participants.
4. Conduct research to determine if procrastination is a cultural problem.

5. Research conducted with the purpose of determining the ideal number of students in a class and the adequate number of students that the class professor could academically accommodate.
6. Conduct research to determine the student's understanding of vocabulary and the successful incorporation into the online courses.
7. Conduct research to identify online mistakes built into online courses that present distractions and difficulties for Korean students.

Conclusions: Final Thoughts

While an interview with a Korean professor and fascination with the Korean culture was the inspiration for this research, the theoretical multicultural model and literature guided the study. Reflecting on the process, one would be terribly remiss not to adamantly declare what a wonderful group of students the Koreans were to research. They were very kind and willing to help as much as possible. Their anxiousness to please was notably unusual and consistent with the findings of the research of their respect for teachers and a teacher-centered classroom.

With that same dedication to please and be accepted into the general population, several qualitative interviewees had even assumed an American name simply for the convenience of U.S. students. They considered it easier to take on an American name to assist U.S. students who were struggling with the memory and pronunciation of their Korean name. Chris was the American assumed name used by one of the qualitative interviewees. He stated, "I took that name on as a method or convenience for other colleagues to be able to remember me. Americans are not able to remember my name . . . so I hoped to accommodate them by assuming an Americanized name."

The new challenge for educators is to encourage multicultural students to know their learning preferences, learning styles, aptitude, limitations and capabilities in order to devote their scholastic efforts, as Smith (2002) said, “to advance the frontiers of knowledge on all sides, and helping them to find a constructive and personally satisfying role in that culture” of education. In order for students to effectively apply critical thinking and applicable knowledge creation, they need to be immersed in educational accommodations of their learning preferences. Student’s culturally-based learning preferences are “. . . not to be ignored, but they are to be realized within an educational environment that is itself an example of and at the same time a legitimate part of the emerging knowledge-creating culture” (Smith, 2002). Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) believe that knowledge building fails because of the failure to acknowledge and address such authentic academic issues. Instructors can promote academic success by soliciting ideas and suggestions from students. Perhaps knowledge could be stimulated by focusing on the individual students as compared to seeking the larger world of knowledge creation through mere exercises as suggested by the multicultural students.

The ability to provide academic pathways of success that accurately accommodate various multicultural learning preferences is not only productive but should be considered compulsory necessities for all university online classes. This researcher’s desire is to design academically successful and scholastically challenging online courses while accommodating all international learning preferences in a most efficient and effective delivery method. The academic success of each student or individual in any educational setting, who has the desire and willingness to succeed, should be promoted by giving equal access and equal opportunity to scholastically excel.

The indication that the number of Korean students taking online courses continues to grow, suggests that the benefits of online courses out weights the complications.

Morris's (2009), Kim (2001-2002), Choi and Ruona (2011), Chen (2004) and many other researchers' findings have certainly reflected the global diversity of learning styles, customs, and traditions. Regardless of the physical distances between countries, regardless of the differences in cultures, regardless of how different the multi-cultural students may seem, the world is now much smaller and there are increasing similarities between international students and U. S. students. As Thomas Friedman (2005) would say, "Successful learning flattens the world and narrows the distances between countries". Cultural sensitivity in designing the increasingly ubiquitous online learning promotes and facilitates successful learning and helps Friedman's vision become reality.

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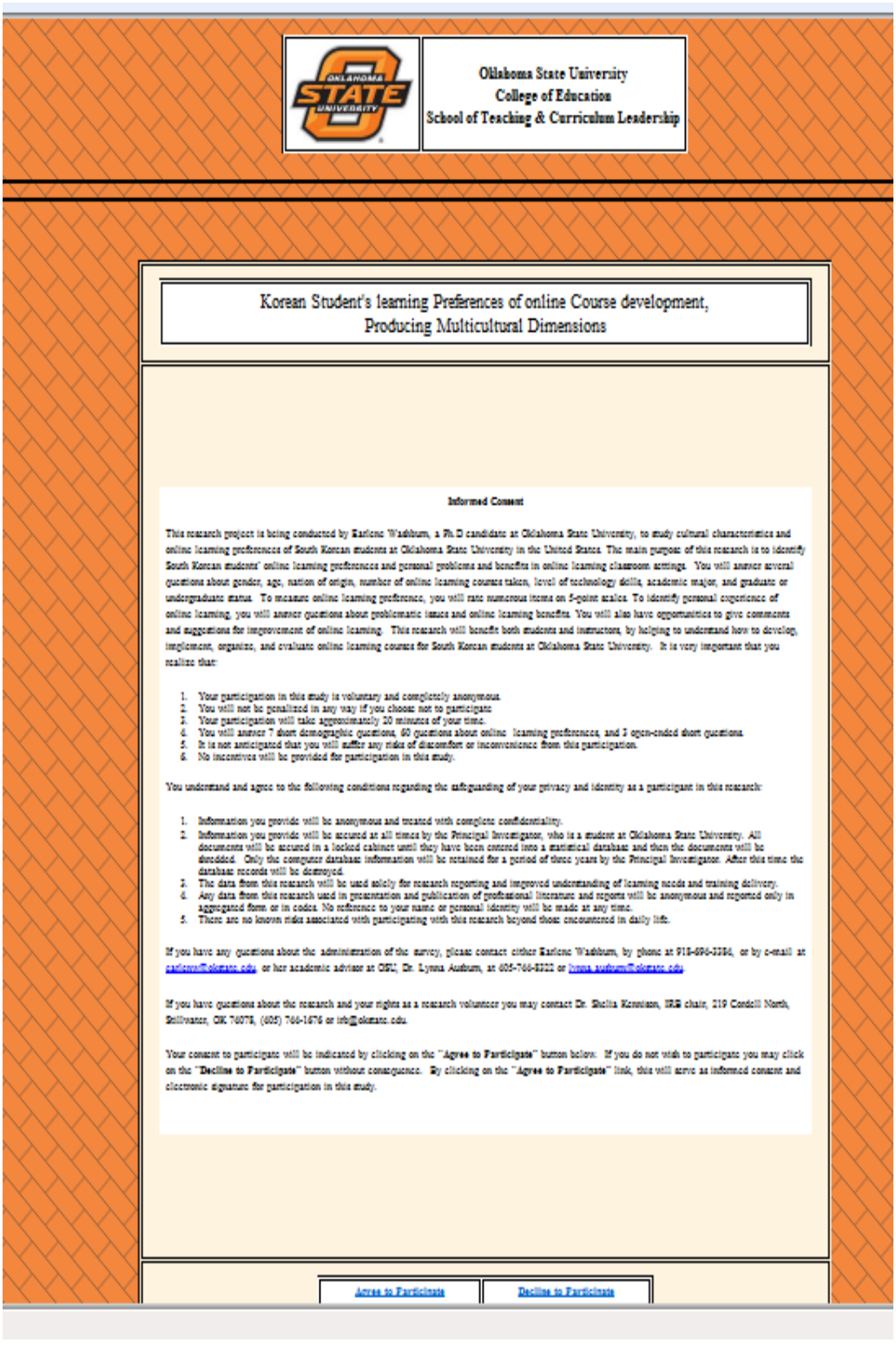
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

QUESIONNAIRE WEBSITE PAGES



Oklahoma State University
College of Education
School of Teaching & Curriculum Leadership

Korean Student's learning Preferences of online Course development,
Producing Multicultural Dimensions

Informed Consent

This research project is being conducted by Earlene Washburn, a Ph.D candidate at Oklahoma State University, to study cultural characteristics and online learning preferences of South Korean students at Oklahoma State University in the United States. The main purpose of this research is to identify South Korean students' online learning preferences and personal problems and benefits in online learning classroom settings. You will answer several questions about gender, age, nation of origin, number of online learning courses taken, level of technology skills, academic major, and graduate or undergraduate status. To measure online learning preference, you will rate numerous items on 5-point scales. To identify personal experience of online learning, you will answer questions about problematic issues and online learning benefits. You will also have opportunities to give comments and suggestions for improvement of online learning. This research will benefit both students and instructors, by helping to understand how to develop, implement, organize, and evaluate online learning courses for South Korean students at Oklahoma State University. It is very important that you realize that:

1. Your participation in this study is voluntary and completely anonymous.
2. You will not be penalized in any way if you choose not to participate.
3. Your participation will take approximately 20 minutes of your time.
4. You will answer 7 short demographic questions, 60 questions about online learning preferences, and 3 open-ended short questions.
5. It is not anticipated that you will suffer any risks of discomfort or inconvenience from this participation.
6. No incentives will be provided for participation in this study.

You understand and agree to the following conditions regarding the safeguarding of your privacy and identity as a participant in this research:

1. Information you provide will be anonymous and treated with complete confidentiality.
2. Information you provide will be secured at all times by the Principal Investigator, who is a student at Oklahoma State University. All documents will be secured in a locked cabinet until they have been entered into a statistical database and then the documents will be shredded. Only the computer database information will be retained for a period of three years by the Principal Investigator. After this time the database records will be destroyed.
3. The data from this research will be used solely for research reporting and improved understanding of learning needs and training delivery.
4. Any data from this research used in presentation and publication of professional literature and reports will be anonymous and reported only in aggregated form or in codes. No reference to your name or personal identity will be made at any time.
5. There are no known risks associated with participating with this research beyond those encountered in daily life.

If you have any questions about the administration of the survey, please contact either Earlene Washburn, by phone at 918-696-3384, or by e-mail at earlene@okstate.edu, or her academic advisor at OSU, Dr. Lynna Ausburn, at 405-744-8322 or lynna.ausburn@okstate.edu.

If you have questions about the research and your rights as a research volunteer you may contact Dr. Sheila Kennison, IRB chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Your consent to participate will be indicated by clicking on the "**Agree to Participate**" button below. If you do not wish to participate you may click on the "**Decline to Participate**" button without consequence. By clicking on the "**Agree to Participate**" link, this will serve as informed consent and electronic signature for participation in this study.

Agree to Participate | Decline to Participate

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Earlene Washburn, a Ph.D. candidate at Oklahoma State University, to study cultural characteristics and online learning preferences of Korean students in the United States. The main purpose of this research is to identify Western constructed online course curriculum that may cause discourse with multicultural learning preferences. Questions are designed to provide demographics, levels of technology skills, grades, academic major, learning preferences, open-ended questions about the difficulty of online courses and recommends for change that you would offer. Numerous questions about learning preferences are on a five-point scale. Your answers will be neither, right or wrong; however they will be greatly beneficial to the process of this research. The results will either confirm that the online courses are very beneficial to Korean students or will provide information that helps instructors understand how to develop, implement, organize, and evaluate online learning as needed. Please understand most importantly:

1. Your participation in this study is voluntary and completely anonymous.
2. You will not be penalized in anyway if you choose to participate or not to participate.
3. Your participation will take approximately 20 minutes of your time.
4. You will answer demographic questions, online learning preferences, and open-ended questions.
5. You will not suffer risks, discomfort, or inconvenience from this participation.
6. No incentives will be provided for participation in this study.

By participating in this survey, please understand and agree to the following conditions regarding the safeguarding of your confidentiality, privacy, and identity in this research:

1. Information you provide will be anonymous and treated with complete confidentiality.
2. Information you provide will be secured at all times by the Principal Investigator, who is a graduate student at Oklahoma State University. All documents will be secured until they have been entered into an electronic database and then the documents will be shredded. Only the computer database information will be retained for a period of three years by the Principal Investigator. After this time the database records will also be destroyed.
3. The data from this research will be used solely for research reporting and improved understanding of learning needs and training delivery.
4. Any data from this research used in presentation and publication of professional literature and reports will be anonymous and reported only in

aggregated form or in codes. No reference to your name or personal identity will be made at any time.

5. There are no known risks associated with participating with this research beyond those encountered in daily life.

If you have any questions about the administration of the survey, please contact either Earlene Washburn by phone at 918-694-3384 or by e-mail at earlenw@okstate.edu or her academic advisor at OSU, Dr. Ausburn, at 405-744-8322 or lynna.ausburn@okstate.edu. If you have questions about the research and your rights as to research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Sheila Kennison, IRB chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Your consent to participate will be indicated by clicking on the "Agree to Participate" button below. If you do not wish to participate, you may click on the "Decline to Participate" button without consequences. By checking on the "Agree to Participate" link, this will serve as informed consent and electronic signature for participation in this study.

APPENDIX C

Instrument

Cultural Dimensions and Online Learning Preferences
of Asian Students at Oklahoma State University in the United States

Demographics			
What is your gender?			
○ Male	○ Female		
What is your age?			
What is your nation of origin?			
○ China (People's Republic of China)	○ Japan	○ Korea	○ Taiwan
How many online learning courses have you taken?			
○ None	○ 1 -3	○ 4-6	○ More than 6
How would you rate your level of technology skills?			
○ **Novice** (I know how to do basic functions on the Internet, but I am not skillful			
○ **Fairly skilled** (I know how to handle and mange most software and hardware)			
○ **Power user** (I can manage advanced software and hardware components)			
What is your major?			
What level of degree program are you pursuing?			
○ Bachelor degree	○ Master's degree	○ Doctoral degree	

Online Learning Preference of Asian Students

The following statements are asking you about your online learning preferences. There are no right or wrong answers. Please indicate the degree to which they are true of you.

Knowledge Acquisition and Educational Philosophy

When I take online learning courses, ...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prefer to pursue theoretical knowledge	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to pursue knowledge for its own sake	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to obtain practical knowledge	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to acquire factual knowledge	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to listen to lectures	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer that the instructor leads the class	○	○	○	○	○
I believe that learning is derived from one's individual and social experience	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn through real life experiences	○	○	○	○	○

Learning Theory and Goal Orientation

When I take online learning courses, ...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prefer that instructor specify the desired learning performance in advance	○	○	○	○	○
I value learning outcomes	○	○	○	○	○
I value the learning process	○	○	○	○	○
I value reorganizing my thoughts rather than changing my external behavior	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer clearly stated learning objectives	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer predetermined learning goals	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer flexible learning goals	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer broad and open-ended learning goals	○	○	○	○	○

Sequencing of Instruction and Valuing of Experience

When I take online learning courses, ...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prefer to learn step-by-step	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn in detail	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn in an unstructured way	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn general principles first and specific knowledge later	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn from textbooks rather than other resources	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn from theory rather than experience	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn by doing	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to learn through practical examples	○	○	○	○	○

Instructor's Roles and Errorless Learning					
When I take online learning courses, ...					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe the role of the instructor is providing knowledge	○	○	○	○	○
I believe an instructor should be an expert on the subject matter	○	○	○	○	○
I believe the role of the instructor is for guiding the learning	○	○	○	○	○
I believe the role of the instructor is as a mentor	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to repeat my learning until I can generate correct answers	○	○	○	○	○
I do not want to make any mistakes in my tests	○	○	○	○	○
I believe making a mistake is just a part of the learning process	○	○	○	○	○
I believe that I can learn through my mistakes	○	○	○	○	○

Motivation and Program Flexibility					
When I take online learning courses, ...					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I value saving time and money	○	○	○	○	○
I value earning school credits more than I value enjoying the class	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy a variety of learning activities such as threaded discussions or other collaborative activities with students and the instructor.	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy online learning itself	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer well-defined learning projects	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer fixed learning schedules	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer self-paced learning	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer flexible learning schedules	○	○	○	○	○

Organizing Courses and Directing Learning					
When I take online learning courses, ...					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prefer well-organized learning courses	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer a well-planned learning curriculum	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to use a variety of learning materials	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to have access to a wide array of supplementary learning materials	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer that the instructor directs my learning	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer that the instructor gives me a deadline for my assignments	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to manage my own learning	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to assess my own learning	○	○	○	○	○

Learner Activity and Group Learning					
When I take online learning courses, ...					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prefer that the instructor controls my entire learning process	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to have class learning tasks rigidly specified in advance on the class syllabus	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to be actively involved in my own learning	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to initiate my own learning	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to work by myself without discussion with my classmates	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer individual learning	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to perform class projects in small groups	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer to cooperate to my classmates	○	○	○	○	○

Cultural Sensitivity					
When I take online learning courses, ...					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Preference	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe learners' cultural backgrounds really affect learning achievement	○	○	○	○	○
I am interested in my classmates' cultural backgrounds	○	○	○	○	○
I am ready to accept cultural differences of both the instructors and classmates	○	○	○	○	○
I am ready to listen attentively others' opinions regardless their cultural backgrounds	○	○	○	○	○

Comments of Online Learning
What is the most difficult problem you personally experience when you take an online course?
What is the best benefit you personally experience when you take an online course?
In order to improve online courses, what do you want to recommend?

APPENDIX D

Letter of Invitation to Complete Survey

To: Korean students taking online courses.

From: Earlene Washburn-OSU Graduate Student
1809 College Park Road
Claremore, OK 74017
918-694-3384
ewashbur@flash.net

Subject: Korean Students' Online Learning Preferences and Issues: Cultural Sensitivity for Western Course Designers

Dear international students:

As an OSU graduate student, I am conducting a confidential survey that will give you the opportunity to voice your opinion about western constructed online course preferences. The purpose of the research is to promote multicultural best practices in all course content, delivery, and synchronous activities. Your assistance is needed to identify learning preferences, distractions, and benefits of Korean students taking online courses.

Your opinions are very important to me while your personal participation is voluntary. All answers will be kept confidential and will be coded into patterns of meanings developed for educational purposes only. You may decline at any time. If you agree to participate, you will grant permission by the act of participating.

Additional face-to-face qualitative interviews will be conducted, but on a volunteer basis only. At the end of the survey, you will be given the opportunity to volunteer by forgoing your confidential identity and providing your e-mail address for contact purposes. Volunteers will be randomly selected. The face-to-face interview will be scheduled at your convenience and only with your total agreement.

If you agree to interview, please go to website http://frontpage.okstate.edu/coe/earlenewashburn and click on "Agree to Participate". If you prefer to answer the questionnaire in paper form, please request a form by sending an e-mail to ewashbur@flash.net or call 918-694-3384.

Once again, I would like to remind you that your participation is strictly voluntary and will be kept confidential. The results will be reported in summary format with the hopes of improving multicultural online course construction.

Thank you for your consideration. I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have by calling 918-694-3384 or e-mailing ewashbur@flash.net. You may also call my advisor, Dr. Ausburn 405-744-8322, lynna.ausburn@okstate.edu or Dr. Song at osu.jhoonsong@gmail.com.

APPENDIX E

Reminder Letter

A letter of invitation was e-mailed to you one week ago inviting you to answer an online questionnaire related to Korean students taking online courses. The purpose of the survey is to determine any possible difficulties in learning styles or course construction that could promote improvements and best practices to the class.

If you have completed the survey, thank you very much. You are greatly appreciated. If not, please visit the following link http://frontpage.okstate.edu/coe/earlenewashburn and complete the survey as quickly as possible. There is no risk to you-the student. This event only offers the potential of curriculum improvements.

Thank you for your consideration. With your help, online courses can be the premiere educational process for multicultural course delivery.

Best wishes,
Earlene Washburn

APPENDIX F

Dialogue for Qualitative Interviews

Introduction

Hello! My name is Earlene Washburn and I am an OSU Ph.D. candidate. I am conducting a confidential survey that will give you the opportunity to voice your opinion about western constructed online course learning preferences. The purpose of the research is to promote multicultural best practices in all online course content, delivery, and synchronous activities. Your assistance is needed to identify learning preferences, distractions, and benefits of Korean students taking online courses.

Your opinions are very important to me and will not be able to harm you in any way. Your personal participation is strictly voluntary. All answers will be kept confidential and will be coded into patterns of meanings developed for educational purposes only. You may decline at any time. If you agree to continue, we will start the questioning now.

Do you have any questions?

Do you wish to continue? Yes_____ No_____

Qualifying Questions

Are you 18 years old or older? _____

Are you Korean born? _____

How long have you lived in the United States? _____

How long did you live in Korea? _____

The following questions are directly targeted to address the 15 learning preferences and will be further probed depending on the volunteer's answers.

1. (Epistemology) Epistemology is the way we learn. In your opinion, what is the best way to create/learn/build/construct knowledge?
2. (Pedagogical Philosophy)
    a. (Instructivist) What is your opinion of learning from the instructor facilitating the class through goals and objectives?
    b. (Constructivist) What is your opinion of learning through building new knowledge from prior knowledge?
3. (Underlying Psychology)
    a. (Behaviorism) What do you like or dislike about
        a. learning from programmed instructions,
        b. computer facilitated instructions,
        c. performance-based learning and mastery learning?
    b. (Cognitive) What is your most comfortable way to collect, store, modify, and interpret information for learning purposes?
4. (Goal Orientation)
    a. What methods of learning do you prefer to learn from when attempting to achieve a goal?

a. Clearly stated learned objectives and direct instruction, rote memorization, tutorials, drills and practice?

b. Unfocused goal objectives, general and broad goals, discovery learning, virtual reality, and conceptual methods?

5. (Instructional Sequencing)
    a. When studying, do you prefer to learn with step-by-step, detailed instructions and transition to specific knowledge or
    b. in an unstructured process?
6. (Experiential Value)
    a. How valuable do you consider learning from experience and doing rather than other resources such as enjoying learning from situations emphasizing practical contextualized, and application learning? Apprenticeship, community service learning, and contextualized learning are also included in experiential value learning.
    b. Why would you prefer more abstract experiences?
7. (Role of Instructor: Didactic and Facilitative)
    a. (Didactic) Would you prefer the instructor provide the knowledge and do you believe an instructor should be an expert on the subject matter? Why?
    b. (Facilitative) Would you prefer the instructor to be there for the purpose of guiding the learning and helping students to construct new knowledge based on previous learning; encouraging students to sets personal learning goals; and providing feedback as a facilitator? Why?
8. (Value of Errors: Errorless Learning or Learning from Experience)
    a. What is your opinion of repeating the learning process until you produce correct answers and never make any mistakes on your tests?
    b. What is your opinion of making mistakes as part of the learning process and learning from those mistakes as an important process?
9. (Origin of Motivation)
    a. (Extrinsic) How motivated are you from outside stimuli such as good grades, parents' praise, and earning money?
    b. (Intrinsic) How motivated are you from within your own goals and ambition to achieve?
10. (Program Flexibility)
    a. (Instructor Proof) Why would you prefer learning environments in which you are not allowed flexibility and can only use restricted learning content, materials?
    b. (Easily Modifiable)Why would you prefer easily modifiable instruction like flexibility and various learning methods such as lectures, experiments, inquiry learning and field trips?
11. (Accommodation of Individual Differences)
    a. (Non-Existent) How would non-existent instruction, where curriculum is presented without consideration of individual differences, benefit your learning process?
    b. (Multifaceted) How do you think you would benefit from a multifaceted instructional process, where you as the student have various learning

styles and recognize that you accept process, organize, and retrieve information in different ways?

12. (Learner Control)
    a. Non-Existent –What learning value would you achieve from instructional methods where the instructor is in total control as he/she manages the learning process?
    b. (Unrestricted) What learning value would you achieve from u*nrestr*icted methods where students are allowed to facilitate their own learning through flow, events of instruction, pace, sequences, assessments, and path?
13. (User Activity)
    a. (Mathemagenic) How well do you learn from activities that promote learning, that are relevant to specified instructor designated objectives, and specific situations or places?
    b. (Generative) How well do you learn from emphasizing involvement, and control of your own academia via creating, elaborating, and educational engagement?
14. (Cooperative Learning)
    a. Collaboration Unsupported - How well do you learn from collaborative, cooperative learning where students work together in small groups and for common goals even though they may be at different levels but still supported for cooperative learning?
    b. (Integrated) Which would you enjoy learning best- unsupported or fully integrated and why?
15. (Cultural Sensitivity)
    a. How do you believe learners' cultural backgrounds affect learning achievement?
    b. How do you think the cultural differences of both the instructor and the classmates will promote learning?

The following questions are directly targeted to address the 4 variables of Transactional Distance theory and will be further probed depending on the volunteer's answers:

1. (Distance) What do you enjoy about a course where you have freedom, are the facilitator, deliberate planner, disciplinary, and are in control of how you learn in a course?
2. (Autonomy) To what extent do you enjoy determining your own goals, learning experiences, and evaluations of the learning process rather than the instructor?
3. (Dialog) How much do you enjoy dialog between/among your instructor and students?
4. (Research) How much do you enjoy classes with rigid educational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods?

Thank you for your help in this educational process. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

Do you have friends or associates that you think would be willing to also participate in the same survey?

Would you consider sharing names and contact information?

Name_____

e-mail_____

Text #_____

Phone#_____

Thank you. Please remember that all information is kept confidential. If you are willing to share your contact information, I will provide to you a transcript to confirm that all details in the transcript are correct.

Name_____

e-mail_____

Text #_____

Phone#_____

APPENDIX G

IRB Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Monday, October 10, 2011
IRB Application No	ED11171
Proposal Title:	Korean Students' Online Learning Preferences and Issues: Cultural Sensitivity for Western Course Designers
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 10/9/2012

Principal Investigator(s):

Earlene Washburn	Lynna Ausburn
1809 College Park Road	257 Willard
Claremore, OK 74017	Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

X The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Earlene Washburn

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: KOREAN STUDENT'S ONLINE LEARNING PERFERENCES AND ISSUES: CULTURAL SENSITIVITY FOR WESTERN COURSE DESIGNERS

Major Field: EDUCATION (Occupational Studies)

Biographical:

Education: Doctor of Philosophy in Education (Occupational Studies) at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2012.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Education-Occupational Studies at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July,1994.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Business Education at Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in May, 1981.

Experience: University of Arkansas, 2008 – present
Earlene Washburn Insurance and Financial Services, 1994 – present
Stellar Consulting Services, LLC, 2010 – present
Workforce Oklahoma 2010 -2011
Rogers State University 1994 - 2008
Tulsa Community College, 2004 – 2006
Centrilift, a Baker Hughes Company 1981 -1994
Melton Sales 1978 to 1981

Professional Memberships: Omicron Tau Theta, Academy of Human Resource Development, Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education, Rotary International, Paul Harris Fellow, Tulsa Area Chamber of Commerce, FINRA Member-Registered Representative, ATMAE

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Name: Earlene Washburn Date of Degree: May, 2012
Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma
Title of Study: KOREAN STUDENT'S ONLINE LEARNING PERFERENCES AND ISSUES: CULTURAL SENSITIVITY FOR WESTERN COURSE DESIGNERS
Pages in Study: 248 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy/Education

Major Field: Education- Occupational Studies

Scope and Method of Study:

While online courses offer educational solutions, they are not academically suited for everyone. International students find distractions in online courses constructed with Western philosophy, epistemology, values, and cultures as compared to experiences in their home country. Learner's cultural, value system, learning preferences, and philosophies should be considered when designing online courses with consideration for how culture influences students' learning. Henderson's Multiple Cultural Model (1996) was the theoretical framework used to identify online learning preferences that Korean students recognize as web-based course distractions.

This study used descriptive methodology in a mixed-method design, combining demographic and learning preferences through quantitative data along with qualitative data obtained from personal interviews. A web-based, confidential survey questionnaire provided quantitative data for the descriptive study that used 65 demographic, open-ended and force-choice questions and 3 open-ended questions. The instrument was web-based constructed so that it becomes accessible to students from any location. Volunteering students were purposefully selected for face-to-face qualitative interviews based on their points of view, opinions, and online experiences. Variables were Korean culture-independent and learning preferences-dependent.

Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, t-test, and thematic analysis emit the major findings. The demographic profile of the population reflective via a five-point Likert-type rating scale, measuring learning preferences by indicating measures of response by; 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=no preference, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. Thematic analysis of the qualitative data expressed online learning experiences offered by Korean students.

Findings and Conclusions: Koreans' educational preferences are very traditional teacher-centered but are slowly changing to more Americanized educational system. While Koreans like the new flexible, more Americanized educational process, they still feel a strong commitment to the former/traditional Korean cultural educational process. While technical issues, complications with high-speed Internet, and the lack of additional learning resources were very highly rated problems, the lack of communications was equally a problem. Students wanted/needed greater communications with their professor; both on a personal level and in the classroom. They wanted to be able to ask questions, obtain answers immediately, have a personal relationship with their professor, and engage with the professor for reassurance and a greater understanding. They hold the professor in highest esteem with greatest respect to guide the learning

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Lynna Ausburn