education sciences

MDPI

Article

Critical Considerations for Intercultural Sensitivity Development: Transnational Perspectives

Asuka Ichikawa [1,*,†] and Sarang Kim [2,*,†]

[1] Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education, Lynch School of Education and Human Development, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA
[2] Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019, USA
* Correspondence: asuka.ichikawa@bc.edu (A.I.); sarang.kim-1@ou.edu (S.K.)
† These authors contributed equally to this work.

Abstract: Intercultural sensitivity is crucial in today's diverse society, and accurate assessment is key to developing effective intercultural programs in educational institutions and beyond. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is widely used for this purpose, yet its applicability to transnational individuals—those navigating multiple cultural and social systems—remains underexplored. This gap is important to address given the interconnected nature of our global society, where individuals frequently move across borders. To address this issue, this conceptual paper critically examines the underlying assumptions of the IDI regarding culture and identity through three interrelated frameworks: transnationalism, relational ontology, and intersectionality. Drawing on existing literature on these frameworks and the IDI, our analysis highlights how integrating these perspectives into the IDI and, by extension, other intercultural assessment tools can more accurately capture the complex, fluid, and dynamic nature of transnational experiences. This integration also shifts the discourse on intercultural assessment from a focus on individual competence to an emphasis on shared responsibility in fostering equitable, relationally grounded intercultural spaces. Implications for future research and practice are also discussed.

Keywords: intercultural sensitivity/competency; intercultural education; transnationality; developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS); intercultural development inventory (IDI); intercultural development continuum (IDC)

check for updates

Academic Editors: Susana Pinto and Mónica Lourenço

Received: 30 December 2024
Revised: 31 March 2025
Accepted: 14 April 2025
Published: 21 April 2025

Citation: Ichikawa, A., & Kim, S. (2025). Critical Considerations for Intercultural Sensitivity Development: Transnational Perspectives. *Education Sciences*, *15*(4), 515. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15040515

Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

Intercultural sensitivity has been recognized as a critical skill for individuals to develop in an increasingly diverse, pluralistic society (Hammer et al., 2003; Punti & Dingel, 2021). Among many terms to name the concept, Hammer et al. (2003) distinguish intercultural sensitivity to mean "the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences" and intercultural competence to refer to "the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways" (p. 422). In this paper, we use the words interchangeably with an intentional word preference for "sensitivity" to connote a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) to highlight "the lifelong process" to cultivate this skill without a definitive endpoint (Arasaratnam-Smith & Deardorff, 2023, p. 2). Various tools have been developed to measure intercultural sensitivity, with the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) being one of the most widely utilized across educational institutions, corporations, government agencies, and non-profit organizations in over 60 countries (Hammer, 2011; IDI, LLC., n.d.). Further, since its inception in 1998, the IDI has been empirically applied in research across various contexts (Hammer et al., 2003). For example, in higher education, it has been used

Downloaded from SHAREOK. Persistent Handle URL: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/342386

to measure intercultural development among faculty, staff, and students across diverse fields, including marketing, nursing, pharmacy, agriculture, and STEM (Emerson et al., 2024; Jaiswal et al., 2024; Kuffuor et al., 2024; Scott & Sandell, 2023; Tamer et al., 2023).

While the IDI has made significant contributions to the field of intercultural studies, some scholars have raised concerns about its universal applicability across diverse cultural contexts and populations due to its Western-centered, individualistic notions of culture and English language paradigms (Acheson & Schneider-Bean, 2019; Greenholtz, 2005; Punti & Dingel, 2021). In particular, its relevance to transnational individuals and communities remains underexplored. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the potential utility of the IDI in its application to transnational individuals and communities through the lenses of transnationalism, intersectionality, and relational ontology, by examining the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) that informs the inventory. Specifically, transnationalism is used to highlight the multiplicity of cultural perspectives and challenge the DMIS's assumptions of culture as discrete and static (Acheson & Schneider-Bean, 2019). Intersectionality addresses the complexities of shifting positionalities of transnational individuals shaped by the systems of power and privilege (Punti & Dingel, 2021), while relational ontology critiques the DMIS's individualistic assumptions, suggesting that intercultural sensitivity is shaped by the relational dynamics between individuals. Through these perspectives, our paper not only builds on previous critiques of the IDI, which highlight its Western-centric, individualistic, and linear assumptions about culture and identity, but also extends these critiques to the largely underexplored context of transnational individuals and communities. Additionally, we propose alternative and complementary approaches to framing intercultural sensitivity for transnational populations.

For the purpose of this paper, we define transnational individuals and communities as those whose lives, relationships, and engagements span multiple nations, characterized by the dynamic negotiation of cultural, social, and political practices that transcend singular national contexts (Schiller et al., 1992; Tedeschi et al., 2022). Rather than identifying specific populations under the broad umbrella of transnational communities, we deliberately focus on the nuanced nature of transnational experiences without imposing limiting categorizations. This approach allows for a more inclusive examination of how intercultural frameworks like the IDI address complex transnational realities.

Further, we acknowledge that the IDI was not originally designed with transnational individuals in mind; thus, our goal is not to critique its foundational scope. Instead, we aim to enhance its applicability and relevance for transnational populations in an era marked by globalization and transnational mobility. Furthermore, given the IDI's frequent use as a diagnostic tool for intercultural and international education, training, and professional development in various institutions (Acheson & Schneider-Bean, 2019; Bennett, 2017; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009), it is imperative that it meaningfully reflects the experiences of diverse populations, including those with transnational backgrounds. Further, it is essential to promote more pluralistic conceptualizations of cultures to better support the well-being and sense of belonging of those with transnational backgrounds at individual and institutional levels. This paper was guided by the following research questions: (1) In what ways might the DMIS not resonate with the experiences and identities of transnational individuals? (2) What practical recommendations can enhance the meaningful use of the IDI with these populations?

2. Researcher Positionality

We foreground our positionality to maintain transparency and provide clarity about the motivations and lived experiences that led us to undertake this work. It is from

the standpoint as transnational individuals who hold a multicultural, multinational, and multilingual upbringing, that we came to both appreciate the framework to understand how people develop intercultural sensitivity while simultaneously being compelled to question some of the fundamental assumptions that underlie the DMIS that is unequivocally applied institutionally through assessment tools and training materials, placing IDI as the "global" model.

Asuka (she/her) was born and raised in Japan, where her home and educational environment created spaces for multilingual and intercultural interactions. From Grades 7 to 11, she went to a Canadian international school in Japan. At age 16, she transferred to a public secondary school in Canada and lived with a local Canadian host family for about two years. After completing a bachelor's degree at a Canadian public university, she returned to Japan for six years and then moved to the United States as an international student. Between her graduate studies in Japan and the U.S., she worked for a multinational firm in Tokyo and a Japanese public institution in New York City. Asuka is ethnically Japanese and is bilingual in Japanese and English. She has taken the IDI assessment as part of leadership training at her current institution. While introducing DMIS/IDI when teaching about intercultural sensitivity in undergraduate and graduate classes, she kept wondering how the model could be more relatable for those who have a transnational sense of belonging and applied in a way to foster an interculturally inclusive society.

Sarang (she/her) was born in the U.S. but grew up in Republic of Korea (hereafter Korea). While raised in a relatively linguistically, ethnically, and racially homogenous environment, she frequently moved across different regions in Korea during her upbringing. These experiences initially sensitized her to cultural differences, such as dialects, political views, and foods, among others. At the age of 19, she moved back to the U.S., where she attended her senior year in a public high school, followed by a community college, and later a four-year public university. Upon returning to the U.S., her encounter with racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity not only broadened her cultural repertoire but also deepened her understanding of the role of power and systemic issues in shaping those dynamics. This awareness was heightened by her transition from belonging to a majority group in Korea, in terms of race, ethnicity, and language, to becoming a minority in the U.S. This experience profoundly shaped her personal, professional, and scholarly journey, inspiring her to explore how transnational individuals experience and understand cultural differences and navigate social systems layered with power dynamics, often vis-à-vis dominant narratives centered on Western perspectives.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and Intercultural Development Inventory

In response to the growing importance of developing intercultural competence in increasingly diverse global and local contexts, Bennett (1986, 1993) proposed the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). This framework outlines how individuals develop orientations toward cultural differences. Grounded in constructivism and communication theory, the DMIS conceptualizes how individuals progress in their understanding of cultural differences and in developing intercultural sensitivity and competence in intercultural interactions. Specifically, the framework posits that individuals move through six stages of intercultural competence development, grouped into two overarching categories: ethnocentrism (denial, defense/reversal, and minimization) and ethnorelativism (acceptance, adaptation, and integration) (Hammer et al., 2003).

The first stage, Denial, describes a worldview in which other cultures are met with indifference, generalized as undifferentiated "others", or perceived with hostility, while one's own culture is experienced as the only "real" culture. In the Defense stage, individuals

become more aware of cultural differences than in the Denial stage, but they view these differences through binary categories of "us" versus "them", often perceiving their own culture as superior. A variation of the defense stage, Reversal, involves valorizing another culture over one's primary culture. Minimization, the final stage of ethnocentrism, consists of a worldview that downplays cultural differences by emphasizing similarities across cultures, often through biological traits or universal social systems and concepts.

The first stage of ethnorelativism, Acceptance, occurs when individuals develop a meta-level awareness of the complexities of different cultures and recognize their own culture as one among many equally valid cultural systems. In the Adaptation stage, individuals can temporarily and situationally interpret and behave in culturally relevant ways, informed by prior interactions with other cultures. The final stage, Integration, involves the ability to move fluidly between different cultural worldviews. At this stage, individuals may see their own culture as marginalized and central to none or leverage this as a positive aspect of their identity.

While the original DMIS included all six stages, Hammer (2011) later revised the framework based on findings from validity testing of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), which was developed from the DMIS. In this revision, Integration was excluded from the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC), as identity development was not deemed directly related to intercultural competence or sensitivity. Additionally, Minimization, originally categorized under ethnocentric stages in the DMIS, was redefined as a transitional orientation between monocultural and intercultural mindsets. Lastly, the broad categories of ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism in the DMIS were reframed in the IDC as a monocultural mindset and an intercultural mindset, reflecting a shift in conceptual emphasis.

The DMIS framework informed the creation of the IDI (Hammer et al., 2003), a 50-item questionnaire supplemented by five open-ended questions designed to measure intercultural competence. The validity and reliability of the IDI have been rigorously tested and well-established (Hammer et al., 2003; Hammer, 2011; Jankowski, 2019; Paige et al., 2003). Since its inception, IDI has been widely used in both research and practice across diverse settings for evaluation and assessment purposes (Hammer, 2011; Kruse et al., 2014). In educational settings, scholars have employed the IDI to evaluate intercultural sensitivity and competence resulting from various intercultural and international experiences. For example, the IDI has been used to assess the impact of study-abroad programs and global community engagement on bilingual college students in Hong Kong (Jackson, 2009), undergraduate students in Spain (Sierra-Huedo & Nevado-Llopis, 2022), and undergraduate and graduate students in U.S. higher education (Anderson et al., 2006; Crystle et al., 2024; Janeiro et al., 2011; Krishnan & Jin, 2022; Mu et al., 2022; Pedersen, 2010; Rexeisen et al., 2008; Scott & Sandell, 2023; Terzuolo, 2018). It has also been applied to examine the effects of interreligious and intercultural diversity programs on intercultural competence among undergraduate students on Canadian college campuses (Green et al., 2018) and to explore how broader intercultural experiences, such as friendships across cultures and fields of study, influence this outcome among undergraduate students in Spain (Rodríguez-Izquierdo, 2022).

Additionally, the IDI has been widely used to inform various initiatives and programmatic efforts that aim to improve intercultural competence by assessing individuals' placement along the developmental continuum and tailoring interventions accordingly. These initiatives include programs for secondary teachers in Hong Kong (Westrick & Yuen, 2007), U.S. K-12 teachers (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; DeJaeghere & Zhang, 2008), undergraduate faculty in U.S. higher education (Ouellette-Schramm, 2024), and U.S. healthcare professionals (Altshuler et al., 2003; Kruse et al., 2014). Overall, the IDI has been exten-

sively applied in both research and practice to create or evaluate programs and initiatives designed to foster intercultural competence. However, some concerns have been raised about its universal applicability to diverse settings and participant groups, which will be explored in the following section.

3.2. Applications of IDI to Diverse Settings and Participants

A handful of studies have highlighted the potential limitations of the IDI in its universal application across diverse populations and contexts (Acheson & Schneider-Bean, 2019; Greenholtz, 2005; Punti & Dingel, 2021; Tamer et al., 2023). For example, Tamer et al. (2023) tested the validity of the IDI in U.S. pharmacy schools, focusing on health professionals such as administrators, faculty, staff, and students by examining how well the IDI aligns with creating inclusive environments for underrepresented populations and assessed its correlation with other measures of intercultural competence. A review of 10 studies on the use of the IDI in pharmacy and health professional education identified several concerns about its validity. These include the lack of a comprehensive description of sampling and demographics, ambiguities in terms such as "community" that might be interpreted differently, and insufficient evidence of clear correlations between the IDI and intended outcomes, such as fostering inclusive healthcare environments for underrepresented groups and improving interactions with diverse patients. This study emphasizes the need for careful consideration of the specific contexts and groups in which the IDI is implemented and for adapting it more intentionally rather than applying it universally.

Further, Punti and Dingel (2021) raised concerns about the IDI's applicability to BIPOC students in U.S. higher education. They argued that the IDI fails to adequately account for these students' lived experiences with systemic racism, racial inequality, and power dynamics in intercultural relationships and understanding. Regarding its use in non-U.S. and non-English-speaking contexts, Greenholtz (2005) and Yamamoto (1998) highlighted limitations in the IDI's cross-cultural and linguistic applicability. Specifically, they questioned its validity when translated into Japanese, citing challenges related to the cultural schema and worldviews underlying the DMIS framework, which may not resonate with Japanese cultural practices. These findings challenge the IDI's pan-cultural assumptions and its universal applicability across different cultural contexts and groups. Overall, these studies suggest that the implementation of the IDI should carefully consider the specific contexts, experiences, and identities of the individuals and communities it seeks to assess.

3.3. IDI and Transnational/International Individuals

While the validity of the IDI in assessing intercultural competence among individuals from diverse cultural, national, and international backgrounds has been well-documented (Hammer et al., 2003; Hammer, 2011), its universal application may not fully account for the unique experiences and identities of individuals with transnational backgrounds. This paper does not aim to challenge the established validity of the IDI; rather, it seeks to propose a more nuanced understanding of how these complexities might be better addressed to ensure a comprehensive assessment of intercultural competence in transnational populations. For instance, a review of existing research and practices applying the IDI suggests that it has not been sufficiently adapted to reflect the unique experiences of transnational individuals. While some studies have incorporated relevant factors, such as multicultural family backgrounds, foreign citizenship, prior intercultural experiences, exposure to multiple languages, immigration history, or living in different countries (Altshuler et al., 2003; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Lantz-Deaton, 2017; Paige et al., 2003), these adaptations remain limited. For example, Terzuolo (2018) conducted a quantitative study examining the impact

of study-abroad programs on intercultural competence among undergraduate students at a large, urban, private U.S. university. The study considered students' demographic characteristics, background experiences, and program features. It found that participants who identified with more than one national culture or had a grandparent born and raised outside the United States were significantly more likely to develop intercultural mindedness than their peers.

Similarly, Altshuler et al. (2003) investigated the effects of an intercultural training intervention on 24 pediatric resident trainees at a U.S. medical center. The study considered various demographic factors, such as gender and prior intercultural experiences, as predictors of outcomes. Their results indicated that participants with greater cross-cultural experiences, such as immigration or living in other countries, exhibited higher levels of intercultural sensitivity in the IDI compared with their counterparts. These studies highlight the importance of incorporating international and transnational experiences into the understanding and measurement of intercultural sensitivity using the IDI. However, to the best of our knowledge, limited research has critically examined the IDI and its underlying DMIS framework within the contexts of transnational individuals and communities.

Acheson and Schneider-Bean's (2019) study, which examined the limitations of the DMIS framework for expatriates and others who have lived in multiple cultures, explicitly critiques the model in relation to our study's focus on transnational individuals and communities. More specifically, the authors argue that the DMIS framework, which assumes a linear progression toward increasing intercultural sensitivity and complexity, may not fully capture the experiences of individuals navigating multiple cultural contexts. These individuals often experience shifts or even regressions in their intercultural sensitivity depending on specific intercultural communication contexts. Accordingly, the authors advocate for a pendulum model that emphasizes the fluctuating nature of intercultural sensitivity over time and across different contexts. This model challenges the notion of intercultural sensitivity as a fixed end state and instead frames it as a dynamic process requiring ongoing strategies and self-reflection to sustain and adapt one's intercultural competence. Building on this critique, our study not only examines the applicability of the IDI and its underlying frameworks in the context of transnational individuals and communities but also proposes alternative and additional perspectives. More specifically, by integrating three relevant frameworks, including transnationalism, intersectionality, and relational ontology, we offer a more nuanced and contextually grounded understanding of intercultural sensitivity for transnational populations.

4. Materials and Methods

This conceptual paper employs a qualitative, theoretical approach to examine the limitations and applicability of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) for transnational individuals and communities. Drawing on existing literature from three theoretical frameworks, transnationalism, intersectionality, and relational ontology, we critically assessed the assumptions underpinning the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) that informs the IDI. We used thematic analysis, a method for identifying and interpreting patterns within qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2016), to analyze the selected literature and identify key themes related to each framework's application to the IDI. Specifically, we focused on transnationalism's challenge to the DMIS's static, Western-centered assumptions of culture, intersectionality's exploration of power and privilege in intercultural experiences, and relational ontology's critique of the DMIS's individualistic nature. As a conceptual paper, this study does not include empirical data but instead integrates theoretical perspectives from existing literature, acknowledging the need for further empirical research to test these ideas.

5. Conceptual Frameworks

In reconsidering the assumptions of the DMIS regarding culture, we explore its potentially limited applicability to transnational individuals. To address these limitations, we draw on the conceptual frameworks of transnationalism, relational ontology, and intersectionality. Each framework provides valuable insights into the interconnected relationships between culture, identity, and transnational individuals and communities. Specifically, transnationalism highlights the dynamic and multifaceted cultural repertoires and identities that emerge from maintaining connections to multiple cultural contexts. It emphasizes how transnational individuals navigate and synthesize cultural influences in ways that transcend rigid, monocultural boundaries. Relational ontology, in turn, allows for a deeper understanding of how cultural views and identity are co-constructed through relationships and interactions within and across cultural contexts. Finally, intersectionality provides a critical lens to examine how intersecting dimensions of identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and nationality, shape the lived experiences of transnational individuals, often in ways that challenge singular or monolithic understandings of culture. Together, these frameworks challenge DMIS's universalist assumptions and propose a more dynamic and inclusive understanding of intercultural sensitivity.

5.1. Transnationalism: Dynamic, Plural Cultural Repertoires, and Identities

Early scholarship on international migration focused on assimilation and integration theories, which assume migrants integrate into their host societies by severing ties to their countries of origin and cultural identities (Laubenthal, 2023). This perspective posits that individuals exist and engage within the rigid boundaries of a single nation-state—either their place of origin or their place of settlement (Ho, 2008). However, this view was largely challenged by Schiller et al. (1992), who introduced the transnationalism framework, defining it as "the emergence of social processes in which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders" (p. ix). This framework emphasizes migrants' simultaneous involvement in and affiliations with multiple places and social systems, which shape their everyday experiences and identities while expanding notions of home to encompass both here and there or even nowhere (Waldinger & Fitzgerald, 2004). Transnationalism thus can be understood as a constant state of being "in-between" from postmodern and postcolonial perspectives (Bhabha, 2012), where individuals construct "hybrid forms of identity" rather than engaging with "the politics of polarity" (Grimshaw & Sears, 2008, p. 262).

While the field of transnationalism initially focused on the experiences of first-generation migrants, it has since been applied to a broader range of migrant groups, including second-generation immigrants, international sojourners, asylum seekers, and diaspora members (Duff, 2015; Ho, 2008; Tedeschi et al., 2022). Additionally, scholars have explored various dimensions of migration, including economic (e.g., remittances), political (e.g., citizenship), and socio-cultural (e.g., identity) phenomena (Vertovec, 2001). Of particular relevance to this study is the interplay between culture, identity, and transnationalism, particularly how transnational individuals experience and negotiate their cultural identities. Research shows that transnational individuals develop cultural repertoires shaped by accumulated experiences in multiple nation-states, which, in turn, influence their identities and belonging (Bhatia, 2007; Esteban-Guitart & Vila, 2015; Hannerz, 1996).

A case in point is the experiences of the Cross-Cultural Kid (Adult), which refers to someone "who is living/has lived in—or meaningfully interacted with—two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during the first eighteen years of life" (Reken et al., 2017, p. 43). One of the characteristics of CCKs (including Third Culture Kids) is that they tend to learn culture by "catching it" experientially (Reken

et al., 2017, p. 63) as they navigate new cultural interactions, especially in the absence of such knowledge or those who can "pass it on" to them, which would have been the case, for example, if they had lived in the same cultural context that their parents/guardians are most familiar with. Since their most authentic sense of belonging tends to exist in motion—in their fluidity between and across cultural spaces—when others invalidate or regard their intercultural identity from a deficit perspective (i.e., "Not [nationality] enough"), it can damage their wellbeing and self-esteem (Reken et al., 2017). For instance, de Waal and Born's (2021) mixed-method analysis, which examined the effect of 20 Third Culture Kids (TCKs) toward their home and host cultures, found that participants' sense of belonging was more rooted in personal relationships established across different cultures and locations rather than in strict geographical boundaries. This experience of belonging and identity beyond geographical locations is further supported by Tan et al.'s (2021) systematic literature review of 31 publications on TCKs. Their key findings indicate that these individuals navigate cultural identities and belonging in complex ways, often feeling connected to multiple locations or, in some cases, not feeling a sense of belonging to any location at all. These empirical studies align with transnationalism's emphasis on how transnational individuals' cultural frameworks, identities, and sense of belonging are shaped by experiences across multiple locations rather than by a single, rigidly bounded cultural system.

5.2. Revisiting Ontology: Relationality Beyond Individualism

In addressing why relationality matters in developing and/or assessing our intercultural sensitivity, we begin by reviewing the definitions of culture. In a broad brushstroke, culture can be understood as "a patterned way of life shared by a group of people" (Kipuri, 2009, p. 51). As it is based on "a system of shared concepts, beliefs, and values"—for human beings who live in society, culture is at the heart of our sense-making and sense of belonging (Reken et al., 2017, p. 55). With regard to human connections, what is of critical importance here is that culture can be a double-sided coin. On one hand, culture can be an "aspect of our existence which makes us similar to some people", yet on the other hand, it can also be a marker of what makes us "different" from others (Kipuri, 2009, p. 51). As such, while culture can often work as an indicator of separation, in the case of transnational individuals, it is rather a norm to inhabit the very intersection of potentially incongruent cultures where their worldviews and identities are nested.

Given the relational understanding of culture, we suggest the need to reframe the ontology behind DMIS to better apply the model to transnational individuals. Specifically, we echo the emerging concerns regarding the universalist applications of individual ontology in research and practice that stem from Western liberalism (You, 2023). Our intention is not to deepen the distinction between the Western and Eastern philosophies that shape the base of individualistic and collectivist cultures. Nonetheless, we saw the need to advocate for non-Western-centric approaches when considering the case of transnational individuals. While there is no concrete global demographic information on transnational individuals, the International Organization of Migration (IOM) reports that Asia was the birth region for over 40 percent of the 115 million international migrants in the world today, from countries such as India, China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, and Afghanistan (McAuliffe & Oucho, 2024). While we do not intend to impose generalizations upon individuals from these countries, many of these countries share collectivist cultures. Given this context, we draw on the decolonial application of relational ontology that calls for a "shift from developing individual-centered skills to cultivating the sense of interrelatedness" (You, 2023, p. 526).

In our analysis of DMIS, we draw on the relational ontology that is broadly rooted in East Asian and indigenous ontologies, where the notion of self is conceptualized and experienced in relation to other living beings (Common Worlds Research Collective, 2020; Hoffman, 2009; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Komatsu & Rappleye, 2020; You, 2023). For example, in the study of social-emotional learning (SEL), You (2023) contests the universalized pedagogies of SEL based on the "Western (liberal) notions of [independent] self and emotion" that discount the relationality between individuals and their environment that shapes emotional experiences and expressions. Similarly to how people cultivate emotional awareness and well-being, intercultural sensitivity is developed through interactions, which is inherently not one-way communication. Here, we assume some degree of communication can take place regardless of the utterance or exchange of words; humans can often sense communicative elements such as emotions, power, and needs from the person(s) in relative proximity (in-person or virtual) through observations. For instance, Deuchar et al.'s (2024) exploratory qualitative study with 19 international students at an Australian university drew on posthumanism frames to examine how participants navigated new social, cultural, and academic systems through engaging in relational, peers learning process in which spaces (e.g., flat), humans (e.g., fellow international students), and non-human actors (e.g., foods) are mutually constitutive. While this article does not specifically focus on intercultural sensitivity, from the relational ontology, it can be said that the degree of autonomy that a person has over his/her/their intercultural response is limited or at least affected in the sense that it exists in interdependency with the surrounding environment. In this regard, we caution against one-dimensional analysis of perceiving someone as maladaptive to a particular cultural context, because the issue may not be with the person himself/herself/themselves but may be also affected by the degree of intercultural understanding enacted by their counterparts, power relations, and other intersectional dimensions in the relationality that is shaping the interaction.

5.3. Intersectionality: Power Dynamics

Research suggests that transnational individuals' cultural repertoires and identities are profoundly shaped by local power structures, including histories of exclusion and belonging tied to intersecting identities such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, and immigration status (Hannerz, 1996; Ho, 2008). As they navigate multiple cultural and social systems, these individuals and communities experience those spaces differently, with their identities and experiences shaped by the power dynamics of each locality (Torres-Olave & Lee, 2020). An intersectionality lens (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991), which highlights how overlapping systems of power intersect to shape individual experiences, provides a useful framework for understanding these dynamics. This lens reveals the limitations of the cultural assumptions embedded in the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), which overlooks the fluid, intersectional, and power-laden processes that shape transnational cultural repertoires and identities. Instead, the DMIS assumes a decontextualized and universalist developmental trajectory for all individuals, failing to account for the complexities of transnational experiences.

This complexity is illustrated in Park's (2020) ethnographic observations and 121 in-depth interviews, primarily with 51 Korean international students in New York City and 38 non-migrant Koreans in Korea with friends or acquaintances who are studying or have studied in the U.S. The study revealed that Korean international students navigate racial dynamics in the U.S. while simultaneously facing class-based and nationalist resentment from non-migrant co-ethnics in Korea. This duality arises from their intersectional identities as racial minorities in the U.S. and members of a privileged economic and ethnic majority in Korea. This dual positioning exposes them to racism abroad and resentment at home,

emphasizing how transnational identities are shaped not only by cross-border connections but also by intersecting local power dynamics. Such dynamics compel transnational individuals to reconcile and negotiate conflicting expectations and positionalities across diverse contexts, thereby forming unique cultural repertoires (Torres-Olave & Lee, 2020). Therefore, these students' intercultural sensitivity and competence might vary depending on the specific local context in which they are situated, as their experiences of race, class, and nationalism are fluid and contingent upon both their host country and home country environments, illuminating the limitations of IDI in fully capturing these complexities.

Furthermore, the notion of a singular developmental trajectory is challenged by the recognition that intercultural experiences vary significantly depending on intersecting identities. For instance, international students of color in U.S. higher education often experience intercultural interactions differently than their White counterparts due to systemic racism and White supremacy. Students from non-Western societies report higher levels of discrimination and negative treatment compared to those from Western countries (Diangelo, 2006; Hanassab, 2006; Lee & Rice, 2007; Mitchell et al., 2017; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). Hanassab's (2006) quantitative study of 640 international students at the University of California, Los Angeles, revealed that students from the Middle East and Africa faced more hostility, both on and off campus, than their European counterparts, who reported the least discrimination. Negative experiences, such as classroom exclusion, verbal insults, and xenophobic remarks from peers, professors, and community members, were often rooted in stereotypes and a lack of understanding of students' home cultures. These students frequently described campus climates as unwelcoming, hostile, and lacking adequate support. Therefore, applying the same intercultural assessment tool to both international students of color and White international students may overlook these contextual differences. Such a one-size-fits-all approach fails to account for the systemic racism, stereotypes, and discriminatory treatment that international students of color often face, which significantly impacts their intercultural development. As a result, the experiences of these students may be inaccurately assessed, and their challenges may be minimized or overlooked. Conversely, White international students, who are less likely to encounter these racialized barriers, may be assessed more positively, leading to an incomplete and skewed understanding of intercultural sensitivity. This underscores the need for more nuanced and context-specific assessment tools that consider the intersecting identities and unique challenges faced by students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

6. Revisiting DMIS Through Transnational Conceptual Frameworks

For illustrative purposes, we will now apply our aforementioned conceptual framework to revisit each stage within two broad categories of DMIS: the Ethnocentric/Monocultural stages (Defense, Denial) and the Ethnorelative/Multicultural stages (Acceptance, Adaptation). Additionally, we will address the minimization stage, which has since been reclassified as a transitional stage in the recent iterations of the framework. Instead of analyzing all stages, we have chosen to focus on one stage from each category. This approach allows us to avoid redundancy, as stages within the same category often share similar core assumptions about culture and identity. Through our critique, we hope to call for an incorporation of more nuanced and relational understandings of intercultural communication and the development of intercultural sensitivity. Additionally, it is important to note that we are not critiquing individuals at each of these stages; rather, our goal is to demonstrate how the assumptions about culture reflected in each stage and its corresponding survey items might not resonate with transnational individuals.

6.1. Denial Stage in Ethnocentrism or Monocultural Mindset

Denial is the first stage of Ethnocentrism in the DMIS or the Monocultural mindset in the IDC. At this stage, individuals are indifferent to cultural differences, fail to recognize them in their interactions, or react with hostility, perceiving their own culture as the only valid one. Sample IDI Denial items include: (1) Society would be better off if culturally different groups kept to themselves, and (2) I do not like to socialize very much with people from different cultures (Paige et al., 2003). The denial stage reflects a binary and static view of cultural identities, assuming that individuals belong to distinct and bounded cultural groups. This perspective overlooks the fluid and hybrid identities of transnational individuals, who often navigate and integrate multiple cultural affiliations simultaneously. In contrast, transnationalism conceptualizes culture as dynamic and fluid, constructed through the interconnectedness of individuals, communities, and institutions across borders rather than being confined to a single geographical or national boundary. Furthermore, the Denial stage and the relevant IDI items above associate the indifferent and/or negative emotional responses with initial intercultural interaction. Transnational individuals are not necessarily free from biases and assumptions themselves. However, since they are less likely to perceive a cultural difference as something abnormal or as a potential threat, they may experience positive emotions when they encounter others with "different" cultural backgrounds, such as curiosity and gratitude when forging new intercultural friendships. From the perspective of relational ontology, the items in the IDI questionnaire presume that individuals interact with others from a position of separation or opposition. This disregards the interconnected and co-constructed nature of relationships and makes the assumption of avoidance or isolation that are incompatible with their relationally embedded realities. Finally, these items ignore the overlapping social identities (e.g., race, gender, nationality) and systemic inequalities that shape transnational individuals' intercultural experiences. Thus, the Denial stage assumes that cultural differences are the primary or sole axis of differentiation, overlooking how intersecting identities influence socialization, interaction with others, and belonging.

6.2. Minimization Stage

In this stage, individuals are assumed to downplay cultural differences by emphasizing similarities, often focusing on biological traits or shared social systems across cultures. Sample IDI Minimization items include: (1) "People are the same despite outward differences in appearance", and (2) "I am sick and tired of hearing all the time about what makes people different; we need to recognize that we are all human beings, after all" (Paige et al., 2003). While we are not arguing that transnational individuals bypass this phase, we wonder how this stage in IDI takes into account some of the humanitarian values that people may see across cultural differences, such as human rights, while assessing someone's ability to be an intercultural communicator. When transnational individuals observe more similarities than differences across various cultures from the perspective of international social justice, IDI may misguidedly place them into this stage, even when they may have some extent of intercultural sensitivity.

From a transnational perspective, the underlying concepts shaping the Minimization stage and survey items may fail to account for how transnational individuals navigate multiple cultural, national, and social contexts, which shape their hybrid cultural repertoires and identities the assumption that people are fundamentally "the same" can obscure the ways in which their unique cultural affiliations and experiences influence their understanding of themselves and others. Furthermore, through the lens of intersectionality, which emphasizes how overlapping social identities create distinct experiences of privilege and oppression, the minimization stage and its corresponding items overlook the significance

of differences rooted in systemic inequalities and power dynamics. For transnational individuals, who often navigate intersecting identities across varied cultural and social contexts, the assumption that "people are the same" erases the unique challenges and privileges they encounter based on their positionality within these systems of oppression. For instance, a transnational individual might experience sexism more prominently in one location and racism more prominently in another, depending on their salient identities and the power dynamics in each context. These differences shape their intercultural sensitivity and understanding in distinct ways, influenced by the specific social, cultural, and institutional environments they navigate. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach to cultural differences, it is possible that transnational individuals develop a more adaptive and critical perspective that accounts for the interplay of race, gender, nationality, and other intersecting identities. However, the minimization stage's emphasis on universal similarities overlooks these complex dynamics and potentially erases the ways in which transnational individuals' unique positionalities foster a nuanced understanding of cultural and systemic inequities.

6.3. Adaptation Stage in Ethnorelative or Intercultural Mindset

Adaptation is the last stage toward the Intercultural mindset in IDC when a person can interpret and behave temporarily and situationally in a culturally relevant manner, informed by the prior interactions with the culture(s) to adapt to. Sample IDI items include: (1) I feel there are advantages in identifying with more than one culture. (2) In evaluating an intercultural situation, it is better to be able to draw from more than one cultural perspective. (3) Although I am a member of my own culture, I am nearly as comfortable in one or more other cultures. (4) When I come in contact with people from a different culture, I find I change my behavior to adapt to theirs (Paige et al., 2003). Bennett (2014) states that this stage should not be conflated with assimilation, which happens through a forced adoption of the dominant culture. Rather, this stage is conceptualized as the base of bi/multiculturalism, in which people are said to maintain their authenticity without having to change their cultural identity, by pivoting around the various versions of themselves to choose the most culturally appropriate one in a given interaction. However, for transnational individuals, we believe there is a need for more complex interpretations to analyze what it means to be a culturally authentic self when the "grounding" composition of their cultural identity is hybridized to begin with.

Furthermore, rather than assuming the individual's absolute agency in a two-way communication, one's degree of agency over their culturally appropriate response may depend on the situation and who they are interacting with. For example, there may be a fine line between voluntary and forced cultural adaptation if there is a power imbalance. Suppose transnational new graduates start at a company in a country where they share the same ethnic and linguistic profile as the dominant group. In this situation, they may face the expectations from the local staff to know and follow the dominant cultural customs. Here, we can use the relational ontology to observe that the transnational new graduates' interculturally sensitive response and degree of authenticity will be directly impacted by the limited intercultural sensitivity among the local staff because they can be reprimanded if they do not conform to the norms of their counterparts. From an intersectional lens, we can also note the impact of power where new graduates have to comply with the seniority system in the workplace. Other examples include xenophobic Othering that some returnees may experience in their personal, educational, and professional settings (Yoshida et al., 2009; Shimomura, 2014). Together, these examples add complexity to the assumed binary between dominant vs. non-dominant cultural grouping and the degree of one's cultural authenticity that is assumed in the Adaptation stage.

7. Recommendations for Using the IDI with Transnational Individuals

Our analysis highlights several limitations in using the IDI to assess intercultural sensitivity among transnational individuals and communities. To address these limitations, we propose two main approaches: (1) Modifying existing frameworks by integrating complementary practices into the IDI, and (2) Exploring alternative assessment tools.

7.1. Modifying Existing Frameworks: Expanding the Use of the IDI

As demonstrated by the three theoretical frameworks outlined in this paper, transnational individuals develop cultural repertoires in complex, fluid, and dynamic ways. Therefore, a single assessment tool may be insufficient for measuring their intercultural sensitivity (Acheson & Schneider-Bean, 2019; Greenholtz, 2005; Punti & Dingel, 2021; Tamer et al., 2023). This can be potentially mitigated by integrating qualitative methods and flexible, holistic guidelines for interpreting IDI results. First, qualitative methods allow for capturing how individuals make meaning of complex, lived experiences, issues, or social phenomena (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, integrating qualitative methods that involve interviews and reflective journaling might better capture the complexities of intercultural engagement and sensitivity. For instance, from a transnational perspective, interview questions or journaling prompts can explore how individuals maintain connections across multiple national and cultural contexts. Open-ended questions such as "How has your connection to multiple national and cultural systems shaped your intercultural sensitivity?" can provide deeper insights into their experience. To integrate relational ontology, questions such as "How have your environment and surroundings (e.g., physical environments, peers) affected your intercultural sensitivity?" might capture how it is shaped by interdependent factors surrounding intercultural engagement. Further, to capture intersectionality in intercultural engagement, questions such as "How do different aspects of your identity (e.g., race, gender, nationality, class) influence the way you experience intercultural interactions?" can help highlight how multiple social identities intersect and shape intercultural experiences. In short, integrating qualitative approaches into the IDI can provide more nuanced ways in which transnational individuals and communities develop intercultural sensitivity and competence.

In addition, we recommend adopting holistic and flexible guidelines for interpreting IDI results to more accurately assess intercultural sensitivity among transnational individuals. Current interpretations of IDI scores often assume a linear and uniform progression of intercultural development, which may not fully reflect the complex and fluid nature of transnational identities. A more nuanced interpretive framework would allow practitioners to analyze IDI results in conjunction with individuals' cultural backgrounds, migration histories, and lived experiences. Incorporating qualitative reflections, such as student narratives or interviews, into these analyses will provide context and lead to more accurate assessments and targeted interventions.

7.2. Exploring Alternative Assessment Tool

In addition to modifying the IDI tool by integrating qualitative approaches to capture transnational, relational, and intersectional aspects of intercultural engagement, we propose considering alternative assessment tools. While we were able to identify only one tool that closely aligns with our argument, this is due to the lack of comprehensive alternatives that fully reflect the complexity of transnational, relational, and intersectional aspects of intercultural engagement. We emphasize the importance of developing tools that more accurately capture these dynamics, and discussing existing tools remains valuable to furthering this dialogue.

One such tool is the Global Citizenship Scale (Morais & Ogden, 2010), which measures key aspects of global citizenship as an outcome of study abroad. It consists of three dimensions: social responsibility, global competence, and global civic engagement. These dimensions reflect an individual's awareness of global injustice, their intercultural competence, and their involvement in addressing social and political issues across borders. While the scale does not fully encompass all three aspects, it offers significant alignment with transnational, relational, and intersectional dimensions of intercultural engagement. Specifically, its transnational dimension links local actions to global consequences, reflecting the interconnected nature of global issues and the movement of people, ideas, and responsibilities across borders.

From a relational ontology, the scale recognizes that intercultural engagement is shaped not only by individual capacities but also by interdependent relationships, power dynamics, and the broader sociocultural environment. This perspective cautions against oversimplified assessments of adaptation, understanding that an individual's intercultural experience is influenced by the understanding and responsiveness of their counterparts, as well as by structural and systemic factors. Although the scale is not explicitly intersectional, it encourages reflection on issues of privilege, oppression, and systemic inequities in both local and global contexts. In this way, it aligns with an intersectional approach to intercultural engagement, highlighting the need to consider how multiple identities and power structures influence intercultural experiences.

While the Global Citizenship Scale is not a comprehensive tool for capturing all aspects of transnational, relational, and intersectional intercultural engagement, it provides a useful framework for exploring how individuals navigate global issues within justice-oriented and relational contexts. However, further development of assessment tools that fully integrate these dimensions is necessary to capture the complexity of intercultural engagement in an increasingly globalized, interconnected world.

8. Implications for Future Research and Practice

This conceptual paper has several implications for future research and practice. First, it lays the groundwork for empirical studies exploring how specific transnational populations, such as international students, migrant workers, and diaspora communities, develop intercultural sensitivity, grounded in transnationalism, relational ontology, and intersectionality. For example, future research could specifically examine how intersectional identities (e.g., gender, race, class) influence the development of intercultural sensitivity among transnational individuals. Studies might investigate, for instance, how female migrant workers experience intercultural sensitivity differently from their male counterparts or how international students from Western and non-Western countries in the U.S. navigate cultural differences while also engaging with racial systems. Additionally, research could apply relational ontology to explore how the interactions between transnational individuals and their host communities shape intercultural sensitivity, focusing on how mutual understanding is co-constructed in real-world contexts. Second, as previously discussed, relying solely on a single assessment tool to measure intercultural sensitivity may limit our understanding of its transnational, relational, and intersectional dimensions. Therefore, this paper suggests methodological approaches for future research, encouraging the use of more holistic and comprehensive methods, such as mixed-methods designs. For example, future studies could combine IDI assessments with narrative interviews to explore how individuals' transnational identities influence their intercultural sensitivity. Alternatively, researchers could focus on developing new intercultural assessment tools that more accurately reflect the experiences of transnational individuals.

In terms of practice, this paper provides practical insights for practitioners and administrators to critically evaluate their use of the IDI, ensuring it effectively serves transnational individuals and communities. Given its widespread use in educational and social institutions for program evaluation and intervention, this study highlights the need to assess whether the IDI adequately addresses the unique needs of transnational and other diverse populations. Additionally, this paper offers concrete recommendations for adapting and enhancing the IDI to better capture the complexities of transnational and intersectional identities. For instance, supplemental modules or revised content that integrate transnational, relational, and intersectional perspectives could make the IDI more aligned with the lived experiences of these populations. Finally, the study informs the design of intercultural training and professional development programs to make them more responsive to the experiences of transnational individuals and communities. Such initiatives could include collaborations with transnational communities to co-create practices that authentically reflect their realities and reimagine how intercultural sensitivity and competence are conceptualized and implemented.

9. Discussion and Conclusions

Building on previous works that have highlighted the limitations of universally applying the IDI to diverse populations without considering their unique experiences and identities (Acheson & Schneider-Bean, 2019; Greenholtz, 2005; Punti & Dingel, 2021; Tamer et al., 2023), this study explored how the IDI can be better tailored to reflect the complex, lived experiences of transnational individuals and communities. Our unique contribution lies in examining the IDI's underlying framework and assumptions regarding culture and identity through three distinct yet interrelated frameworks: transnationalism, relational ontology, and intersectionality. Together, these frameworks illuminate how transnational individuals develop cultural repertoires and engage in intercultural communication. Integrating these critical perspectives revealed that the IDI's underlying conceptualization of culture as a singular, bounded system may not resonate with the plural, dynamic, and fluid ways in which transnational individuals experience culture.

Our critical analysis of DMIS does not negate the model's importance in helping us understand some of the reasons behind prejudices, discrimination, and inequalities in "our diverse global society that has become highly polarized" (Punti & Dingel, 2021, p. 1). The concepts in DMIS and the IDI assessment can guide researchers and practitioners to tailor and target interventions by generating educational resources and actions at the individual and institutional levels. Nevertheless, an uncritical overreliance and application of IDI may overlook the complexities of culture and the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity that are interpersonally and contextually constructed. In particular, the fundamental assumptions in DMIS need to be made explicit, and a more flexible view of cultures and cultural identities could allow for a more nuanced use of the model for transnational individuals.

To further illustrate the danger of having a fixation with developmental models, it may be useful to classify DMIS as one of the "stage theories". Stage theories have lineages in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and health sciences; they can help develop practical inventories by "offer[ing] new ways of understanding complex systems of human behavior, ways that may be helpful for diagnostic purposes and to guide intervention" (McGorry, 2007; Stroebe et al., 2017, p. 456). Nevertheless, just as contemporary studies critique the widely used "five-stage" coping model for bereavement (Corr, 2019; Stroebe et al., 2017), the fixation on the linear progression of the phenomenon and the prescriptive use of stage theories in research and practice without considering the context-dependent nature of the phenomenon may risk simplifying the analysis and designing the effective treatment/intervention. In a similar manner, for the application of IDI to transnational pop-

ulations, researchers and practitioners of intercultural understanding need to be critically aware of the potential limitations in the inventory's underlying stage theory, which was not originally designed for those who may have transnational upbringings, life trajectories, and identities.

When considering the healthy intercultural identity development for transnational individuals alongside their intercultural sensitivity, the assumed separateness among cultures in DMIS may negatively impact transnational individuals' self-esteem, if they themselves and others perceive their internal cultural multiplicity or their state of in-betweenness as lacking the intercultural skills to appropriately adapt to the given cultural context, especially when that culture is an integral part of transnational individuals' intercultural identity. In other words, the uncritical understanding of intercultural sensitivity along the linear stages in IDC may misleadingly reward code-switching in a way that strengthens cultural dissonance within a person rather than promoting a pluralistic understanding of culture and cultural identity. Furthermore, DMIS is founded upon Eurocentric liberalism that assumes the ultimate independence and autonomy of the person when intercultural sensitivity is developed through interaction with others and the broader environment. In this regard, there are limitations with DMIS not only for analyzing intercultural sensitivity as a phenomenon that is co-constructed but also for IDI to be applicable to growing transnational populations in the world who tend to emigrate from Asian regions (McAuliffe & Oucho, 2024). Moving forward, we recommend researchers and practitioners of IDI critically examine the underlying assumptions that conceptualize DMIS, and work toward promoting intercultural sensitivity that embraces a flexible view of cultures and cultural identities as a society to support a holistic sense of belonging for individuals within educational, professional, and other settings that welcome cultural plurality within a person.

Lastly, as this is a conceptual paper, we acknowledge the need for empirical studies to validate our arguments. In particular, the theoretical frameworks we propose would benefit from real-world exploration to assess their relevance and effectiveness in practice. Additionally, while we advocate for a more transnational, relational, and intersectional perspective in assessing intercultural sensitivity, this paper does not provide a concrete, step-by-step methodology for integrating these frameworks into existing tools. We recognize that such integration requires significant conceptual and practical development, which could be explored in future research. Therefore, while this paper offers a conceptual critique and theoretical recommendations for modifying the IDI, we encourage further empirical work to explore these ideas and develop more inclusive tools that capture the complexities of transnational, relational, and intersectional aspects of intercultural engagement.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, A.I.; methodology, A.I. and S.K.; formal analysis, A.I. and S.K.; investigation, A.I. and S.K.; resources, A.I. and S.K.; data curation, A.I. and S.K.; writing—original draft preparation, A.I. and S.K.; writing—review and editing, A.I. and S.K.; project administration, A.I. and S.K.; funding acquisition, S.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by the University of Oklahoma Libraries' Open Access Fund.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

IDI	Intercultural Development Inventory
DMIS	Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity
IDC	Intercultural Development Continuum

References

Acheson, K., & Schneider-Bean, S. (2019). Representing the intercultural development continuum as a pendulum: Addressing the lived experiences of intercultural competence development and maintenance. *European Journal of Cross-Cultural Competence and Management*, *5*(1), 42–61. [CrossRef]

Altshuler, L., Sussman, N. M., & Kachur, E. (2003). Assessing changes in intercultural sensitivity among physician trainees using the Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *27*(4), 387–401. [CrossRef]

Anderson, P. H., Lawton, L., Rexeisen, R. J., & Hubbard, A. C. (2006). Short-term study abroad and intercultural sensitivity: A pilot study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *30*(4), 457–469. [CrossRef]

Arasaratnam-Smith, L., & Deardorff, D. (Eds.). (2023). *Developing intercultural competence in higher education: International students' stories and self-reflection*. Routledge.

Bennett, M. J. (1986). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Cross-cultural orientations: New conceptualizations and applications* (pp. 27–70). University Press of America.

Bennett, M. J. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 21–71). Intercultural Press.

Bennett, M. J. (2014). Cultural marginality: Identity issues in global leadership training. In *Advances in global leadership* (Vol. 8, pp. 269–292). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [CrossRef]

Bennett, M. J. (2017). Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. *The international encyclopedia of intercultural communication*, *1*(10), 1–10. [CrossRef]

Bhabha, H. K. (2012). *The location of culture* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Bhatia, S. (2007). Rethinking culture and identity in psychology: Towards a transnational cultural psychology. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, *27*(2-1), 301. [CrossRef]

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2016). Thematic analyiss. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *12*(3), 297–298. [CrossRef]

Common Worlds Research Collective. (2020). *Learning to become with the world: Education for future education, research, and foresight*. UNESCO. Available online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374032 (accessed on 28 December 2024).

Corr, C. A. (2019). The 'five stages' in coping with dying and bereavement: Strengths, weaknesses and some alternatives. *Mortality*, *24*(4), 405–417. [CrossRef]

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, *1989*(1), 139–167.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*(6), 1241–1299. [CrossRef]

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Crystle, J., Moran, M. W., & Venskus, D. G. (2024). Using the Intercultural Development Inventory to measure intercultural development for a high-impact global community engagement program. *Journal of Global Education and Research*, *8*(3), 194–203. [CrossRef]

DeJaeghere, J. G., & Cao, Y. (2009). Developing US teachers' intercultural competence: Does professional development matter? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *33*(5), 437–447. [CrossRef]

DeJaeghere, J. G., & Zhang, Y. (2008). Development of intercultural competence among US American teachers: Professional development factors that enhance competence. *Intercultural Education*, *19*(3), 255–268. [CrossRef]

Deuchar, A., Fu, J., Gowing, A., & Smith, C. (2024). Enacted spaces of peer learning: Tracing practices of relationality among international students in higher education. *Critical Studies in Education*, 1–19. [CrossRef]

de Waal, M. F., & Born, M. P. (2021). Where I'm from? Third Culture Kids about their cultural identity shifts and belonging. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *83*, 67–83. [CrossRef]

Diangelo, R. J. (2006). The production of whiteness in education: Asian international students in a college classroom. *Teacher College Record*, *108*(10), 1983–2000. [CrossRef]

Duff, P. A. (2015). Transnationalism, multilingualism, and identity. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *35*, 57–80. [CrossRef]

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success* (Reprint, Updated edition). Random House.

Emerson, C., Keen, D., Barnett, K., & Wade-Berg, J. A. (2024). Intercultural competence development: A qualitative case study. *Nurse Education in Practice*, *79*, 104082. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Esteban-Guitart, M., & Vila, I. (2015). The voices of newcomers. A qualitative analysis of the construction of transnational identity. *Psychosocial Intervention*, *24*(1), 17–25. [CrossRef]

Green, A. R., Tulissi, A., Erais, S., Cairns, S. L., & Bruckner, D. (2018). Building an inclusive campus: Developing students' intercultural competencies through an interreligious and intercultural diversity program. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, *48*(3), 43–64. [CrossRef]

Greenholtz, J. F. (2005). Does intercultural sensitivity cross cultures? Validity issues in porting instruments across languages and cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*(1), 73–89. [CrossRef]

Grimshaw, T., & Sears, C. (2008). 'Where am I from?' 'Where do I belong?': The negotiation and maintenance of identity by international school students. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *7*(3), 259–278. [CrossRef]

Hammer, M. R. (2011). Additional cross-cultural validity testing of the Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *35*(4), 474–487. [CrossRef]

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *27*(4), 421–443. [CrossRef]

Hanassab, S. (2006). Diversity, international students, and perceived discrimination: Implications for educators and counselors. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *10*(2), 157–172. [CrossRef]

Hannerz, U. (1996). *Transnational connections: Culture, people, places*. Routledge.

Ho, E. L. E. (2008). Citizenship, migration and transnationalism: A review and critical interventions. *Geography Compass*, *2*(5), 1286–1300. [CrossRef]

Hoffman, D. M. (2009). Reflecting on social emotional learning: A critical perspective on trends in the United States. *Review of Educational Research*, *79*(2), 533–556. [CrossRef]

IDI, LLC. (n.d.). *Intercultural development inventory (IDI)*. IDI, LLC. Available online: https://www.idiinventory.com/ (accessed on 15 December 2024).

Jackson, J. (2009). Intercultural learning on short-term sojourns. *Intercultural Eucation*, *20*(Suppl. S1), S59–S71. [CrossRef]

Jaiswal, A., Sapkota, M., & Acheson, K. (2024). Bridging borders: Assessing the impact of semester-long study abroad programs on intercultural competence development in undergraduate engineering students. *International Journal of STEM Education*, *11*(1), 24. [CrossRef]

Janeiro, M. F., Kelsey, K. D., & Robinson, J. S. (2011). Assessing changes in intercultural sensitivity among agricultural students exposed to international experiences. *Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education*, *18*(1), 34–44. [CrossRef]

Jankowski, P. J. (2019). A construct validation argument for the intercultural development inventory. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, *52*(2), 75–89. [CrossRef]

Kipuri, N. (2009). *State of the world's indigenous peoples* (pp. 51–78). United Nations. Available online: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP_web.pdf (accessed on 15 December 2024).

Komatsu, H., & Rappleye, J. (2020). Reimagining modern education: Contributions from modern Japanese philosophy and practice? *ECNU Review of Education*, *3*(1), 20–45. [CrossRef]

Krishnan, L. A., & Jin, L. (2022). Long-term impact of study abroad on intercultural development. *Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups*, *7*(2), 560–573. [CrossRef]

Kruse, J. A., Didion, J., & Perzynski, K. (2014). Utilizing the Intercultural Development Inventory® to develop intercultural competence. *SpringerPlus*, *3*(334), 1–8. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Kuffuor, O., Aggrawal, S., Jaiswal, A., Smith, R. J., & Morris, P. V. (2024). Transformative pathways: Implementing intercultural competence development in higher education using Kotter's change model. *Education Sciences*, *14*(7), 686. [CrossRef]

Lantz-Deaton, C. (2017). Internationalisation and the development of students' intercultural competence. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *22*(5), 532–550. [CrossRef]

Laubenthal, B. (2023). Introduction: Assimilation, integration or transnationalism? An overview of theories of migrant incorporation. *International Migration*, *61*(1), 84–91. [CrossRef]

Lee, J. J., & Rice, C. (2007). Welcome to America? International student perceptions of discrimination. *Higher Education*, *53*, 381–409. [CrossRef]

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, *98*(2), 224–253. [CrossRef]

McAuliffe, M., & Oucho, L. A. (Eds.). (2024). *World migration report 2024*. International Organization for Migration. Available online: https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2024 (accessed on 28 December 2024).

McGorry, P. D. (2007). Issues for DSM-V: Clinical staging: A heuristic pathway to valid nosology and safer, more effective treatment in psychiatry. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, *164*(6), 859–860. [CrossRef]

Mitchell, D., Steele, T., Marie, J., & Timm, K. (2017). Learning race and racism while learning: Experiences of international students pursuing higher education in the Midwestern United States. *AERA Open*, *3*(3), 1–15. [CrossRef]

Morais, D. B., & Ogden, A. C. (2010). Initial development and validation of the global citizenship scale. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *15*(5), 445–466. [CrossRef]

Mu, B., Berka, S., Erickson, L., & Pérez-Ibáñez, I. (2022). Individual experiences that affect students' development of intercultural competence in study abroad. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *89*, 30–41. [CrossRef]

Ouellette-Schramm, J. (2024). Intercultural development of US undergraduate faculty: A constructive-developmental study. *Discover Education*, *3*(1), 231. [CrossRef]

Paige, R. M., Jacobs-Cassuto, M., Yershova, Y. A., & DeJaeghere, J. (2003). Assessing intercultural sensitivity: An empirical analysis of the Hammer and Bennett Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *27*(4), 467–486. [CrossRef]

Park, S. C. (2020). *Korean international students and the making of racialized transnational elites*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Pedersen, P. J. (2010). Assessing intercultural effectiveness outcomes in a year-long study abroad program. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *34*(1), 70–80. [CrossRef]

Poyrazli, S., & Lopez, M. D. (2007). An exploratory study of perceived discrimination and homesickness: A comparison of international students and American students. *The Journal of Psychology*, *141*(3), 263–280. [CrossRef]

Punti, G., & Dingel, M. (2021). Rethinking race, ethnicity, and the assessment of intercultural competence in higher education. *Education Sciences*, *11*(3), 110. [CrossRef]

Reken, R. E. V., Pollock, M. V., & Pollock, D. C. (2017). *Third culture kids: Growing up among worlds* (3rd ed.). Nicholas Brealey.

Rexeisen, R. J., Anderson, P. H., Lawton, L., & Hubbard, A. C. (2008). Study abroad and intercultural development: A longitudinal study. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, *17*(1), 1–20. [CrossRef]

Rodríguez-Izquierdo, R. M. (2022). International experiences and the development of intercultural sensitivity among university students. *Educación XX1*, *25*(1), 93–117. [CrossRef]

Schiller, N. G., Basch, L., & Blanc-Szanton, C. (1992). Towards a definition of transnationalism: Introductory remarks and research questions. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, *645*(1), ix–xiv. [CrossRef]

Scott, K. A., & Sandell, E. J. (2023). Increasing intercultural competency in study abroad marketing classes: Implementing the intercultural development inventory. *Marketing Education Review*, *33*(1), 86–96. [CrossRef]

Shimomura, F. (2014). Japanese returnees' reentry cultural struggles: Differences and commonalities in the research findings over time. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, *14*(1), 1–11. [CrossRef]

Sierra-Huedo, M. L., & Nevado-Llopis, A. (2022). Promoting the development of intercultural competence in higher education through intercultural learning interventions. *Revista Electrónica Educare*, *26*(2), 526–546. [CrossRef]

Stroebe, M., Schut, H., & Boerner, K. (2017). Cautioning health-care professionals: Bereaved persons are misguided through the stages of grief. *OMEGA—Journal of Death and Dying*, *74*(4), 455–473. [CrossRef]

Tamer, D., Liu, Y., & Santee, J. (2023). Considering the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess intercultural competence at US pharmacy schools. *Pharmacy*, *11*(1), 39. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Tan, E. C., Wang, K. T., & Cottrell, A. B. (2021). A systematic review of third culture kids empirical research. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *82*, 81–98. [CrossRef]

Tedeschi, M., Vorobeva, E., & Jauhiainen, J. S. (2022). Transnationalism: Current debates and new perspectives. *GeoJournal*, *87*(2), 603–619. [CrossRef]

Terzuolo, E. R. (2018). Intercultural development in study abroad: Influence of student and program characteristics. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *65*, 86–95. [CrossRef]

Torres-Olave, B., & Lee, J. J. (2020). Shifting positionalities across international locations: Embodied knowledge, time-geography, and the polyvalence of privilege. *Higher Education Quarterly*, *74*(2), 136–148. [CrossRef]

Vertovec, S. (2001). Transnationalism and identity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *27*(4), 573–582. [CrossRef]

Waldinger, R., & Fitzgerald, D. (2004). Transnationalism in question. *American Journal of Sociology*, *109*(5), 1177–1195. [CrossRef]

Westrick, J. M., & Yuen, C. Y. (2007). The intercultural sensitivity of secondary teachers in Hong Kong: A comparative study with implications for professional development. *Intercultural Education*, *18*(2), 129–145. [CrossRef]

Yamamoto, S. (1998). Ibunkasenshitivity moderu wo nihonhin ni taioh suruniattate–saiteigi no hitsuyousei ni tsuite: Applying the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity in the Japanese context. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, *2*(1), 77–100.

Yoshida, T., Matsumoto, D., Akashi, S., Akiyama, T., Furuiye, A., Ishii, C., & Moriyoshi, N. (2009). Contrasting experiences in Japanese returnee adjustment: Those who adjust easily and those who do not. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *33*(4), 265–276. [CrossRef]

You, Y. (2023). Learn to become a unique interrelated person: An alternative of social-emotional learning drawing on Confucianism and Daoism. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *55*(4), 519–530. [CrossRef]

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.