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Expanding Identities and Advancing Global Citizenship of Underrepresented U.S. Higher  
Education Students Through International Virtual Exchange

by

Janita Poe

Under the Direction of Anthony F. Lemieux, PhD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctorate of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2022

## ABSTRACT

Global citizenship education (GCED) helps students thrive in the multicultural 21<sup>st</sup> century world. Yet participation in study abroad and related programs in the United States – a purported “melting pot” of races and cultures – remains, disproportionately, the domain of affluent whites (Bell et al., 2021; Seid, 2021; NAFSA, 2020; IIE, 2020; Sweeney, 2013; Salisbury, et. al., 2011). In recent years, international virtual exchange (IVE), an educational experience involving sustained interaction between geographically-separated participants using technology and trained facilitators, has emerged as an affordable and scalable complement to study abroad.

Analyzed at the macro level, IVE has the potential to promote world peace among future generations by bringing students around the world together instantly for dialogue and friendship. In addition to language learning, many established IVE scholars contend these exchanges, like study abroad, can foster greater understanding of different world views and address socio-political issues in an increasingly polarized world (Beelen & Jones, 2018; Helm, 2013; O’Dowd, 2021). There is a large body of research on IVE for cultural competency development, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (Marinoni & van’t Land, 2020). One under-explored area, however, is the potential for IVE to draw more students from underserved communities to the global world and the career and personal development opportunities affiliated with it.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to learn from the experiences of underrepresented and historically-segregated students in IVE. To achieve this, I conducted a mixed-methods study using surveys to identify and recruit IVE participants at three large universities in the South and

Midwest followed by one-on-one virtual interviews with a subset of the students to attain a more nuanced understanding of their exchange experiences. In addition, exchange field notes and my own abroad experiences have informed this study. Data from the study revealed six main themes: “Virtual connections beyond the classroom,” “Bias reduction,” “Color matters,” “Equality in digital space,” “Window to the world,” and “One step closer to abroad.” Findings suggest that sustained contact and collaboration with counterparts in other parts of the world strengthens participants’ self-efficacy, identity and desire to learn more about the global world.

**INDEX WORDS:** International virtual exchange, COIL, Study abroad, Identity, Contact theory, Diversity, Underrepresented students, Cultural competency

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2022

Expanding Identities and Advancing Global Citizenship of Underrepresented U.S. Higher  
Education Students Through International Virtual Exchange

by

Janita Poe

Committee Chair: Anthony Lemieux

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College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

August 2022

## **DEDICATION**

To my Titans, Booker Poe, M.D., and the late Gloria Reeves Poe, M.A. (GSU Department of Education, 1977). Jim Crow tried to keep you down but you made a way through education. This PhD study is dedicated to you.

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*For your spiritual guidance, fit lifestyles fellowshiping, and sisterhood for almost 40 years*

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**LIST OF KEY ABBREVIATIONS**

AGSC	Atlanta Global Studies Center
ASHE	Association for the Study of Higher Education
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
CALL	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
CG Students	Continuing Generation Students
CIEE	Council on International Educational Exchange
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
FG Students	First Generation Students
GCED	Global Citizenship Education
GLN	Global Learning Networks
HBCUs	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
IIE	Institute of International Education
IOCCs	International Online Cultural Competencies
IVEC	International Virtual Exchange Conference
IVE	International Virtual Exchange
NGO	Non-Government Organization
SIDE Theory	Social Identity and Deindividualization Theory
SIP Theory	Social Information Processing Theory
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board

## PREFACE

In this dissertation study I seek to examine a societal phenomenon: economic and racial disparities in international and intercultural experiences. I am inspired to do this because of my own experiences as the only person of Black African descent in my kindergarten class at Tachikawa Elementary School on a U.S. Air Force base outside Tokyo, Japan, in the late 1960s, and at summer language schools in Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, and France from the 1990s through the mid-2010s, respectively. My world view and first-hand knowledge of other cultures empowers me. In a matter of weeks, I went from being the lone dark, kinky-haired girl on the playground in her Kimono Day attire to the frightened kindergartener from a foreign land being introduced before an all-Black classroom in Southwest Atlanta. Both experiences have been indelible and, over the years, I have imported their trauma and rewards into a unique identity that has given me a cultural competency to confidently navigate many different worlds. I am at once



Janita Poe, Tachikawa AFB Dependent School "Kimono Day," Tachikawa, Japan, 1969

a proud, dare I say “woke,” woman of Black African descent in America and an international citizen, well aware of and still open to learning the narratives, values, and perspectives of people around the world, within and outside of my African Diaspora. Because I was

raised and live in a hypersegregated Black community, I also have primary knowledge of one of the main populations I seek to serve in this research. Indeed, over the years, I have met many talented, driven, ambitious people like myself who were arrested in their social cognitive

development for just one reason: They had little knowledge about or access to the world outside their segregated environment. For those who did, if international travel became a consideration, they too often encountered barriers to making their international travel dream a reality. With this backdrop, this study seeks to add to the literature and conversation around equity and diversity in international cultural competency development. I do this by providing research that I have not yet found published or readily available on scholarly digital archives: inquiry into whether participation in a relatively new, affordable and scalable international experience called international virtual exchange (IVE) influences interest in international travel, study abroad, global careers and other forms of intercultural competency development among U.S.-based groups underrepresented in study abroad and international travel.

Because of my own exchange experiences, I have a keen appreciation for the unique challenges and rewards involved in cultural competency development for people from hypersegregated and underrepresented communities. While I have had a few bad experiences while living in other nation states, I have had many more that were rewarding. In fact, based on my experiences and those of other people of color I've met who have traveled abroad, I believe international experiences – whether online or through actual travel – actually are more profound for first-generation college students and other underrepresented groups than they are for many of our continuing generation college-educated White counterparts.

For instance, one theme shared by some African Americans who live or have lived in Western Europe is that the region is “less racist” than the United States because they do not have several centuries of color-based slavery and Jim Crow laws found in our home country. Another is that people in countries around the world tend to see us as United States citizens first and included in this stereotype is the assumption that we are wealthy and powerful. It also includes

the “Ugly American” trope that we are egocentric, entitled, overly patriotic and ignorant about the rest of the world. Having to negotiate this completely new perception of who we are offers new, identity-building experiences and adds depth and complexity to our sense of ourselves and our place in the larger world.

In closing, for students of all ethnic and racial backgrounds who have lived in historically-segregated neighborhoods most of their lives, I believe international experiences help develop not only cultural competency skills but also an ability to live a more enriched life informed by exposure to other cultures. For those from historically oppressed racial and ethnic groups, I contend international exchanges and travel offer a level of self-efficacy and understanding about our world that our own country may not provide because of interwoven, undetected racial hierarchies that still influence our everyday lives. IVE is poised to become a change agent in the global world. By starting with just an IVE experience in high school, at a community college, or on a university campus, more and more students from underrepresented groups in the United States are one step closer to escaping the shackles of limiting “minority,” “hillbilly” and “alien” labels and to become truly culturally competent “international citizens” of the world.

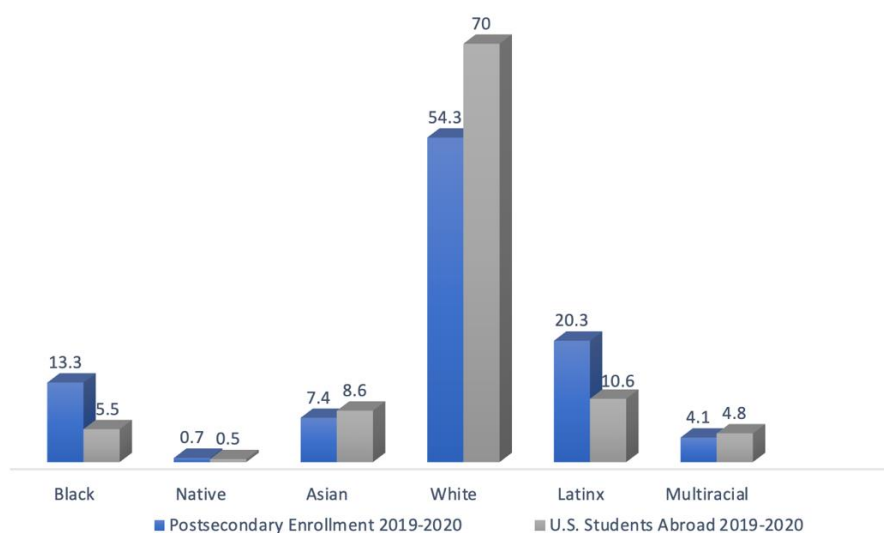
## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Global citizenship education (GCED) helps students develop the critical intercultural competency skills needed in the multicultural 21<sup>st</sup> century world. Research has shown that participation in international exchange can contribute to GCED development by positively influencing everything from one's ability to adapt to different cultures to marketability in a global job marketplace (Angelova & Zhao, 2016; Batardière et al., 2019; Çiftçi & Savaş, 2018; Commander et al., 2022; Fitzgerald & Lemieux, 2010; Goldstein & Lopez, 2021; Taskiran, 2020; Kolm et al., 2021; Tolan & McCullers, 2018).

Before COVID-19, travel abroad was the most prominent approach to global citizenship development for teenagers and young adults. However, study abroad costs are often prohibitive: Per-semester exchange costs generally range from \$8,000 to more than \$25,000 (Palmer, 2022; Fusco, 2019), so international experiences traditionally have been limited to students with private funding or government support. Indeed, federal government reports show that only about one in 10 U.S. college students pursue studies in another country before graduating and that a disproportionate percentage of those who do study abroad are non-Hispanic Whites (Redden, 2019; U.S. Department of State, 2017; Figure 1.1). When the lens is switched to first-generation (FG) students – those without one parent or guardian with a bachelor's degree (Toutkoushian et al., 2018) – the findings are similar. Although FG students comprise about a third of those enrolled in U.S. post-secondary institutions, only 9% of FG college seniors reported participating in study abroad as compared with 20% of their continuing-generation (CG) peers (Goldstein & Lopez, 2021). These figures are not taken lightly as study abroad advocates repeatedly have declared a need for more diversity and inclusion in their ranks.

The Sen. Paul Simon Act Study Abroad Program Act, for instance, aims to invest in programs that increase participation of underrepresented groups “so that the demographics of study abroad participation reflect the demographics of the undergraduate population” (American Council on Education, 2019).

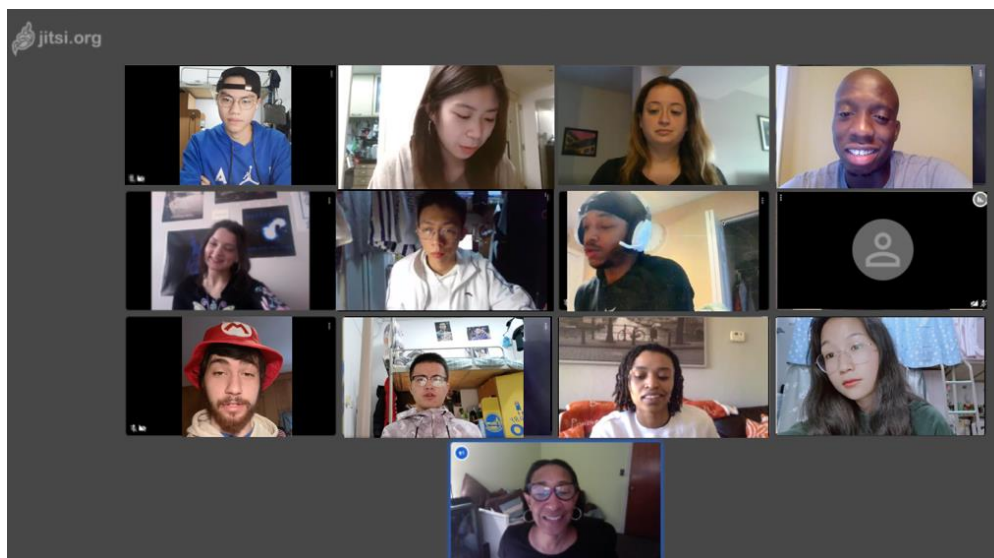


**Figure 1.1** Ethnic makeup of U.S. postsecondary enrollment and study abroad by percentage of whole (Adapted from NAFSA, 2020)

Enter international virtual exchange (Figure 1.2). IVE is a relatively low-cost online experience involving sustained interaction and communication between geographically separated participants using technology managed by trained facilitators (Gutiérrez & O’Dowd, 2021; Helm & Acconcia, 2019). Analyzed at the macro level, IVE has the potential to promote world peace among future generations by bringing large groups of students around the world together instantly for dialogue and friendship. In addition to language learning, many established IVE scholars contend these exchanges, like study abroad, can foster greater understanding of

different world views and address socio-political issues in an increasingly polarized world (Beelen & Jones, 2018; Helm, 2013; O’Dowd, 2021).

The history of IVE as a GCED model is relatively short due to its technology-era application. In the 2000s, IVE grew when individual educators began informal video-based exchanges with global counterparts using then-new video conferencing tools such



**Figure 1.2** Researcher (bottom) facilitating Hong Kong-China-US IVE in October 2020. (All images approved; Illustration is merger of two different sessions to compensate for unapproved visuals).

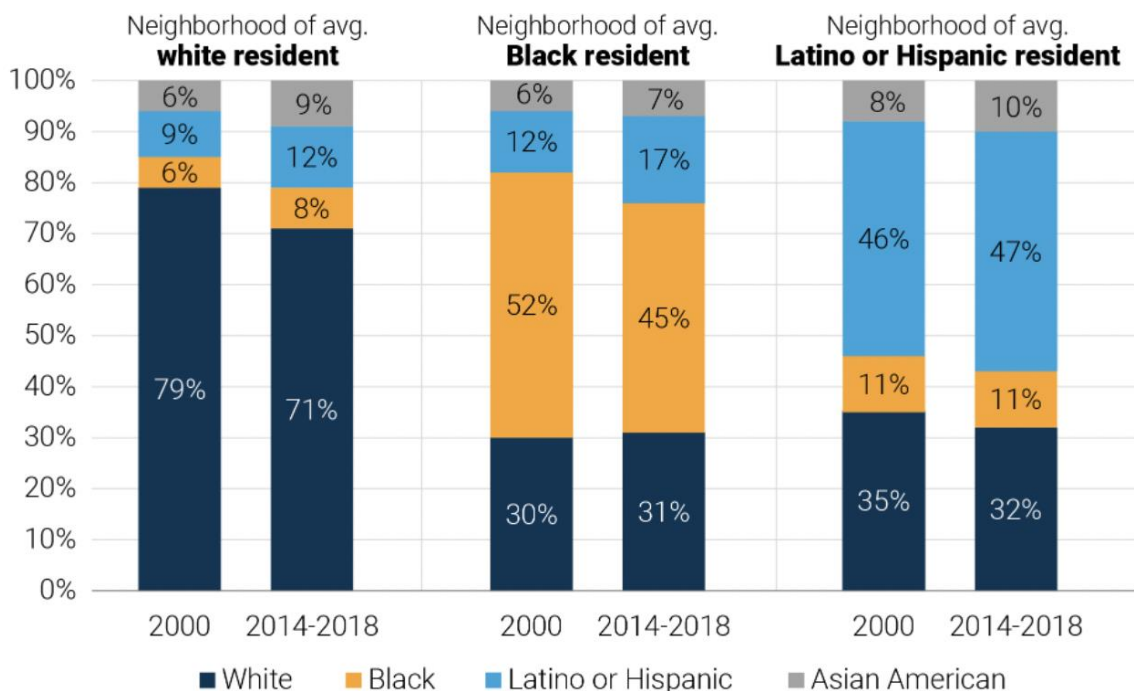
as Skyper (later Skype) and WhatsApp. Initially, IVE was mostly for computer-assisted language learning (CALL) or federally-subsidized peace-building projects, but its use has expanded to include serving as an affordable alternative to or first step towards travel to another country (Marcillo & Desilus, 2016; O’Dowd, 2016; Starke-Meyering, 2010).

As the number of IVE partnerships has grown, so have the number of studies dedicated to gaining insights into participants’ experiences. For example, a search of the term “virtual exchange” in the Georgia State University EBSCO host database brings up 1,011 results between January 2001 through December 2010 but a total of 2,158 results between January 2011 and December 2020. Most of the research thus far has focused on participants’ language learning

motivation and cultural competence development and, typically, the exchange has included students from two different nation-states. When demographics are measured, questions typically focus on age, race, ethnicity and nationality. One IVE demographic that has not been fully examined is the participant's past exposure to and experience interacting with diverse ethnic and racial populations. This study operationalizes that demographic using the term *hypersegregation*.

Hypersegregation was coined by Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, two University of Chicago sociologists who in the 1980s and 1990s wrote extensively about the role classism, suburbanization and de facto segregation play in education attainment, job security and other socio-economic factors in the United States. In *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* Massey, and Denton (1993) defined segregation along five dimensions – unevenness, isolation, clustering, concentration and centralization – and determined that ethnic groups with high scores on several of these dimensions tend to be hypersegregated (Hadden Loh et al., 2020; Massey & Denton, 1993; Figure 1.3). Their work was influenced by the work of earlier scholars like William Julius Wilson, a Harvard University professor who used the term “concentration effects” (Wilson, 1987, p. 58) to refer to the same layers of social isolation.





**Figure 1.3** Race-ethnic makeups of different groups in metro areas in 2000 and 2014-2018 (Hadden Loh et al., 2020)

According to Massey and Denton, a hypersegregated group may be distributed so that they are overrepresented in some areas and underrepresented in others, leading to different degrees of *unevenness*. They also may be distributed so that their racial *isolation* is ensured by virtue of rarely sharing a neighborhood with relatively-affluent whites. In addition, their neighborhoods may be tightly *clustered* to form one large contiguous enclave or scattered about in checkerboard fashion, or they may be *concentrated* widely in a very small area or settled sparsely throughout the urban environment. Finally, they may be spatially *centralized* around the urban core or spread out along the periphery (Massey & Denton, 1993). Experiencing just one of the five dimensions, the researchers explain, removes that group from full participation in the larger society and limits their access to its benefits; however, “multidimensional layering of segregation” can lead to people growing up with very limited direct experience with the culture, norms and behaviors of the mainstream society. Denton and Massey’s research and related

studies found that among the nation's largest ethnic groups, African Americans were the most likely to be hypersegregated followed by Latinos (Hadden Loh et al., 2020; Massey & Denton, 1993; Figure 1.3).

Though sociologists argue they fair better on some of the dimensions because of their race (Massey, 2007; Wilson, 1987), Whites can suffer from hypersegregation in the form of class stratification which includes the same type of isolation, clustering and concentration in impoverished neighborhoods experienced by their Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) counterparts. Several sociologists have explored discrimination uniquely experienced by low-income Whites such as the “hillbilly” and “trailer trash” stigma of people who reside in rural and exurban districts with large numbers of modular homes (Besbris et al., 2019, p. 530; Kusenbach, 2020, pp. 67-68; Pitts, 2014).

Before the emergence of international virtual exchange as an alternative or supplement to study abroad, journalists and scholars for decades have documented racial and socio-economic disparities in international travel experiences among college-age students (Gliozzo, 1980; Jarvis & Jenkins, 2000; Jessup-Anger, 2008; McLellan, 2007; Norflores, 2003; Penn & Tanner, 2009; Salisbury et al., 2011; Simons & Ainsworth, 2012). The Institute of International Education (IIE) provides annual reports on the racial and ethnic backgrounds of U.S. study abroad participants going back to the 2000-2001 academic year. Despite modest growth in diversity over the last two decades, the most recent report found that “Black or African American” participation actually dropped in the 2019-2020 academic year to 5.5%, down from 6.4% the year before. “Hispanic or Latino(a)” also dropped slightly, from 10.9 to 10.6% in 2019-2020. As shown in Figure 1.1, both groups, along with Indigenous Americans, are underrepresented in study abroad. Previous research suggests students with fewer resources may not pursue study abroad because they may

view it as an unnecessary luxury. Those who don't live or attend school in areas that foster an international outlook are less likely to be exposed to people who have studied abroad. They may develop a limited frame of reference, whereby study abroad is not a part of their habitus and not seen as suitable for people like them (Simon & Ainsworth, 2012; Yuksel & Nascimento, 2018).

The primary base for this study is Georgia State University, my university and affiliated home of the Atlanta Global Studies Center (AGSC) that facilitates and promotes international virtual exchange at GSU and Georgia Institute of Technology. This urban campus setting and its diverse student body informs and inspires this dissertation study. Nationally recognized for its high graduation rate and success at closing achievement gaps, the university's student body directly aligns with this study's target population. Located in the heart of downtown Atlanta, GSU draws a high percentage of students who are first generation, BIPC and from lower-income communities of all ethnicities. Recent University System of Georgia reports show that GSU enrolls more African Americans, Latinx, Asian Americans, first-generation, and Pell Grant students than any other four-year university in Georgia (University System of Georgia, 2021; GSU, 2019). In fact, since the mid-2010s, African-American, Hispanic, and Pell-eligible students have, on average, all graduated from GSU at or above the rates of the student body overall—making GSU the only national public university to attain and sustain this goal (GSU, 2019). GSU's undergraduate population is now 63% non-White, and 58% of the students qualify as low-income by federal standards (GSU, 2020). The university consistently ranks at the top in the nation for both its racial/ethnic diversity and social mobility (US News & World Report, 2020; GSU, 2019).

## 1.2 Study Rationale and Research Questions

Recognizing long-existing barriers to greater diversity, equity and inclusion in study abroad and international travel, this study is bolstered by a multi-pronged research blueprint I developed for achieving greater equity in GCED among students from all types of racial, social and cultural backgrounds in any society. This long-term research planning model – which has informed the research questions, literature review, theoretical underpinnings and methodology – seeks to explore and recognize the IVE experiences of students from hypersegregated and first-generation college student backgrounds and, then, consider the benefits of increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in IVE. The goal of the study is to add another dimension to increasing awareness of IVE as an affordable, scalable option to study abroad and vehicle for reaching the students who stand to benefit the most from an international exchange experience. The ultimate aim is to contribute to the decolonization of “transcultural learning zones” (Eijkman, 2009) in higher education.

The key research questions guiding this inquiry into IVE in this study are as follows:

**RQ1:** Does participation in an international virtual exchange influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from underrepresented groups in study abroad?

**RQ2:** In what ways do IVEs expand a student’s identity, self-efficacy and cultural competence in the global world?

To answer these questions, this study utilized a multi-method approach. The first phase of the study consisted of gathering quantitative data obtained from an 18-question Qualtrics survey of students who had participated in an IVE within the last three academic years (Appendix A). The second phase consisted of a pilot interview with a non-U.S. IVE cohort followed by six

interviews using a guide (Appendix B) that allowed for probing and follow-up questions during the communication to further explore the research questions. The more quantitative initial survey provided numerical data to measure demographic facts about the participants' and their IVE experiences – particularly those using a virtual chat format such as Zoom – while the qualitative interviews allowed me to capture participants' voices and find common themes in their perspectives. In addition, data from a pilot interview with a non-U.S. cohort who has participated in a virtual exchange; archives from TopHat, the student engagement platform used in two large-scale exchanges I co-facilitated; my experiences as an African-American female studying and living abroad in four countries; and informal conversations all informed the study.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

*“What is familiar tends to become a value.” – Gordon Allport*

This review of literature is divided into four sections. The first is a brief history of computer-mediated communication and the earliest virtual exchange formats. The second discusses the development of IVE and some of the largest initiatives today. The third concentrates on intercultural competence and ways IVE has been used to develop it. The final looks at the gaps in the literature that this dissertation study seeks to address – the underrepresentation of students from hypersegregated backgrounds in IVE – and any studies that come close to exploring the topic.

### 2.1 Computer-Mediated Communication

Educational exchanges using technology to connect geographically-separated groups of students emerged shortly after the arrival of the Internet and the widespread use of personal computers in the late 1980s. Though a variety of labels were used, some of the most common included *computer-mediated communication* (CMC), *global learning networks* (GLNs) and *telecollaboration*. One of the first digital exchanges between two geographically distant classrooms was a 1987 AT&T collaboration between middle-school age students in Saanich, British Columbia, Canada, and Greenwich, New York. Using a closed AT&T network that connected the student via landlines, the students became “e-penpals” and wrote letters to each other (AT&T Tech Channel, 2012; Riel, 1990). The effort grew to become the AT&T Learning Network, which lasted until 2000 and had participating classes across the United States.

Another early exchange was a 1988 collaboration between the Academy of Sciences in Moscow and the New York State Board of Education (Helm, 2018) that focused on cultural competence and peace-building. The project, designed to address lingering Cold War tensions

between the United States and former Soviet Union, brought together 12 secondary schools in each country to work in English and Russian on projects based on their curricula, which was designed by the teachers (Helm). Other early international exchange studies include an ethnographic report on computer-mediated, foreign language referential communication, carried out via communications networks, how email could be adapted to foreign language teaching in senior secondary schools in Finland (Tella, 1991), and a study of the use of “telephones, fax machines, word processors, computers and email” in a multi-stage exchange involving high school language students from Singapore and Quebec, Canada (Soh & Soon, 1991).

Early theory development of CMC focused on dialogue as it relates to the absence of factors such as verbal cues in email or text communication, and, more recently, in virtual formats as with the use of applications such as Skype and FaceTime. Communication scholar Joseph Walther began research on CMC using electronic mail and “computer-based conferencing systems” in the early 1990s specifically to look at the effect of eliminating “nonverbal codes that are generally rich in relational information” in human communication (Walther, 1992). Walther developed the Social Information Processing (SIP) theory that says that individuals can develop relationships over time by using computers, but the process takes longer than face-to-face relationship building due to the reduced non-verbal communication (Walther, 1997). The SIP theory is important to intercultural exchange study because it illustrates the importance of pacing intercultural dialogues with “warm-up” conversations for a period of time before delving into more sensitive topic areas. About the same time Walther developed the SIP theory, social psychologists Martin Lea and Russell Spears developed the Social Identity and Deindividuation (SIDE) theory that applied the idea of anonymity in groups and crowds to computer-mediated interactions. Lea and Spears argued that while earlier theories assumed

digital dialoguing might improve intercultural communication, the lack of nonverbal cues actually prompted some users to form negative impressions of their dialogue counterparts based on stereotypes and social categories of the other group (Lea & Spears, 1992). In their 1998 research with Tom Postmes, “Breaching or Building Social Boundaries? SIDE-Effects of Computer-Mediated Communication,” the researchers found power dynamics and prejudices emerged in online exchanges involving groups just as much as in face-to-face exchanges. Although CMC gives us the opportunity to traverse social boundaries, paradoxically, the researchers found it can also afford these boundaries greater power, especially when they define self- and group- identity (Postmes et al., 1998). Another work recognized as groundbreaking in CMC is *The Network Nation: Human Communication via Computer* (Hiltz & Turoff, 1978 and revised in 1993), which was hailed in the original forward by Suzanne Keller for “exploring a new form of communication called computerized conferencing.” More practical than theory-based, the lengthy text covered the emergence of virtual meetings, online international business communication, researcher collaborations and other ways pioneers were communicating online at the time. In a section dedicated to virtual exchange in the classroom, the authors focused mostly on teacher-student CMC and asynchronous exchanges but they did predict a future “virtual university” of not just courses but students in different locations working in collaborative groups (Hiltz & Turoff, p. 471).

### ***2.1.1 COIL***

In 1999, after returning from a five-month Fulbright fellowship in Belarus in 1999 and developing a cross-cultural video production project with a humanities professor he had met in Belarus, Jon Rubin began exploring a sustainable online international co-teaching program (Labi, 2011; Rubin, 2017). The mission of the SUNY COIL center focuses on helping institutions



adapt their single-classroom courses to the online, collaborative format, and to establish strong partnerships with professors – who would join classrooms and co-teach using COIL resources – from international universities abroad (A Brief History of the SUNY COIL Center, n.d.; Labi, 2011; Reed, 2016; Rubin, 2017). In the first few years, COIL reports show the center trained faculty at more than 20 SUNY campuses and in more than 10 countries. COIL also hosted two conferences in 2007 and 2008. My advisor and dissertation chair, Anthony Lemieux, was among the early COIL researchers and part of the first cohort implement the practice at Purchase College, SUNY.

In 2010, the center hired a second full-time staff member and relocated to New York City to become part of the SUNY Global Center (A Brief History of the SUNY COIL Center, n.d.; Guth, 2013). Since then, COIL has received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, hired at least four more staff members, established partnerships in Latin America has hosted a dozen conferences, launched a COIL Institute and developed a COIL training program for SUNY faculty and others interested in learning the practice (Rubin, 2017).

### ***2.1.2 Soliya***

One of the most established initiatives is operated by Manhattan-based Soliya, an international nonprofit organization established in 2002 to foster dialogue and understanding between youth in Western and Muslim-majority countries (Gokhale as cited by Poe, 2017). Soliya has pioneered the use of virtual exchange—sustained, technology-enabled people-to-people education—as an innovative and urgent medium of skill- and peace-building for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Through the Connect Program, the organization’s flagship virtual exchange initiative, every year hundreds of post-secondary students across North America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa log into a custom-built video conferencing application to engage in

facilitated and multilateral dialogue around critical and possibly divisive topics. Since its founding Soliya has reached over 10,000 students across 159 higher-education institutions in 30 countries and 26 states in the United States (Gokhale as cited by Poe, 2017).

### ***2.1.3 Stevens Initiative***

Established in honor of Ambassador Chris Stevens, who was killed in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012 (The Week Staff, 2015), the Stevens Initiative was established in 2015 primarily to use virtual exchange to improve relations between students in the United States with those in the MENA region. The Stevens Initiative is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, with U.S. government funding administered by the Aspen Institute, a global nonprofit. It is also supported by the Bezos Family Foundation and the governments of Morocco and the United Arab Emirates. According to the Initiative's website, the organization builds on the pioneering work of the virtual exchange community, which uses technology to connect young people across continents and cultures. Through virtual exchange, youth have access to a substantive international exchange experience by collaborating and learning with their peers abroad without having to leave their communities. Recognizing the impact that virtual exchange promises, and capitalizing on advances in technology, the aim is to make life-changing, cross-cultural experiences available to all young people. The Initiative has awarded 86 grants and, by summer 2023, will expand its reach to nearly 75,000 young people in 17 MENA countries and the Palestinian Territories, and in 48 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, one tribal community, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Washington, D.C.

## **2.2 Intercultural Competence**

Prior to World War I, creating opportunities for international, cultural exchange was an informal process, planned by an individual student and, always, involving long distance travel.

Students would enroll by mail directly into a foreign university, and were required to arrange their own travel plans and programs of study (Association for the Study of Higher Education, 2012). At that time, the majority of students who undertook to study abroad were male graduate students, oftentimes training for the ministry or for medicine, who would travel to Europe to complete their education or gain expertise in fields beyond the scope of American universities.

Ironically, as the cost of study abroad programs has escalated, so has the need for more cross-cultural engagement. Higher education scholars, peace think tanks and diplomatic organizations are all producing reports and studies that point to the benefits of sustained intercultural exchange for young adults and the low numbers of students engaging in them, primarily due to the high costs of study abroad programs. The authors of a 2011 United States Institute of Peace report on virtual international exchange contend that alumni of international exchange programs “are a tremendous resource for mobilization” in support of cross-cultural understanding and dialogue:

Recognition is growing that not only presidents and politicians determine whether we live in a safe and secure world: citizens, activists, and non-state actors also do. The skills, character, and knowledge required to be a responsible and constructive leader in a globalized world therefore need to be cultivated across even broader segments of society. Further, because it is increasingly imperative that citizens have global and linguistic competency (if they are to succeed in the twenty-first century framework), all young people need opportunities to gain these skills. Our collective ability to solve complex global problems requires that many more people be exposed to the learning and knowledge that international exchange programs offer (Himelfarb & Shamil, 2011, p. 2).

In response, colleges and universities have begun to explore ways to give a much larger audience of students an international learning experience. Some schools have expanded global studies departments and modified curriculum requirements for all students (Al' Abri, 2011; Elrick, 1999). Others have created administrative-level offices dedicated to programming focused around global cultures and international partnerships. In terms of diversity, the global education community clearly has recognized that the move towards internationalized curricula has the potential to open doors to students. Specifically, for students confined by isolation, segregation, racism and limited resources, interactions with students from around the world can be most profound and rewarding. Bolumole and Barone said international experiences can create a “real opportunity for transformation” by giving students a “third space” in which, removed from the context of U.S. society, they have “the room... to observe, experience, and appreciate new and different ways of being and doing” (Bolumole & Barone, 2020, p. 6).

The “learning and knowledge that international exchange programs provide” don’t just reward the governmental and economic goals of a nation state. Waidehi Gokhale, CEO of Soliya Connect, a landmark virtual exchange program that focuses on critical thinking and conflict resolution, said that college-aged youth are at a “critical point of identity crystallization” and that productive cross-cultural dialogue at this stage can foster the development of a more complex and informed social identity (Gokhale, personal communication, 2017). Their sense of self and other is vulnerable and malleable, and therefore must be nourished in a way that promotes awareness of oneself as a responsible and capable global citizen. What makes virtual exchange significantly different from physical exchange, she said, is the receptiveness of the model for scale:

The exponential growth we have experienced in the past two academic calendars is

significant. We have high hopes for the next generation: That they will be better equipped with the skills and strategies to approach conflict than their predecessors, and be the empathic citizens the world needs (Gokhale personal communication, 2017).

After COVID-19 decreased work force and student mobility, awareness of the potential of digital internationalization and the need for stronger international, online cultural competencies (IOCCs) grew (Lee et al., 2022; Kolm et al., 2021). In a 2020 International Association of Universities study of the pandemic's effect on higher education in 109 countries, 60% of participants reported that COVID had increased "virtual mobility and/or collaborative online learning" on their campuses (Marinoni et al., 2020). As emphasis on IOCCs increases, without intervention and dedicated research, students in and from the most hypersegregated communities, once again, are at the greatest risk of falling behind.

### **2.3 Diversity in IVE and Global Inclusion**

There is no widely published empirical research available on racial and ethnic diversity in U.S. international virtual exchange. There is, however, extensive literature on diversity in study abroad interest and participation and closing achievement gaps and decolonizing global citizenship. A thorough review of existing research on these subjects will inform future research on closing global competency development gaps as virtual conferencing and education become more mainstream.

Scholars have found relatively consistent reasons for the disproportionate percentage of FG and BIPOC students in study abroad and related international exchange education. Since the early 1990s, the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) has conducted periodic studies and conferences around disparities in study abroad. Many studies and literature reviews have cited their findings, which have been expanded and modified over the years. Lists have

included limited finances, lack of faculty support, marketing and institutional practices, cultural norms and family attitudes, historical patterns, fear of racism and discrimination (Seid, 2021; Lopez-McGee et al., 2017; Abdi, 2015; Brux & Fry, 2010; CIEE, 1993). Other studies also have included concern about language differences (e.g., Gaines, 2012; Hembroff & Rusz, 1993), lack of family and community support (e.g., Guitierrez, 2015; Lu et al., 2015, p. 446; Salisbury et al., 2011), lack of prior international travel (e.g., Lu et al., 2015; Gaines, 2012; Hembroff & Rusz, 1993) and concern about delay in graduation (McClure et al., 2010). Several have specifically concentrated on negative study abroad experiences of BIPOC travelers (Goldoni, 2017) and the fear of international racism as it relates to African Americans and a cultural sentiment that student abroad “is not for black students” (Craig 2015, as cited by Gaines, p. 24), and the hashtag #TravelingWhileBlack has reinforced fears on social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram (Alderman et al., 2022; Dillette et al., 2019). In a study of perceptions of study abroad among students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Gaines found that “Black students considering studying abroad often encounter myths and unpersuasive dialogue about other countries and being Black while studying abroad” (Gaines, p. 30). She identified peers, family, and media as the main influencers promoting this perception. In addition, Gaines said Black students’ fears were influenced by limited information about the experiences of Black students who have studied abroad, since the population of past student abroad students is so much smaller than the population of Whites who have studied abroad.

Though fewer in number, some studies have focused on the perceptions and experiences of the Latinx community with regard to education abroad. In addition to financial concerns, several studies suggested that students from immigrant backgrounds may be less intrigued by traveling to another country to study and learn about another culture since they navigate different

cultures in their everyday lives (Goldstein & Lopez, 2021; Orb, 2004). Indeed, a study comparing Latinx and first-generation White students' intent to study abroad with that of continuing-generation White students found that characteristics such as *adventurousness* and *language interest* were much more important to CG White students than the other two groups (Goldstein & Lopez, 2021). Other studies have found that Latinx students are just as interested in education abroad as their White counterparts but they were inclined to delay international travel and exchange until after college because of a desire to remain near family and not to delay individual graduation deadlines (McClure et al., 2010).

Yet research continues to identify international exchange as a high-impact educational practice (HIP) with various academic, social, and career benefits (Bell et al., 2021; ; Kuh, 2008; Larsen, & Ditta, 2013; Tolan & McCullers, 2018).

In a series of focus group discussions with African-American students who had recently studied in China, Lu et al. (2015) recording participants' saying their experiences made them "more academically curious and globally competitive. Several made plans to begin foreign language studies, including Mandarin; others began pursuing more study abroad and travel opportunities for the next year" (Lu, p. 448). In a narrative analysis of African Americans who had studied abroad in both Africa and other parts of the world, Bruce concluded that a theme around "a heightened level of awareness of and psychological commitment to the African-American experience emerged" (Bruce, 2012, p. 115). Himself of Black African descent, Bruce has studied and worked in Kenya and Mexico. Interestingly, as with my own experiences (Preface), Bruce's interviewees detail numerous experiences with race and color that their White counterparts simply did not encounter. However it is living those difficult experiences – as well the positive ones – that allows for true self-actualization, Bruce said. "International travel is

freedom; For the African-American collegians I interviewed, studying abroad embodied the freedom to explore the world and their relationship with it” (Bruce, p. 160).

A 2021 study by Bell et al. also identified ways international travel and exchange benefit underrepresented groups. Their study contrasted indices of student success of “ethnic minority” and White students with those of their counterparts who did not participate in overseas educational program found that the ethnic minority students who studied abroad were more likely to graduate on time and with a higher GPA than their counterparts who did no (Bell et al., 2021). Furthermore, while the study also found improvements in GPA averages and timely graduation when contrasting White study abroad students and their counterparts, the difference was less pronounced than what was found for the ethnic minority group.

In her 2016 dissertation, Fournier-Sylvester studied power imbalances in the dialogue and communication of participants in seven programs at the time that used digital platforms for exchange between geographically separate groups: By conducting multi-phase case studies that included a series of interviews and document reviews, she explored ways to address “epistemological, linguistic and technological hegemonies in online learning environments” (p. 157). In her literature review, she concluded that there was a “significant gap in the literature between the empirical research on developing intercultural competence online (largely in the context of language and business courses) and the largely theoretical body of literature that points to issues relating to power and inequality in international online learning settings” (p. 33). Her research proposed a more “transformative dialogue model” that would move through stages with trained facilitators who provide opportunities for engagement through virtual exchange as well as asynchronous discussion forums. She recommended that wikis, images and videos be used to “share personal experiences, challenge dominant ideologies and explore different ways



of knowing and understanding social issues” (p. 129). Facilitators, she said, should be trained to balance feelings of discomfort and safety within the group so that all participants felt accepted and challenged. Finally, in line with a critical framework, Fournier-Sylvester said the dialogue process should conclude with “emancipatory action aligned global peace building and social justice efforts” (p. 129). In citing Eijkman (2009), she described virtual exchanges as “transcultural learning zones” and explained one succinct position in the need to expand the identities of underrepresented students in global competency building:

How can we transform Western higher education to provide epistemically and discursively inclusive transcultural learning zones that place non-mainstream students on trajectories of participation that enhances their opportunity to participate as equals in a more vernacular, a much more egalitarian, cosmopolitanism increasingly committed to socio-economic and politically transformative global practices? (Eijkman, p. 244).

### 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Under a theoretical lens, this dissertation study aims to serve as a foundation for further exploring the use of international virtual exchange for dismantling practices such as hypersegregation and hegemony and promoting positive peace through cultural exchange and critical dialogue. By including this separate chapter dedicated exclusively to theories that explain both negative peace (Addams, 1907; Shields, 2017) and positive peace practices, the interviews, survey questions and analysis of this study are better designed and administered.

This chapter is divided into five sections, each focusing on a theory that underpins this study: *Intergroup contact*, *social cognitive theory*, *identity*, *dialogue* and *hegemony*. The chapter ends with a look at some recent theoretical ideas that are framing the foundation for international virtual exchange practices used today.

#### 3.1 Intergroup Contact

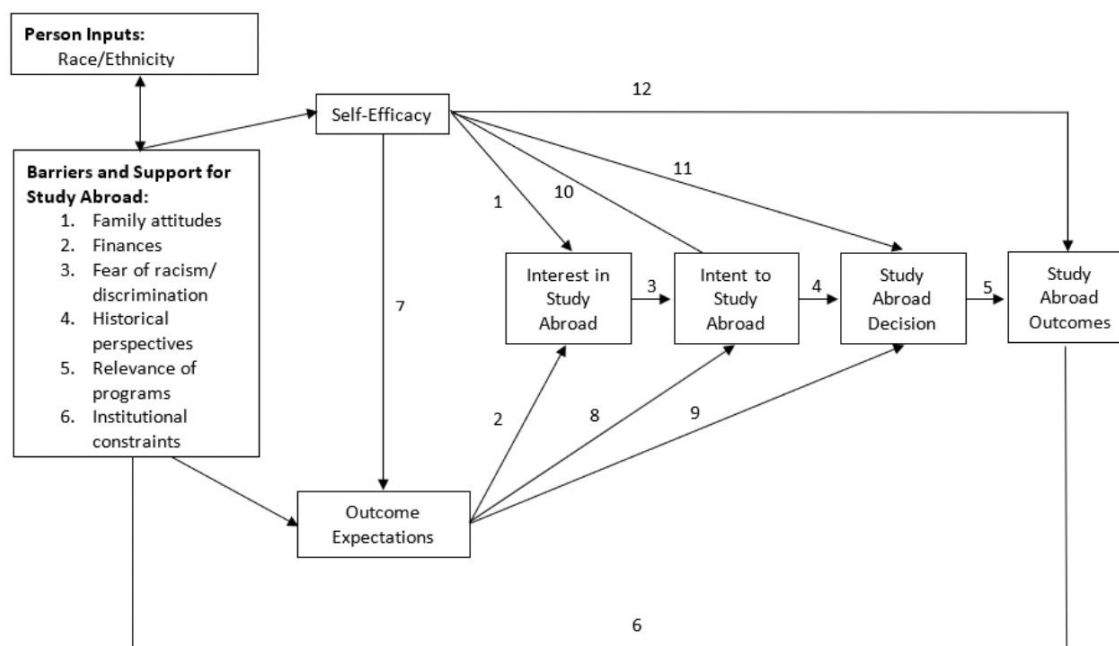
An early model that informs inequality and power dynamics in international virtual exchange is Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954). Allport, a Harvard psychologist and author of the groundbreaking book *The Nature of Prejudice*, argued that the best way to reduce tensions between disparate groups is through mediated contact. Allport stated that successful intercultural communication occurs when four elements are in place: equal status, common goals, cooperation and support by authority and society (Allport et al., 2011). If left unchecked, Allport said, racial and ethnic segregation can foster varying degrees of prejudice in individual personalities ranging from stereotyping and hate speech to outright violence (Allport, 1954). Allport's hypothesis – eventually termed contact theory (Brown, et. al., 2007; Hodson et

al., 2018) and intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998) – has been the foundation for numerous reformulations over the years (Dovidio et al., 2008; Gaertner et al., 1993; Pettigrew et al., 2011). In a 2017 review of two decades of research on contact theory, Yale psychologist John Dovidio and collaborators from Oxford University found that recent work had begun looking more at what transpires during intergroup contact that leads to a reduction in prejudice (Dovidio et al., 2017). Today, contact theory is one of the most common theories used to explain positive outcomes of student IVEs around the world.

### **3.2 Social Cognitive Theory and Self Efficacy**

In social cognitive theory Albert Bandura explains that individuals engage in behavior and choose that specific behavior because of a dynamic interaction between individuals, their experiences, and human behavior. Bandura said behavior can be "fashioned by direct and vicarious experiences" (Bandura, 1977, p. 13) and that "much social learning occurs based on casual or directed observation of behavior as it is performed by others in everyday situations" (p. 38). In past analyses of factors influencing students' perceptions of and intent to study abroad, research findings have supported Bandura's theory and expanded and applied it to areas of study. Emerging scholar Adam Seid (2021) applied a Bandura-inspired model for career planning developed by Lent, Brown & Hackett (1994) that illustrates how peoples lived experiences tied to their race and ethnicity can influence their self-efficacy and expectations which are both

factors leading to international exchange opportunities (Figure 3.1).



**Figure 3.1** Lent et al. (1994) Social Cognitive Theory Path Model Adapted by Seid (2021) for Study Abroad.

One major component of Bandura's theory is the concept of self-efficacy. A person with self-efficacy is confident in their ability to control events in their lives by setting goals, making choices and pursuing opportunities. In contrast to self-confidence, Bandurian self-efficacy is not a personality trait that doesn't change; it is a perception that can change due to environment, social circles and other factors. For example, outcomes that are interpreted as successes raise self-efficacy while those seen as failures lower it (Pajares, 1997).

### 3.3 Identity

In his communication theory of identity (CTI), Michael Hecht wrote that he essentially viewed identity as communication itself rather than a mere product of communication. Hecht said identity existed not only in the individual but also in social circles and he identified four layers or frames for it: Personal, enacted, relational, and communal. Hecht's theory added a new

dimension to identity research. More recently, CTI has underpinned expanding research on identity and the use of social media, particularly Instagram (Iqbal et al., 2019; Beale, 2017.)

In more recent years, scholars also began to explore the identity of marginalized groups. In the case of impermeable characteristics such as skin color and gender, for example, researchers have found that low status members labeled as inferior have found new dimensions of comparison on which to establish positive distinctiveness from a higher status group. For example, groups may emphasize their “solidarity” and cohesiveness while depicting higher status groups as “stuck up” and snobbish (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Hogg, 2016). In addition, scholars have studied how uncertainty about one’s identity actual increases an individual’s desire to belong to a group and their loyalty to that group. Uncertainty-identity theory informs and explains a range of group phenomena, including social influence, norms, deviance, minority influence, leadership processes, and extremism and ideological orthodoxy (Hogg, 2012).

In their research on identity in the global classroom, Brooks and Pitts (2016) expanded on Hecht’s communication theory of identity and conceptualized several goals in international exchange and learning. The first is the expansion of the learning community to include diverse members and increase the multicultural nature of group collaborations. Another is the facilitation of dialogues that allow for the negotiation of particular identities among all participants. The third is increasing participant self and cultural awareness. Brooks & Pitts argued that simply asking students to engage in or reflect upon conversations about culture and power is not enough (Johnson et al., 2008), instructors must also continually point out communicative moments wherein power dynamics such as elitism and ethnocentrism are manifest. Ultimately, Brooks and Pitts demonstrated and concluded that IVEs offer participants a unique platform for not only

intercultural experiences but also “identity negotiation, personal growth, and self-reflection” (Brooks & Pitts, p. 66).

### 3.4 Dialogue

Understanding how theorists view dialogue helps communications researchers develop more effective exchange platforms.

U.S. philosopher David Bohm believed that human mistrust stems from social conditioning and preconceived assumptions. Bohm said the primary purpose of dialogue is not to communicate but to address the blocks in communication that keep us from hearing each other (Bohm, Factor, & Garrett, 1991). During the 1960s and 1970s, Bohm worked with south Indian-born philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti to develop a framework for releasing assumptions in order to free up space to hear others and solve problems. In what some eventually began to call “Bohm Dialogue,” participants are asked to suspend “thoughts, impulses, and judgments” and focus much more on listening, observing and receiving information rather than speaking and pushing their own views and feelings (Bohm, 1996).

Paulo Freire, author of the groundbreaking *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, was an advocate for the education of impoverished and illiterate Brazilians most notably during the 1960s. In the third chapter of his seminal book, Freire focuses on dialogue, which he presents as a critical to the liberation of oppressed, illiterate people (Freire, 1970). According to Freire, in contrast to teaching what the elite want them to learn, teachers of marginalized people are at their best when they create transformative dialogues that allow students to see oppression:

Dialogue, as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lack humility. How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own? How can I dialogue if I regard

myself as a case apart from others—mere “its” in whom I cannot recognize other “I”s? How can I dialogue if I consider myself a member of the in-group of “pure” men, the owners of truth and knowledge, for whom all non-members are “these people” or “the great unwashed?” How can I dialogue if I start from the premise that naming the world is the task of an elite and that the presence of the people in history is a sign of deterioration, thus to be avoided? How can I dialogue if I am closed to—and even offended by—the contribution of others? (p. 90).

### **3.5 Hegemony**

The growing enthusiasm in academic circles over international virtual exchange is galvanized by its potential to promote peace, understanding, and greater equality among humans historically divided by national and cultural boundaries. But one of the most entrenched barriers to reaching those goals is the U.S. hegemonic system that has informed international order since the end of World War II (Cooley & Nexon, 2020).

The theory of cultural hegemony, originally defined by ancient Greek philosophers, was most thoroughly developed by 20<sup>th</sup> century social reformers such as Karl Marx in Germany and Antonio Gramsci in Italy. Understanding hegemony and how it affects student behavior and their perceptions of each other can help researchers and facilitators improve the quality and success rate of IVEs. According to Marx, a base of workers, the “substructure,” is maintained in a hegemonic society by a dominant group, the “structure” (Marx, 1867, as cited by Gramsci, 2000, p. 189). During time spent in prison, Gramsci developed comprehensive writings on inequalities embedded in the industrial and political world of his time. On the topic of hegemony, Gramsci expanded on Marxism and emphasized the idea that a dominant group gains acceptance of its

*weltanschauung*, or world view, through a hierarchical promotion of its politics, culture and rhetoric (Gramsci, 1999).

In more recent years, scholars have begun using terms such as “privilege” and “social justice” when critiquing the United States’ cultural hegemony over the rest of the world. In her 2011 book, *Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education*, Canadian scholar Vanessa Andreotti describes an “ethnocentric privileging of western rationality” and of dialectical thought that has established specific parameters of validity and recognition of what can be known and how it can be communicated (Andreotti as cited by Fourier-Sylvester, 2016, p. 44-45). Drawing from post colonialism scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein (1998) and John Willinsky (1991), Andreotti has developed an educational training tool with the acronym HEADS UP for educators, IVE facilitators and others who want to reduce inequities in intercultural exchange.

Similarly, on his YouTube channel and in his journal articles, social justice scholar Paul Gorski distinguishes between “liberal” and “critical” multicultural education (Gorski & Dalton, 2020) as well as “globalization,” “multiculturalism” and “decolonization.” Gorski argues that ethnic and racial groups have varying degrees of access to power, so when brought together for dialogue and interaction exchanges are only productive when the facilitator recognizes inequity and works to deconstruct it (Gorski, 2015)). According to Gorski, intercultural education that does not primarily strive toward “establishment and maintenance of an equitable and just world” can unintentionally create “education colonization in which equality and injustice are reproduced under the guise of interculturalism” (Gorski, 2008, p. 517).

In her 2014 *Teaching in Higher Education* journal article, “Why doesn’t this feel empowering? The challenges of web-based intercultural dialogue,” scholar Maha Bali identifies four main types of problems associated with “putting the rhetoric of web-based intercultural



dialogue into practice:” those related to the use of technology; those related to the use of dialogue as the predominant pedagogy; predominantly using the English language; and the dynamics of interculturality itself (Bali, 2014).

Using first-person commentary, Bali details her experiences working with a web-based intercultural exchange pairing students from “the Arab/Muslim world and those from the U.S./West” (Bali, 2014). Though she declines to provide the name of the program, Bali identifies it as a non-governmental organization (NGO) that offered video-conferencing discussions on topics of “identity, culture, politics, and religion” to supplement traditional university course work.

In her observations and conclusion, Bali reports that program exit interview surveys found that, generally, the program was effective and that the majority of students (74%) reported the experience “improved their abilities to express their opinions to people of other cultures.”

However, Bali argues there are still many deficiencies in digital/virtual international exchanges. Among the issues identified are 1) the question of the lingua franca for communication, 2) a digital divide of high-speed high-quality technology, 3) divergent cultural norms around dialoguing, and 4) divisions of privilege, on both “sides,” tied to gender, social class and nationality.

Like Freire, Bali argues that dialogue assumes, incorrectly, that all members have equal power to speak, but it actually privileges students comfortable with spontaneous and oral, rather than reflective and written communication. It privileges Western students generally more familiar with the idea of interactive classrooms, Bali writes, than those unfamiliar with it, such as Arabs schooled in traditional ways that discourage student participation altogether. Bali ends the piece by raising more questions in lieu of offering solutions but she does conclude that

intercultural exchanges that don't strive towards equality can unintentionally create "education colonization in which inequality and injustice are reproduced under the guise of interculturalism."

The theories presented in this chapter underlie some the most compelling inclusion and equality challenges that have emerged in international virtual exchange. Along with the review of literature on the overall growth of international virtual exchange as a platform for scaling college students' global experiences and increasing cultural competence in the previous chapter, this chapter frames the need for more research on the experiences of students from hypersegregated backgrounds who have participated in international virtual exchange. With more data, IVE scholars, facilitators and supporters will have the information they need to effectively recruit more students from under-represented populations to exchange opportunities.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

This chapter is structured as follows: The first section provides an overview of the data collection and a review of the two research questions. The next briefly covers triangulation and mixed-methods benefits and then details the two main methods used in this study: a survey and interview.

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach to data collection with an emphasis on interviews. The first stage, which lasted about four months involved the distribution and collection of data from an 18-question survey using Qualtrics. The second stage, which overlapped with the last month of the first stage, lasted about three months and consisted of a series of one-on-one interviews using Zoom. The interviews – the main data collection phase – lasted from 34 minutes to an hour and five minutes. In every case, the student opted to use their Zoom name card. I used my Zoom profile photo instead of live video. In all cases, the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded and I took notes using her interview guide. In addition, data from archives from TopHat, the student engagement platform used in two large-scale exchanges I co-facilitated, and my own experiences as an African-American female studying and living abroad in four countries informed the study. The Georgia State Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (Appendix F) was given for all procedures for and amendments to this study.

### 4.1 Data Collection Overview

This study uses several methods to answer the research questions. A mixed-method study can involve intersections in replication of a specific inquiry, intersection within a single method, and intersections between quantitative and qualitative methods (Benoit & Holbert, 2008). In addition, mixed methods research offers richer insights into the phenomenon being studied and

allows the capture of information that might be missed by utilizing only one research design, enhances the body of knowledge, and generates more questions of interest for future studies that can handle a wider range of research questions because the researcher is not limited to one research design (Caruth, 2013). Using a *triangulation* scheme (Figure 4.1), I applied horizontal and vertical filters to the data to help reduce the replication of design flaws and validity and reliability concerns. Triangulation allows for a more comprehensive study with intersections in replication of a specific inquiry, intersection within a single method, and intersections between quantitative and qualitative methods (Benoit & Holbert, 2008). I developed the matrix from a model for multi-method studies taught in an action research methods course by GSU Education and Policy Studies Professor Janice Fournillier and presented in a 2012 journal article on action research by Pier Junor Clarke, a GSU Clinical Professor in Secondary Math Instruction and Research (Clarke & Fournillier, 2012).

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Sample</b>
Does participation in an international virtual exchange influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from underrepresented groups in study abroad?	Survey(Secondary), Interview (Primary)	Survey Population (Includes Interview Participants)
In what ways do IVEs expand a student's identity, self-efficacy, and cultural competence in the global world?	Survey (Secondary), Interview (Primary)	Interview Participants

**Figure 4.1** *Triangulation of Study Research Questions*

## 4.2 Survey

A survey is a system for collecting information (Keyton). The two most critical features of survey are the sample and the survey instrument (Singleton & Straights). Because of advances in technology, surveys are now solicited by email and text as well as through traditional methods such as shopping malls and telephone contact. The survey is a popular approach because it allows for the collection of quantifiable data using closed-ended questions and Likert-type scales. By quantifying responses, researchers are able to be very precise in their analyses. Another advantage of this tool is that, in contrast to time consuming qualitative focus groups and interviews, surveys allow researchers to collect data from a large number of participants in much less time.

### 4.2.1 Survey Sample

The study's target population was U.S. college students who were FG or BIPOC, had experienced some hypersegregation before starting college, and had completed an international virtual exchange between 2018 and 2021. The full target population for this study was very small and finding participants was challenging because of but not limited to the following:

1. International virtual exchange is relatively new practice;
2. It's hard to track IVEs since many are still professor-to-professor collaborations;
3. Per guidelines established by IRB and the participating schools or IVE organizations, I had to depend on faculty to distribute survey invitations in all cases except for the former student participants of two exchanges she co-facilitated.

### **4.2.2 Survey Instrument**

The 18-question survey instrument was distributed to more than 300 undergraduate student at three large, diverse universities in the South and Midwest who had completed a virtual exchange. It had three basic functions: 1) to gather sociodemographic information that would provide background on participants in the interview phase, 2) to obtain initial feedback on the students' rating of their overall exchange experience and 3) to identify those who were willing to participate in a 45-60-minute virtual interview about their personal experiences and views about intercultural exchanges with students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The final sample was  $N = 42$ .

The survey began with a consent form that detailed the voluntary nature of the survey, confidentiality, benefits and risks and contact information for myself, my department and the university's institutional review board. If a student provided consent, they were then asked two member-checking questions followed by three questions designed to determine more about the type of exchanges the student engaged in and how often. After those questions, respondents were asked to rate their overall IVE experience on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "very unsatisfied" and 5 being "very satisfied."

The last 12 questions were either socio-demographic or designed to determine the student's pre-college exposure to diversity and international travel.

### **4.2.3 Survey Procedure**

Qualified students at U.S. universities were identified by emailing IVE directors, facilitators and scholars at GSU and several other southeastern and mid-western universities as well as through IVE organizations such as UNICollaboration, the International Virtual Exchange Conference (IVEC), and the SUNY Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Center.

The email to the professors and facilitators (Appendix C) introduced the study and included a prepared invitation to forward to recent, first-time international virtual exchange participants. Once received by the students, the email (Appendix D) invited them to take an optional 5-7-minute survey accessed through a link and QR code at the bottom that would help the IVE community at (name of participating universities) improve their understanding of online collaborative exchange in the global context.

To increase the survey's validity, I piloted an early version of the survey during which GSU cohorts, fellow UNICollaboration graduate student interest group members and participants in the AGSC's Faculty Community on Virtual Exchange monthly webinars were asked to give feedback regarding its questions, length and wording.

### **4.3 Interview**

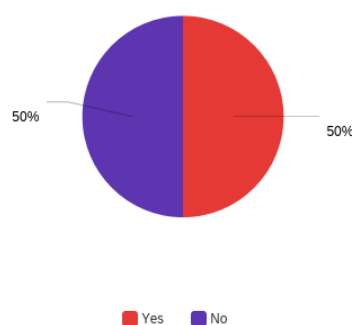
Interviews give researchers the chance to get to know participants and follow up on specific responses. As a method of inquiry, qualitative researchers contend, the interview is most consistent in allowing interviewees to make meaning through language (Seidman, 2019). Interviews also provide an opportunity to collect data on complex issues and views that simply cannot be observed (Keyton, p. 291; Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). Challenges of interviewing include development of good questions and the management of personality differences that may make it hard to stay focused or to get someone to open up and share.

#### ***4.3.1 Interview Recruitment and Procedure***

As the survey link and QR code were circulated, I began analyzing respondent data, particularly of those who said they were willing to participate in a 45-60-minute interview about their exchange experiences. Half of the 40 survey respondents who answered the question chose not to provide their names and emails and/or phones in an interview, even after a \$10 Amazon e-

giftcard was increased to \$20 Amazon in February upon approval by IRB. This may have been because the surveys were distributed in November and December of 2021, right before the holidays, and in January 2022, when the spring semester was starting. The compensation also may have been a factor as it was initially set at \$10. In contrast, recent studies have offered up to \$45 or more in gift cards and other forms of compensation (e.g. Seid, 2021).

Survey respondents (N = 40) who replied "Yes" or "No" to the following question: "Would you be willing to participate in a 45-60 minute virtual interview about your personal experiences and views about intercultural exchanges with students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, if invited? All interview participants will receive a \$20 Amazon e-gift card immediately upon completion of the interview."



**Figure 4.2** Percent of survey respondents who said they would be willing to participate in an interview if contacted

Aiming to inform the research questions and purpose of the study, I then began a sociodemographic coding of the data from the 20 students who said they would be willing to participate in an interview to provide their names, email addresses, and/or phone numbers. In the coding, I also earmarked all students who responded that:

1. They had “never traveled outside my country.”
2. They had never participated in a study abroad program.



3. The neighborhood(s) they “grew up in before going to college” was “homogenous” where they shared “the same racial or ethnic background with 90% of other residents.”
4. The racial and ethnic diversity they experienced in school, place of worship and part-time jobs before going to college was “homogeneous” where the respondent shared “the same racial or ethnic background with 90% or more of the other residents.”
5. Their mother’s or father’s education was “unknown,” they did not finish high school, or the highest degree earned was a high school diploma.

After the survey analysis and coding, I sent emails (Appendix E) to all of the students, thanking them for agreeing to an interview and then asked them to select three time slots on a Doodle scheduling document. Because the first stage of the study was conducted immediately following a winter break, more than one email was sent to some students and, for those who approved the contact option in the survey, texts were also sent.

To prepare for the interviews, I developed a semi-structured interview guide (Figure 4.3; Appendix B) informed by combining online interviewing protocols developed by Seidman (2019), Galletta (2013), and Salmons (2011) and questions developed after a pilot interview with a Canada-based academic cohort who had participated in an IVE in 2019. The purpose of the pilot study was to try out the interview guide and questions, identify flaws or limitations of the interview design and make modifications and improve the interview protocol before conducting the main study (Majid, Othman, Mohamad, Lim & Yusof, 2017; Turner, 2010; Kvale, 2007).

**Questions/Comments**

On a scale of one to five you gave it a [score here]. Why did you rate it a [score]?

What effect, if any, did this exchange have on your view of (Chinese and Hong Kong; counterparts') culture?

What effect, if any, did this exchange have on your view of our culture in the United States?

Did this experience, in any way, influence your interest in foreign language study?

Now, thinking not just about yourself but anyone living, working, attending school in mostly homogenous settings most of their lives, what kind of effect, if any, do you think participating in exchanges would have on them? Please discuss potential benefits and problems that you see.

***Figure 4.3 Interview Guide Excerpt*****Line of Inquiry/Focus**

*At this point, begin exploring RQ1:*

*Does participation in an international virtual exchange influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from underrepresented groups in study abroad?*

After the pilot interview, I began the interview process. Though coding with yes/no responses of the 20 students to the five questions was conducted to identify qualified candidates, all six students who agreed to schedule interviews met at least three of the qualifications so no potential interviewee was declined for the study. The interviews were conducted over a six-week period using Zoom. They lasted from 34 minutes to 1 hour and five minutes. In every case, the student used the Zoom name card and I used my Zoom profile photo instead of live video. In all cases, the interviews were recorded, and I took notes using the interview guide I designed for the study that juxtaposed interview questions next to notes outlining: the related research question(s), the aligning theories that underpin the questions and the overall general lines of inquiry. All interviews were informed by participants' responses to the preliminary survey.

While there is not consensus on ideal sample size for studies using in-depth, semi-structured interviews, recent articles and prominent scholars have suggested from four to 20 for those studies seeking a balance of margin-of-error reduction attained from larger sample sizes with the validity created around a low number of in-depth, phenomenological interviews seeking to gather deep detail around participants lived experiences (Cobert & Adams, 2020; Baker & Edwards, 2012; Seidman, 2006). While the survey sample of six (and one pilot) is on the lower end, all interviewees also completed a survey designed by the researcher to screen interview candidates. In addition, my personal experiences and a review of some of the GSU-based students' archived exchange communication allowed for thorough multi-level triangulation and data checking during the data collection phases.

## 5 SURVEY FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings from the survey (Appendix G). It is divided into three sections. The first section (Demographics) includes a summary of descriptive findings of demographic questions about age, gender, year in school and major or intended major area of study. The second section (IVE Experience and Format Feedback) presents results from a question about the participant's overall satisfaction with their IVE as well as results from four questions focusing on questions about frequency, technology and additional opportunities to connect with their international exchange counterparts. The third section (Hypersegregation, Travel Experience, First- or Continuing-Generation College) reports the findings from six questions designed to determine the students' previous travel, and parent and guardian educational background.

Most of the data are illustrated with a table or graph. The questions on the survey did not appear in this order but, rather, in a format that allowed for the most logical line of questioning. Although 43 students filled out the survey three were eliminated after the second question because they indicated that they had not participated in an IVE. Therefore, the total number of respondents is  $N = 40$ . Under each survey question, and in the descriptive section, a total number of respondents is included.

### 5.1 Demographics

A little more than half of the survey respondents were seniors, about a third were juniors and the remaining 13.5% were sophomores. No freshmen completed the survey. This suggests that the respondents all had spent at least a year virtually or on an integrated college campus setting, since all of the participants attended large, racially-diverse universities.

## 1

**Table 5.1** *What is your student classification?*

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Freshman	0.00%	0
2	Sophomore	13.52%	5
3	Junior	32.43%	12
4	Senior	54.05%	20
	Total	100%	37

Note: N = 37.

Because an open-ended field was used to record age, the only available Qualtrics illustration was a word cloud. Therefore, I prepared a separate table for age. To calculate the mean, media and mode age of the sample, data were exported to Excel and Google sheets spreadsheets. The average age of the participants who reported their college classification was 24.6 years. The mode was 20 and the median was 22. The youngest participant was age 19, and five of the students were age 30 or older, including ages 30, 34, 41, 41, and 50.

**Table 5.2** *What is your age?*

Age	%	Count
19	5.7%	2
20	22.8%	8
21	14.4%	5
22	14.4%	5
23	5.7%	2

24	8.6%	3
26	2.8%	1
28	8.6%	3
29	5.7%	2
34	2.8%	1
41	5.7%	2
50	2.8%	1
Total	100%	35

Note: N = 35.

**Table 5.3** *What is your gender? (Optional).*

Answer #	Answer	%	Count
1	Male	27.50%	11
2	Female	62.50%	25
3	Non-Binary	7.50%	3
4	Prefer Not to Say	2.50%	1
5	Prefer to Self-Describe	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40.

Survey respondents were asked to choose from a list of options describing their “race or ethnic background.” They were told to “check all the boxes that apply.” A little more than half of the respondents selected *Caucasian* to describe their race or ethnicity. Of the remaining responses, those with more than one answers, 17.5% indicated that they were *African American*,

10% said they were *Latinx or Hispanic*, and 7.5% chose *Asian*. The other six responses were as follows: *Native American*, *Other or Unknown*, *Prefer Not to Say*, *Caucasian and Latinx*, *Caucasian and Asian*, *Caucasian*, *Latinx and Native American*. Table 5.1.4 lists all the responses, including those of students who chose two or more backgrounds.

**Table 5.4** Which best describes your race or ethnic background? Please check all the boxes that apply.

Answer #	Ethnic Background(s) selected	%	Count
1	Caucasian	50%	20
2	African American	17.5%	7
3	Latinx or Hispanic	10%	4
4	Asian	7.5%	3
5	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%	0
6	Native American	2.5%	1
7	Other or Unknown	2.5%	1
8	Prefer Not to Say	2.5%	1
	<i>Caucasian/Latinx</i>	2.5%	1
	<i>Caucasian/Asian</i>	2.5%	1
	<i>Caucasian/Latinx/Native American</i>	2.5%	1
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40. Three respondents selected more than one description. Their responses appear at the bottom in italics.

Survey participants were asked to select a category that best defines their major or intended major area of study. Of the 40 who responded, 14 (35%) said they were education majors and 9 (22.50%) selected Humanities and Arts as their primary interest area in school. An equal number 6 (15%) indicated their major or intended major was Business or STEM. The remaining respondents chose Health Professions (5%), Political Science (5%) and Law (1%) as their primary university interest area.

**Table 5.5** Please select your primary interest area at (your university).

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Business	15.00%	6
2	Education	35.00%	14
3	Health Professions	5.00%	2
4	Humanities & Arts	22.50%	9
5	Law	2.50%	1
6	Political Science	5.00%	2
7	STEM	15.00%	6
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40. The most popular major or intended major area of study was education followed by arts and humanities.

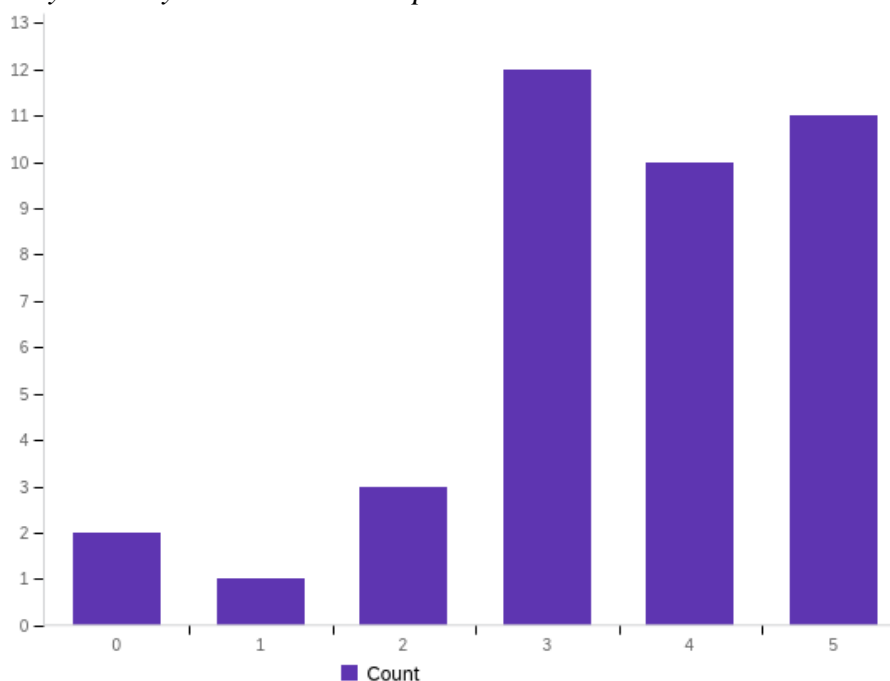
## 5.2 IVE Experience and Format Feedback

When asked to rate their IVE experience, a majority of survey participants indicated they were “satisfied” (n = 10) or “very satisfied” (n = 11) with their overall IVE experience. Two of the participants did not move the slide on the survey barometer so their results were reported as “0.” One of the two was contacted and he indicated that he would have chosen “very satisfied.”



Table 5.2.1 is a bar graph visualization of their responses. However, his response was reported as “0.

**Table 5.6** *On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "very unsatisfied" and 5 being "very satisfied," how would you rate your overall IVE experience?*



Note: N = 39

I wanted to know if the students had had a synchronous (real-time), face-to-face exchange with their counterparts. While there are some advantages to asynchronous (non-real-time) communication, I also wanted to know if a participant had experienced at least one synchronous exchange. This is because research has shown that synchronous virtual meetings allow for non-verbal cues around body language and expressions and are more interactive and personalized (Racheva, 2018). Results showed that 35 of the 40 respondents said they participated in at least one video chat with students outside of the United States.

**Table 5.7** *In your IVE, did you participate in at least one video chat (using a platform similar to Zoom) with students from a country or territory that is not part of the United States?*

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	87.50%	35
2	No	12.50%	5
3	Do Not Recall	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40.

The respondents who said they had participated in a video chat were asked to report the approximate number. This was done so I could learn more about the degree of engagement each student had in their exchange. All survey participants who indicated they had participated in a video chat responded to this question. Of that number, 11 said they had participated in 1-2 exchanges, 15 said they had 3-4 and 9 said they had participated in five or more.

**Table 5.8** *How many video chats would you say you participated in as part of your IVE?*

#	Answer	%	Count
1	1-2	31.43%	11
2	3-4	42.86%	15
3	5 or More	25.71%	9
	Total	100%	35

Note: N = 35.

Yet another question relating to the technology and engagement of the exchange asked respondents to indicate if their exchanges included communication options beyond virtual

conferencing. More than two thirds of the survey participants said their IVE included other exchange experiences.

**Table 5.9** *Did your IVE include any other exchange experiences -- e.g. DMs, phone, Dropbox sharing, etc. -- besides video chat(s)?*

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	67.50%	27
2	Yes, But Do Not Recall Platform Name/Many Details	12.50%	5
4	Not Sure/Do Not Recall If Exchange Included Communication Beyond Video Conferencing	15.00%	6
6	No	5.00%	2
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40.

In the last question about exchange engagement, all respondents who indicated that they communicated with their exchange partners using experiences besides video chat were asked to describe the platform(s) used. This was the longest short answer question on the survey.

**Table 5.10** *If you answered "Yes" to (the previous question), please describe what you do remember about the other exchange experience(s) you had with international students.*

we provided feedback on some of their school work projects that were sent to us

There was a group messaging platform we used to plan the meetings
Direct Messages & Group Chat
Top Hat instant messaging

We used Facebook messenger to converse.

---

asynchronous discussion forums

---

Whatsapp, d2L

---

email, dms

---

Whats App

---

We started an independent WhatsApp account to communication outside our set meetings.

---

WeChat as well as Instagram and Twitter.

---

Whats App

---

LINE, email

---

We used WeChat to talk in a group chat and one on one with the other students

---

Whats App and Padlet

---

Email & Whats App

---

I virtually collaborated with international students using the online Google suite of tools (Docs, Slides, etc.) as well as coordinating using WhatsApp

---

My groupmates from the exchange coordinated with me on Facebook and WhatsApp.

---

Flipgrid videos - we didn't chat live like on Zoom, but we posted videos and responded to each others'.

---

It was hard to get everyone responding at the same time, I believe due to time zones. But everyone did talk about slack and it was fun!

---

I was able to use a video-sharing platform (though I cannot recall the name) in order to post informational videos, watch other students' videos, and comment and communicate with them about the information that we learned.

---

we messaged one another when needing information previously discussed

---

Email correspondence about meeting times.

---

We chatted ac lot on GroupMe. And we had various zoom meetings.

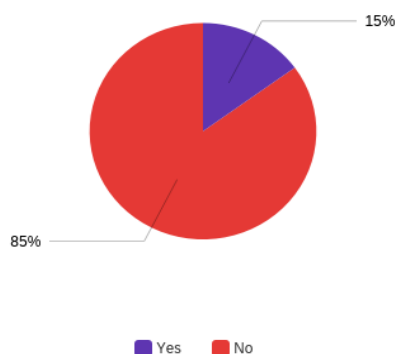
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On Top Hat community we could all chat and plan when the video chats were. But most people were not very active and it was difficult to plan the meetings. Many people from the US did not join the chats. Instructions were also not very clear on how to actually join the program

### 5.3 Hypersegregation, Travel, First- or Continuing-Generation College

The survey included six questions designed to determine the students' previous travel, parent and guardian educational background, and degree of hypersegregation of the neighborhood(s) and community(ies) in which they were raised.

Six of the 40 respondents said they had already participated in a study abroad program. This means that, for the majority of the respondents, their IVE was the first or one of the first international exchange experiences with other students.

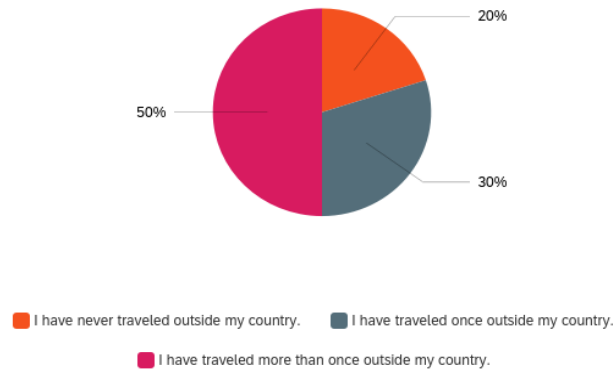


**Figure 5.1** *Have you ever participated in a study abroad program?*

Note: N = 40.

Half of all survey participants said that they had travelled more than once outside the United States and 30 percent had traveled once outside the country. This indicates that although 85% of the survey group had not participated in an IVE, the majority had been outside the United States. It is worth noting that three of the four interview participants

who had traveled outside the country said they had done so as immigrants with their family to the United States or to visit relatives in another country.



**Figure 5.2** Which option best describes your international travel experience?

Note: N= 40.

All participants were asked to provide information about their parent(s) or guardian(s) highest level of education, if they knew the answer. All of the respondents indicated that they knew their mother's highest level of education. Results showed that 40% indicated their mother had not gone beyond high school diploma or GED education, 7.5% had attained an associate's degree, 25% had a bachelor's, 22.5% had a master's and 5% had a Ph.D. or M.D.

**Table 5.11** Which option best describes your mother's highest level of education?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Did not finish high school	10.00%	4
2	High School Diploma or GED	30.00%	12

4	Associate's Degree	7.50%	3
5	Bachelor's Degree	25.00%	10
6	Master's Degree	22.50%	9
8	Ph.D./M.D.	5.00%	2
9	Unknown	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40.

The participants also were asked to provide information about their father or male guardian(s) highest level of education, if they knew the answer. In the reports, 38 of the 40 participants indicated they knew father's highest level of education. Of that number, 52% indicated their father had not gone beyond a high school diploma or GED for their education, 2.5% had an associate's degree, 11% had attained a bachelor's degree, 10% had a master's and 5% had a Ph.D. or M.D.

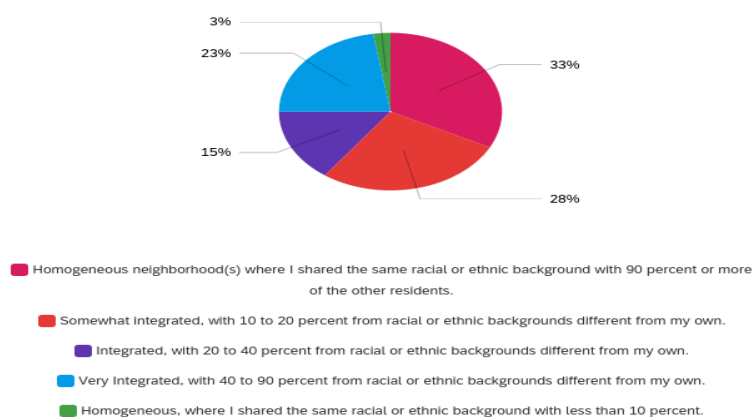
**Table 5.12** Which option best describes your father's highest level of education?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Did not finish high school	12.50%	5
2	High School Diploma or GED	37.50%	15
3	Associate's Degree	2.50%	1
4	Bachelor's Degree	27.50%	11
5	Master's Degree	10.00%	4
6	Ph.D./M.D.	5.00%	2
7	Unknown	5.00%	2
	Total	100%	40

Note: N = 40.

In addition to travel experience and parent or guardian educational background, this study attempted to gather information about each respondent's degree of hypersegregation in the neighborhood(s) and community(ies) in which they were raised.

More than half the respondents (N = 40) said they grew in a homogeneous (33%) or somewhat integrated (20%) neighborhood(s). In addition, 15% said they grew up in an integrated neighborhood and 23% said they grew up in very integrated neighborhood. One of the respondents indicated that they grew up in a homogeneous neighborhood where they shared the same racial or ethnic background with *less than* 10% of the population.



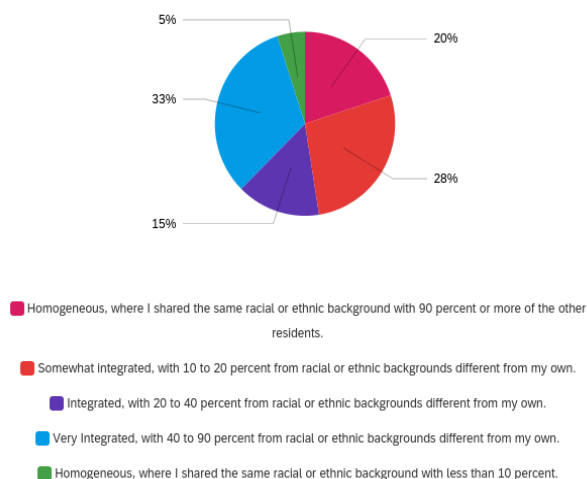
**Figure 5.3** We would like to know more about the racial and ethnic makeup of the neighborhood(s) in which you grew up before going to college. Please select the choice that comes closest to describing your overall experience.

Note: N= 40.

Lastly, when asked about the overall racial and ethnic diversity in the community(s) where they were raised just under half the respondents (48%) said they lived, worked and went to school in a homogeneous (20%) or somewhat integrated (28%) community(s). In addition, 15% said they grew up in an integrated community and 33% said they lived in a very integrated



community. Two of the respondents indicated that they grew up in a homogeneous community where they shared the same racial or ethnic background with *less than* 10% of the population.



**Figure 5.4** We would like to know more about the overall racial and ethnic diversity you experienced -- in school, place of worship and part-time jobs -- before going to college. Please select the choice that comes closest to describing your experience.

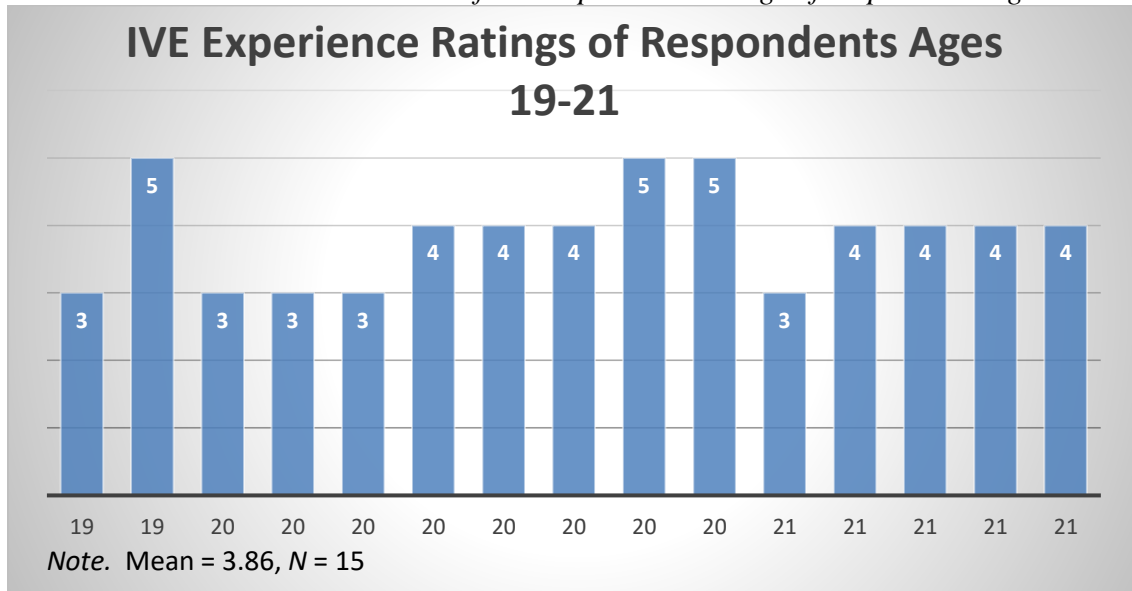
Note: N= 40.

## 5.4 Cross Tabulations of Key Variables

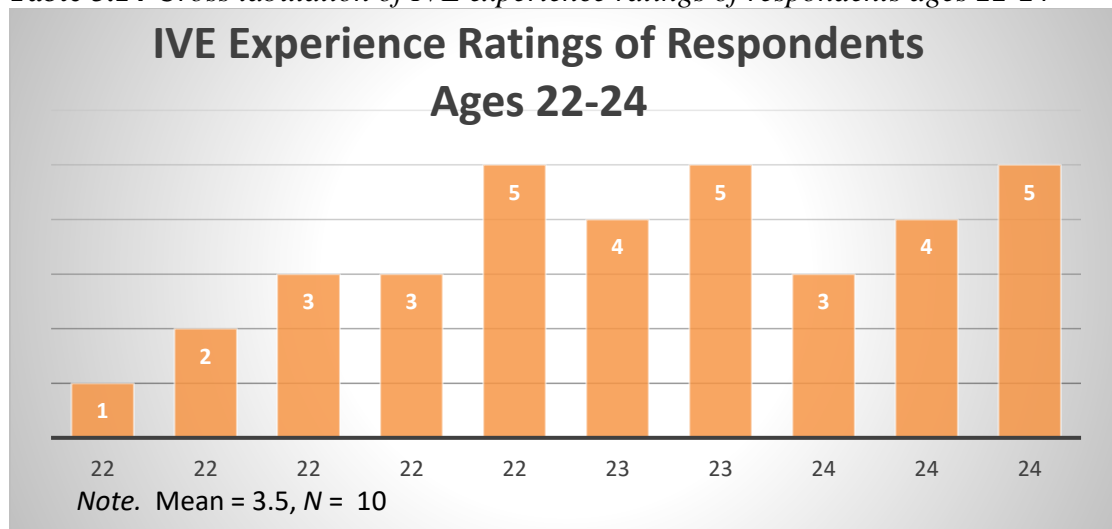
While the primary purpose of the survey was to recruit recent IVE participants from underrepresented and hypersegregated backgrounds, I conducted a few cross tabulations of the survey findings after the survey and interview phases were complete to explore possible relationships between key demographic variables and a participant's 1-5 rating of their international virtual exchange experience. To do this, I exported data from the Qualtrics database to an Excel spreadsheet. I then removed all partially completed surveys from the list. Next, she formatted the data into a table and calculated the sums and averages for all numeric data. After that, sI inserted charts and graphs as recommended by the spreadsheet software.

The first cross tabulations of IVE experience ratings from participants who completed all questions of the survey were computed for the age groups of 19-21, 22-24 and 25 and older (Tables 5.3.6, 5.3.7., 5.3.8) . In a review of the interview data, I also conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test of the three age groups to determine if there was any significant difference in the three age groups' average ratings of their IVE experience. Though the study aimed to answer questions about hypersegregated students' experiences, the participants' ages ranged from 19 to 50 so an ANOVA test – using averages to create equal counts – allowed me to look at whether a quantitative variable, age, might have been a factor in how the students perceived their IVEs. The test revealed a p-value of 0.4312, indicating that there were no statistically significant differences in the numbers.

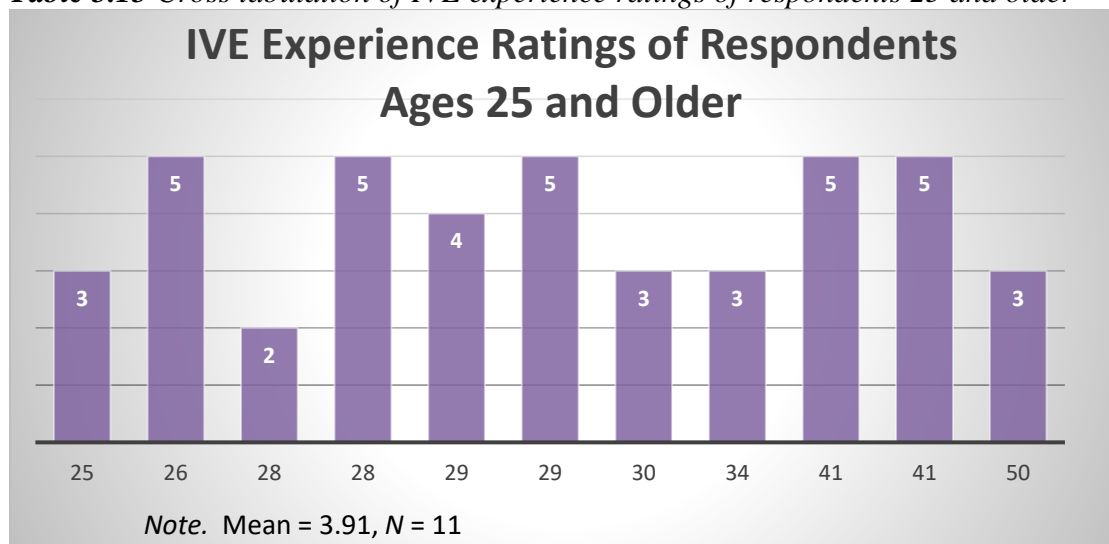
**Table 5.13** Cross tabulation of IVE experience ratings of respondents ages 19-21



**Table 5.14** Cross tabulation of IVE experience ratings of respondents ages 22-24

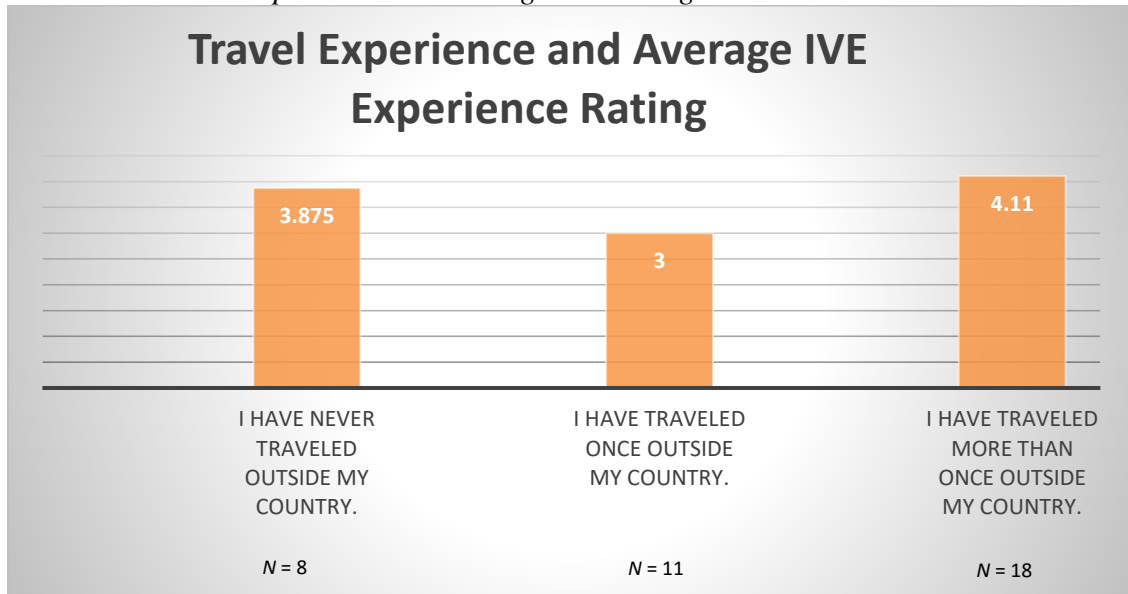


**Table 5.15** Cross tabulation of IVE experience ratings of respondents 25 and older

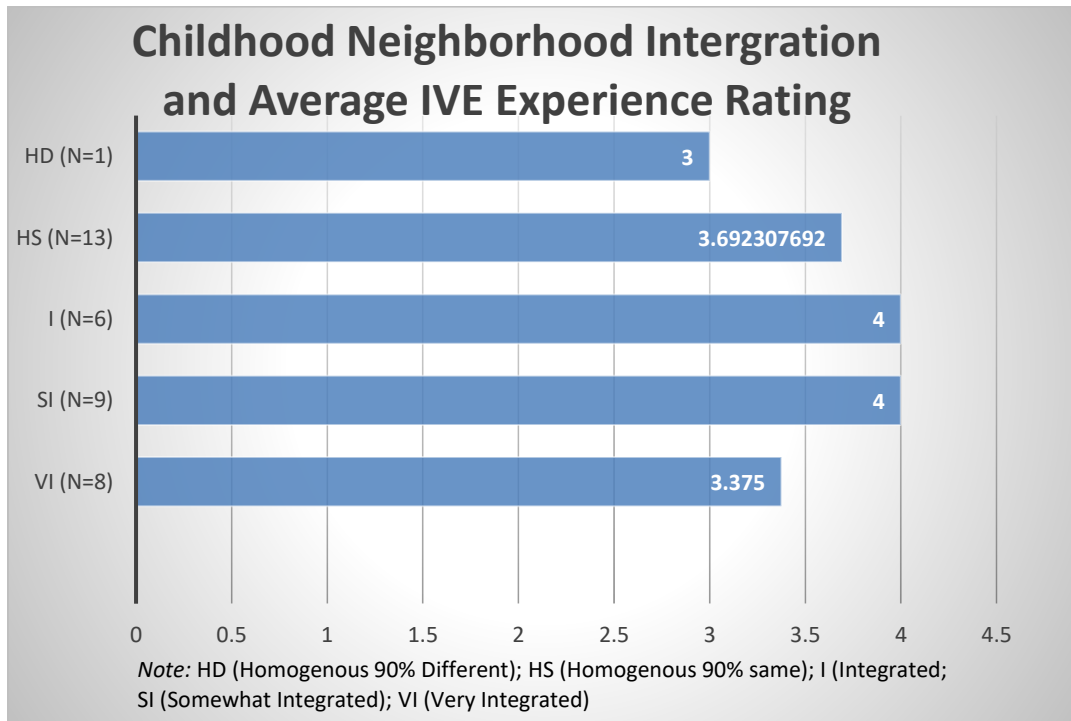


To explore the possibility of a significant correlation between travel experience and how the students felt about their IVEs, I created tables of both the average IVE ratings of participants by travel abroad experience (Table 5.3.9) and by childhood neighborhood integration (Table 5.3.10). For the general survey population in this study, there was no significant correlation between travel experience and IVE ratings. In addition, the table focusing on hypersegregation and IVE ratings suggests no relationship between hypersegregation and a participant's IVE rating. For instance, the 14 participants who said they grew up in "integrated" or "very integrated" neighborhoods rated their IVE experience at an average of 3.642 while the 13 participants who said they grew up in "homogenous neighborhoods where 90% or more of the residents had the same racial or ethnic background" produced an average 3.6973 IVE experience rating. Because of the design of this study, only six of the survey participants, in the end, agreed to an interview, I did not conduct further analysis of this data. However, the findings are addressed, again, in Chapter 7.

**Table 5.16** Travel experience and average IVE rating



*rating* **Table 5.17** Childhood neighborhood integration and average IVE experience



## 6 INTERVIEWS FINDINGS

The previous chapter presented the data findings from the survey. This chapter will present profiles of the six interview participants who are all, in some way, the face of underrepresented students in IVE review. It will then cover the findings from the conversations with the participants and what the data from the survey, interviews, archives review, and my own international exchange experiences tell us about the research questions.

### 6.1 Sociodemographic Characteristics of Interview Participants

The final six interviewees were representative of the larger survey population in general demographics. They ranged from ages 19 to 50 and included three sophomores, two juniors, and a senior (Table 6.1.1). Each had a different major or intended area of study: education, humanities, health, STEM, business, and political science. None had studied abroad but four had traveled outside of the country, all more than once.

The group was racially, culturally and ethnically diverse. Included were a white male of Jewish heritage, a 50-year-old white female, a Latino of Mexican heritage, a 29-year-old African American male, and two Asian females, one with roots in India and the other from the Philippines. Half of the six had parents or guardians who had not gone past high school in their education, including one whose father's academic background was unknown. Lastly, two of the six lived in hypersegregated neighborhood(s) and one in a somewhat integrated neighborhood before going to college. One of the participants was raised in hypersegregated communities (school, work, house of worship, public institutions) and one in a community where 90% or more

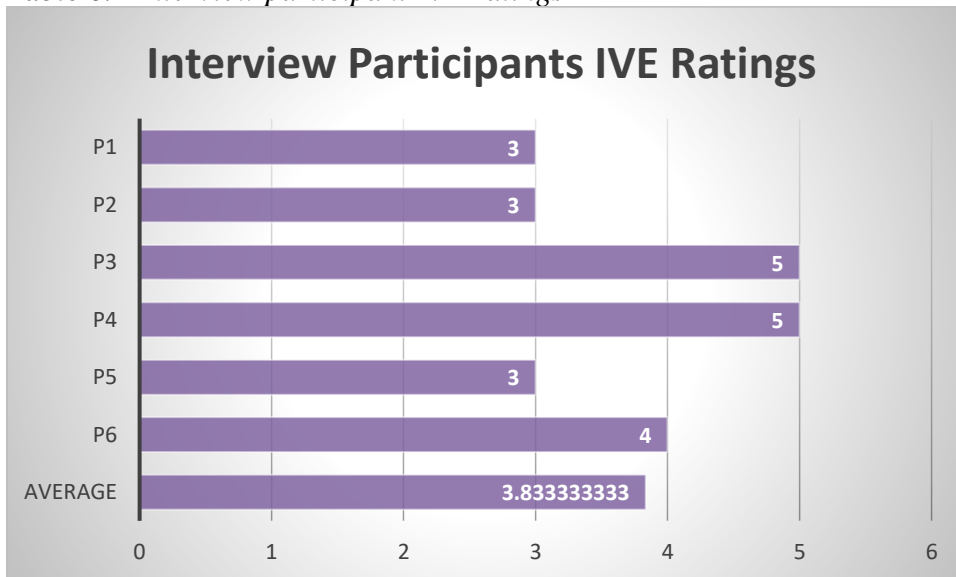
of the people were of a homogenous racial or ethnic background *different from* the participant's own.

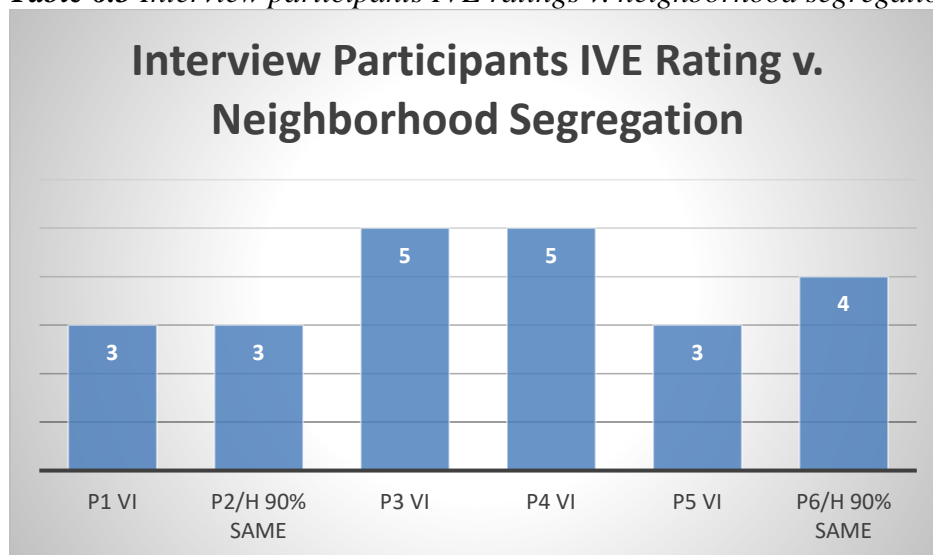
**Table 6.1 Sociodemographic Characteristics of Interview Participants**

**Table 1**  
*Sociodemographic Characteristics of Interview Participants*

Student	Age	Gender	Race/ethnicity	College class	Major/area of study	Study abroad	Intl travel	Mother's highest education	Father's highest education	Neighborhood diversity before college	Community diversity before college	How rate IVE experience
P1	19	M	W	Soph	Education	N	N	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	S Integrated	V Integrated	3
P2	50	F	W	Junior	Humanities	N	1+	HS D	Associate's	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	3
P3	19	F	Asian	Soph	Health	N	1+	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	V Integrated	V Integrated	5
P4	23	M	Latino	Soph	STEM	N	1+	HS D	No HS Diploma	V Integrated	V Integrated	5
P5	21	F	Asian	Senior	Business	N	1+	Master's	Ph.D.	V Integrated	Homogenous 10% or less same	3
P6	29	M	B	Junior	Poly Sc	N	N	HS D	Unknown	Homogenous 90%+ same	V Integrated	4

**Table 6.2 Interview participant IVE ratings**



**Table 6.3** Interview participants IVE ratings v. neighborhood segregation

## 6.2 Interview Themes

The interview findings suggest that participation in an international virtual exchange can positively affect a student's interest in the global world. All of the participants in this study said their exchange experience influenced their interest in at least one of the three areas explored: international travel; global careers, working or volunteering abroad; and generally learning more about people from other cultures. To explore ways IVEs increase students' interest in the global world the researcher used a six-step guide developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to identify themes in the interviews and exchange archives.

### 6.2.1 *Virtual Connections Beyond the Classroom*

While virtual exchange provides a structured platform for student interaction and sharing, many of the more engaged students took steps to establish and maintain friendships outside of the IVE space. In a Spring 2021 exchange platform co-facilitated by the researcher,



for example, a student from Hong Kong contacted an African-American female cohort in the U.S. and asked if she would share her Instagram account “for more convenient communication” after having trouble connecting on the course-provided platform. She replied with her profile name and the two ended up being among the most active posters in their group, indicating a possible connection beyond the structured exchange. Later in the semester, the group again broke out of the mold of meeting on a virtual platform and, instead, chose to use YouTube to develop an entertaining, edited video presentation about their course topics. Other students in the exchanged swapped email addresses, even working around government fire walls, to share recipes and YouTube music clips.

Interview Participant #1 (P1), a 19-year-old student who grew up in a mostly Jewish community and had never traveled outside of the United States, said he has always followed

**Participant #1**

**Age:** 19

**Gender ID:** Male

**Ethnicity:** White/Jewish|

**Area of Study:** Education

**Mother’s Highest Education:** Bachelor’s

**Father’s Highest Education:** Bachelor’s

**Study Abroad:** None

**International Travel:** Never

**Childhood Neighborhood(s):** Predominantly Jewish, Somewhat Integrated

**Childhood Community(s):** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 3

people from all over the world on Instagram. But he said participating in an IVE gave him a chance to develop friendships with people in another country who, like him, had never traveled outside their countries and then sustain it on the social media site.

He said he is keeping in touch with several of his IVE friends now on Instagram:

We’re at a time now where people are better about separating the government from the people. There’s now easier international communication. On Instagram, people all over the world are posting and sharing.

Indeed, the potential exists for students to post screen shots of their exchanges – several produced straight-face-then-funny shots – and other images and comments about their IVE

experiences on social media platforms. Consequently, the student-initiated moves to connect virtually beyond the classroom that P1 mentions inadvertently exposed virtual exchange to a larger, more diverse audience, including those not currently enrolled in a college or university. P1 said he that he has never been interested in study abroad because of the cost, planning and potential delay to graduation. “It’s such a large commitment,” he said. But now that he has participated in an IVE, P1 said he thinks a lot more about international travel and is even curious about a person’s background when he meets someone with an accent. Said P1, “I think almost all communication helps peace building.”

### **6.2.2 Bias Reduction**

All six interviewees reported not only bias reduction in pre-conceived notions about their exchange counterparts but also an increased affinity for people from other another part of the world. In addition, the students most engaged on the platform threads expressed “mutual” empathy around being students juggling exam studies and paper deadlines. These sentiments supported the overarching ideas underlying Allport’s contact theory (1954) and Gaertner and Dovidio’s related common ingroup identity and recategorization theories (Gaertner et al. 2005).

Participant #4 (P4), a 23-year-old Latino whose mother has a high school diploma and father did not finish high school, described his experience as “awesome” and “eye opening” because, without even leaving home, he could immerse in another culture and language with friends thousands of miles away. Raised in a Mexican-American neighborhood in Chicago, P4

#### **Participant #4**

**Age:** 23

**Gender ID:** M

**Ethnicity:** Latino

**Area of Study:** STEM

**Mother’s Highest Education:** High School Diploma

**Father’s Highest Education:** Did Not Finish High School

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** 2+

**Childhood Neighborhood:** Very Integrated

**Childhood Community:** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 5

said some of the exchange, which was often conducted on the Chinese social media site WeChat, was actually more like people watching. For instance, he said his Chinese exchange partners shared pictures of *Gundam* plastic model kits and dishes they had made or eaten. After the semester ended, he said he had a renewed interest in recipes for *luosifen*, a popular Chinese dish known for its pungent smell. Said P4, “It was a lot similar to people watching without leaving home.”

Participant #5 (P5), a 21-year-old business student and daughter of immigrants united in an arranged marriage in Delhi, India, said she had “always known about” the greater Asian world but she found the exchange still rewarding because it offered her direct connections with people

**Participant #5**

**Age:** 21

**Gender ID:** F

**Ethnicity:** Asian

**Area of Study:** Business

**Mother’s Highest Education:** Master’s

**Father’s Highest Education:** Ph.D.

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** 2+

**Childhood Neighborhood:** Very Integrated

**Childhood Community:** Homogenous 10%-less

**IVE Experience Rating:** 3

living in another country:

Once you talk to a person directly, it makes you have a different perspective of the world..... A lot of people think people in different countries are so different but when you talk to them to you realize you have a lot in common. We are all people, we are all the same, we are going through the same stuff.

### 6.2.3 *Color Matters*

Growing up in a mostly Black, impoverished neighborhood in the South Participant #6 (P6), 29, felt relatively fortunate. He and his mother lived with her parents, who owned their home. His grandfather was a respected pastor and community leader and Sunday mornings revolved around dressing up for a day of worship, fellowship and big meals with his extended church family. Though his first three years were in de facto segregated schools, P6 was tapped for a racially-diverse magnet school and it was there that he first met kids and teachers – including one African-American mentor – who talked about their travels and places they wanted to go next. “Travel is much more talked about in those diverse settings than in other neighborhoods,” he said. “I remember dreaming of wanting to visit Japan or The Netherlands and other places.”

By the time he was in high school, however, P6 said he had begun to understand that his grandparents probably didn’t have the resources to send him off to Western Europe or Eastern Asia. And he also had developed a greater consciousness of the role his skin color played in how people in the United States and other countries might view and treat him:

Most documentaries and the blogs on the Internet I read were very much white people traveling. As a Black American, you always wonder how Black people are perceived in other countries.

Like P6 growing up in the South, P4 said he dreamed of going to Russia one day when he was growing up in Chicago. P4, who describes himself as a “brown-skinned *mestizo*,” said that sentiment changed, though, when he mentioned his interest to his new bosses at a Russian-owned business where he worked part-time in the IT department. He said they warned him that he might not have the same experience as his white-skinned U.S. counterparts. They described

the gang members of the *gopota* subculture in suburban Russia and said they might target him because of his phenotype.

They said I would have to go to hugely populated cities in order to remain safe.

They made it clear they knew that some of them might be offended at the sight of someone not their skin color.

The experiences and views of Mexican-American P4 and African-American P6 are those held by many people of color, including the researcher who has lived abroad as a child and an adult. While all people may fear travel to dangerous “hot spots,” white-skinned youth are less likely to fear non-U.S. travel. In addition, many countries have either a history of colonialism or centuries of mostly White tourism in which they are viewed as affluent people of high status deserving respect. In contrast, darker-skinned travelers are more likely to have some apprehension over travel to even the most popular tourism destinations.

#### ***6.2.4 Equity in Digital Space***

Participant #3 (P3), a 19-year-old nursing student who was born in the Philippines but grew up most of her life in the greater New York City area and the South, said after participating in an exchange that she actually found a manner of connecting in the IVE space that she has not while visiting other countries. One of the two youngest interviewees, P3 had travelled more than most. She has gone to Mexico, Japan, France and Italy in addition to returning to the Philippines several times. In addition, she said while growing up she had an uncle studying for the priesthood who lived several years in Spain and also studied philosophy in India. In her global studies

#### **Participant #3**

**Age:** 19

**Gender ID:** Female

**Ethnicity:** Asian/Filapina

**Area of Study:** Health

**Mother's Highest Education:** Bachelor's

**Father's Highest Education:** Bachelor's

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** 2+

**Childhood Neighborhoods:** Very Integrated, Bronx and New Jersey up to age 6, then suburban Atlanta with immigrant diversity

**Childhood Communities:** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 5

exchange with students from China, P3 said she was able to share and analyze videos with her counterparts and, also, meet them while they were living in their environment and she in hers. She said the virtual space offers a more neutral platform, which allowed everyone to feel they had an equal share of the space. For students who have never had the chance to travel abroad, P3 said she thinks virtual exchange might actually be a more comfortable platform for opening up about personal lives, cultural differences, political conflicts, faith and other topics because no one is placed in another person's physical and cultural world. P3 said she became close enough to some of the students to talk about perceived cultural differences related to family structures because of the format. Together, she said, she and her counterparts concluded that Asian-Americans and Americans, in general, place more emphasis on extracurricular activities while those in China were "more hands on" and likely to use extra time for tutoring and academic studies. "We were able to share the pluses and minuses of our cultures," said P3, who also recognized an additional dimension of identity-expansion around having a common Asian heritage with her Chinese peers in the exchange. "Online there are a lot of ways to communicate that you do not have (in person)," she said. "It sort of equalizes things."

#### ***6.2.5 Window to the World***

While virtual exchanges are designed with curriculum goals such as language acquisition or peace building, some unanticipated dynamics were identified by this study's participants that suggest new avenues to cultural competency development. In the interviews, several students mentioned that they enjoyed having the opportunity to watch fellow students from another part of the world in their own environments, whether synchronous or asynchronous. For example, in contrast to two-dimensional images in books or the media, P3 (Asian, Filipina) said virtual exchanges are "able to give us, like, a more well-rounded view" and P4 (Latino, Mexican)

talking about how “it was so weird to find, like, a common thing from someone who's halfway across the world...”:

It was awesome to (see) them on that platform regardless if they were speaking to me directly or not. I remember that they would speak to each other about things, sending some photos of what they had eaten that day and he was really interesting to see the food and the way they interacted and the way they spoke and it was a lot. Like it was almost like peering like, through a window. I would say it was a lot similar like keep watching but virtually, without having to leave my home we can. Although I can feel like maybe that is an improper way of experiencing something like that, I would say it would be just the same as going out there in person and being in like a bookstore or something and watching people interact, but not knowing what they're really talking about.

P1 said, in contrast to reading about experiences in a textbook or, even, watch a news report on television, he felt so much more empathy about the climate change issues facing his counterparts in Hong Kong by talking to them regularly and sharing a virtual space throughout the semester:

It is real people you're talking to... It's not just, somewhere out there, people struggling. It's these people right now talking to you, who are just like you. They're in school doing the same program you're doing, but also dealing with the massive struggle of air pollution and flooding and I think there was a big problem.

### ***6.2.6 One Step Closer to Study Abroad***

All six interviewees reported not only bias reduction in pre-conceived notions about their exchange counterparts but also an increased affinity for people from other another part of the

world. In addition, the students most engaged on the platform threads expressed “mutual” empathy around being students juggling exam studies and paper deadlines. These sentiments supported the overarching ideas underlying Allport’s contact theory (1954) and Gaertner and Dovidio’s (2005) related common in-group identity and recategorization theories.

P2, 50, a humanities major who participated in a 2019 exchange involving climate studies with students from China and Hong Kong, grew up in and attended mostly-White, suburban schools in four different states. Her father worked for IBM, so the family moved for the company as his career advanced. Not until she was in her 20s, she recalled, did she have many multicultural experiences and friends from other racial and ethnic backgrounds. While in her 30s, she became involved in a community church and traveled once to Haiti on a mission trip. She said, aside from that trip, her only other travel outside of the United States was to Cancun, Mexico, for her honeymoon.

P2 said she her IVE experience did not influence her interest in study abroad as she has been planning more international trips for some time, and her exchange experience did not influence her interest in the global world or her desire to travel abroad because she has been planning more missionary trips to Kenya and other parts of Africa for some time until her plans

**Participant #2**

**Age:** 50

**Gender ID:** Female

**Ethnicity:** White

**Area of Study:** Arts & Humanities

**Mother’s Highest Education:** High School Diploma

**Father’s Highest Education:** Associate’s

**Study Abroad:** None

**International Travel:** 2 Trips (Haiti, Mexico)

**Childhood Neighborhood(s):** 90%+ White

**Childhood Community(s):** 90%+ White

**IVE Experience Rating:** 3

were changed by the COVID-19 pandemic. But she described the experience as a great opportunity for anyone to experience the global world. “Having that real time, one-on-one conversation and exposure highlights that more than just turning on the news,” P2 said. “It helps to put faces with a place to make it more real.” However, more than any of the other interviewees, P2



stressed the limitations of the IVE format. While “definitely cheaper” and easier to prepare for in contrast to actual travel to another country, P2 said she considered IVE at best “a Plan B.”

Students who have never traveled abroad but who take part in international exchange still would not experience what she did in Haiti, she said, where she was able to spend quality time every day immersed in the community:

A really beneficial and successful way to come together is like over a meal. There is something about that time and that sharing of the meal. It's more than just consuming food. There's something relational that happens. And so, even if I'm on zoom in Kennesaw, Georgia, in their own zoom in Hong Kong, and we're both eating at the same time, I don't, it's just not the same thing as your personal contact.

## 7 DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

*“...there is no neutrality in the racism struggle. The opposite of ‘racist’ isn’t ‘not racist.’ It is ‘antiracist.’” – Ibram X. Kendi*

Virtual exchange has emerged, at the very least, as a viable initiation to study abroad and global travel and – as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic – a full replacement, when international mobility isn’t possible. According to a 2020 Stevens Institute report, at least 224,168 students around the world, between September 2020 and August 2021, up from a count of 125,000 in 2018, participated in an IVE (Stevens Initiative, 2021).

Indeed, as the world has become increasingly global, the need for alternative and supplemental global competency education and preparation has become obvious. Yet, as mentioned in the introduction, government reports show that only about one in ten U.S. college students pursue studies in another country before graduating and that a disproportionate percentage of those who do study abroad are non-Hispanic whites. In addition, as reported in the 2021 Goldstein and Lopez study, first-generation (FG) students now comprise about a third of those enrolled in U.S. post-secondary institutions but only 9 percent of FG college seniors report participating in study abroad as compared with 20 percent of their continuing-generation peers.

This dissertation set out to explore barriers and solutions to increasing diversity in global competency development by learning from students from these groups who recently have participated in an IVE. The previous chapter presented the profiles of the interview participants and discussed the findings from the conversations with them. This concluding chapter will begin by looking at the original research questions, theories and the frameworks for this study. I will then cover the implications for stakeholders and conclude with future next steps for increasing diversity in the growing practice of IVE.

## 7.1 Reflection on the Research Questions

In this study, two research questions were developed to explore ways participation in an IVE expands the identities and global citizenship of students underrepresented in the practice:

**RQ1:** Does participation in an international virtual exchange influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from underrepresented groups in study abroad?

**RQ2:** In what ways do IVEs expand a student's identity, self-efficacy, and cultural competence in the global world?

In addition to these questions, the literature background reviewed in Chapter 2 and the theories – *intergroup contact*, *social cognitive theory*, *identity*, *dialogue* and *hegemony* – identified in Chapter 3 were used to inform the design of the survey and interview instruments presented in Chapter 4 and in the appendices (Appendix A and B). This framework allowed for the life experiences and voices of each participant to be heard and best understood during the survey and interview data collection phases. The survey findings, covered in Chapter 5, helped us understand the target audience's life experiences and recruit interview participants; from those interviews six themes, detailed in Chapter 6, emerged: "*Virtual connections beyond the classroom*," "*Bias reduction*," "*Color matters*," "*Equality in digital space*," "*Window to the world*," and "*One step closer to abroad*." The follow are interpretations of how the findings relate to the two research questions, the current literature and the theories that inspired and directed the overarching process of this study.

The findings of this study suggest participation in an IVE influences interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students underrepresented in study abroad. In the interviews, some of the reasons given reflect the theories presented. In his seminal book “The Nature of Prejudice,” Gordon Allport concludes that bias is reduced and relations between disparate groups improves and when each is afforded equal status in the pursuit of a common goal. This is cultivated, he said, when exchanges are well facilitated and group members are guided through activities that allow for the sharing of experiences on neutral ground, informally called icebreakers today, before collaboration:

Almost any topic will bring out the universal (or closely similar) values of all the ethnic groups. With the ground for acquaintance thus laid, an agenda for the improvement of (relationships) can gradually be evolved, and common projects and cooperative endeavor will then fortify and implement what might otherwise be aborted good will (p. 266).

In many ways, the process he describes is what happens at the beginning of a virtual exchange. Participants from distinct cultural groups are brought together to learn, collaborate, and over time, it is hoped, increase their cultural competency. P3 speaks to an in-the-trenches illustration of Allport’s contact theory when she explains how her exchange offered a much more nuanced understanding of the “tiger mom” stereotype of strict Chinese parents who push their children to succeed. “(Virtual exchange) was just able to give us, like, a more well-rounded view, rather than just oh, they’re more strict in that country with education,” said P3. “Like they reinforced some things, but they also discuss like oh it’s not always like that or oh it’s not always the best thing.” In her interview, P3 also shared experiences of *bias reduction* and *equality in*

*digital space* that occurred because of sustained, facilitated virtual contact with students from China:

It does kind of equalize things a little bit more.... (We're all in) like, our own environments, and we're sharing equally on the same platform. No one's going to like a place they don't really know and they're not familiar with.

This study also is underpinned by the concept of *self-efficacy* as defined and developed by Albert Bandura in his social cognitive theory. Bandura argued that cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors influence human behavior. In the context of this study, his postulations inform the individual efficacy and motivation identified in the themes "*virtual connections beyond the classroom*" and "*one step closer to abroad*" derived from the participant interviews and the review of the exchange archives. For instance, P1 said he was never really interested in study abroad because of the cost and time commitment away from home. But after meeting and collaborating with students from another country, he now says "Maybe I'll up for a whole semester abroad," said the 19-year-old, who has never traveled outside the United States. "I'd like to get around." In the Bandurian frame, P1's exchange experience enhanced his self-efficacy. P1's experience illustrates how participation in an IVE embedded in a course a student chose to take can motivate students who have never traveled to see the world from a more global perspective.

The findings of this study also suggest participation in an IVE can expand a student's identity, self-efficacy and cultural competence in the global world. As documented over several decades by post-segregation sociologists such as Wilson and Denton and Massey, the United States, particularly the South, stands on an imbalanced foundation of several centuries of oppression and legalized segregation of BIPOC groups. While rooted in the worlds of language acquisition and, to a lesser degree, international conflict resolution, virtual exchange holds great potential as a

vehicle to help underrepresented students out of the “concentration effects” of hypersegregated communities. At the same time, scholars have noted that dialogue is not enough. As Brooks & Pitts, Bali and Gorski stated, IVE facilitators need to work proactively to eliminate the hegemony and power dynamics that can make their way into exchange spaces.

## **7.2 Implications**

The results of this study have implications for students from first-generation and hypersegregated backgrounds, college faculty and administrators, government policy makers, exchange facilitators and scholars. Recognizing these implications will help all of these groups attract more underrepresented groups in global competency development to well-facilitated international virtual exchanges and the benefits associated with it.

### ***7.2.1 Students***

As illustrated in Table 5.6, when asked to rate their IVE experience “on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very unsatisfied and 5 being very satisfied,” 90 percent of the 37 survey participants who answered the question responded with a rating of 3 or higher. In the interview phase, when the four participants who rated their experience a “3” or “4” had a chance to expound on why they gave less-than-perfect ratings, all said it was not because they did not like the students but, rather, because of frustration at times over issues around scheduling synchronous meetings, poor planning by exchange facilitators and connectivity problems. For example, P5 said she love the idea of talking regularly to students from China and Hong Kong about their studies and she liked the students that she did meet. She said logistics, time differences and, at times, the group’s size, made it difficult to have the interaction for which the IVE was designed:

The only thing I guess that made it hard was the connectivity. I don't know if it was a platform or their Wi Fi or our Wi Fi, but it just seemed like people got cut off a lot. Also,

like being in a video thing with so many people, it's like, you kind of interrupt each other and talk over each other anyways.

When asked about the experience of instantly meeting students thousands of miles away in their own cultural and school settings, however, all interview participants said they had positive experiences and they expressed new or renewed interest in non-native language acquisition and study and travel abroad. In terms of fears about racial and cultural differences and the question of acceptance from BIPOC U.S. students, I observed in a review of archives from two large-scale exchanges she helped facilitate that some of the Chinese and Hong Kong students seemed particularly eager to meet students from historically marginalized ethnic U.S. groups. Indeed, a few even openly demonstrated admiration of urban, African-American and Latinx music, sports and culture. For instance, while embracing Chinese streetwear as well, at least two of the male students from China, wore NBA team swag and one attended sessions from a dorm room festooned throughout with celebrity U.S. basketball players at the net. To experience this is a counter to the constant, compelling images of China as a closed, racist, anti-American communist stronghold seen on social media and 24-hour news programming with more commentary than traditional news.

P6, a 29-year-old African American majoring in political science, said he has been planning to apply to work an English language teaching assistant position with the North American Language and Culture Assistants Program (NALCAP) in Spain for some time now. Still, because of his interest in global affairs and international travel, he said he enjoyed his IVE and that it reinforced his determination to live and teach abroad. For example, after reflecting on his IVE experience, P6 said he has concluded that the greatest barrier to global competency development is lack of information:

It was always something that I thought, you know, one day I would try to maybe do. I don't think the idea of studying abroad was really, as crystal clear of an idea as much as visiting. And so, I think, yeah, my attitudes towards international travel growing up that was attractive and there was a thing that people did do. I might not have seen a ton of people that were exactly from my background doing it. But I understood that it was a thing that was possible.

Indeed, the research findings suggests that, no matter the racial or ethnic background, the parent or guardian's education level, or the degree of childhood neighborhood integration -- frustration over technology and logistics aside – students in this inquiry, overall, reported having positive IVE experiences that renewed or affirmed existing desires to travel abroad or sparked new interest in the global world. As facilitators in this still-emerging practice become more experienced in navigating exchange logistics and as technology advances, the quality of exchanges formats should increase. With this, if more students from hypersegregated and underrepresented backgrounds are recruited for the IVE starting line, the implicate is that they will embrace the experience and find many more common bonds with their counterparts than differences.

### ***7.2.2 Faculty and Administrators***

The growing importance of campus internationalization is well documented (O'Dowd, 2017; Simms and Marvel, 2017) and university faculty and administrators play an important role in making global competency development available to a more diversity group of students. As mentioned in the introduction, federal government reports show that only about one in ten U.S. college students pursue studies in another country before graduating and that a disproportionate percentage of those who do study abroad are non-Hispanic whites. In addition, as stated,



although first-generation college students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds now comprise about a third of those enrolled in U.S. post-secondary institutions, the 2021 National Survey of Student Engagement reported that only 9 percent of first-generation college seniors reported participating in study abroad as compared with 20 percent of their continuing-generation (CG) peers. Universities committed to preparing all students for an increasingly digital, multicultural world need to understand the reasons for this divide and work not only to close the gap but also to create alternative global experiences.

P1, a 19-year-old education major, has never traveled outside of the United States and, until participating in this exchange, he says he really wasn't interested in study abroad for a semester or year. "It's such a large commitment," said P1, who is Jewish and grew up in a predominantly Jewish community. "You have to just be there all the time." However, he said now that he has completed an exchange with students from Hong Kong and China, he finds himself paying more attention to international news and even notices if someone has a Chinese accent. P1 said he likes the idea of having both an exchange with students from another place and, later, an actual abroad visit to their country. He said his exchange allowed for focused conversations about a specific topic – in his group's case, climate change – and it gave him the chance to meet and be met in one's "authentic" cultural space. In contrast, he said "there isn't a 100 percent replacement for human interaction" and that he realized he might want to grab a cup of coffee after class with classmates but that he could not do that with his virtual exchanges friends.

Yeah, I think I'd like to travel outside the country because of the exchange. Maybe I'll (go) for the whole semester abroad. I'd like to get around. (It's) just seeing people from different cultures in their own authentic element. There's a big thing difference between

talking to people, in other countries in their countries and talking to them in my country. You know, there's a big gap there. So, I'd like to go to other countries and talk to more people in their own country.

IVE offers an affordable, scalable platform to expose more students to global issues, careers and opportunities. However, if first-generation, hypersegregated and BIPOC students are not encouraged and motivated to participate in virtual exchanges – and if their participation is not monitored and assessed – then IVEs could end up showing the same disproportionate participate rates as actual study abroad. Students from underrepresented backgrounds need more mentoring and information early to make up for what students historically well-represented in study abroad receive in their homes, extended families and communities.

### ***7.2.3 Policy Makers***

Over the last decade, state-level policy makers in Georgia have passed bills, earmarked funding and collaborated on a range of initiatives that aim to prepare students at all grade levels to succeed in an increasingly international workforce. Among these developments are the 2012 Georgia International Workforce Development Initiative (GWI), the Georgia International Skills Diploma Seal for high school graduates in 2019 and the inaugural Georgia Language Industry and Education Summit in 2019. In his proposal for the initiative, then-superintendent John Barge stressed the importance of global competency development:

For our students to succeed in the global economy they will need to possess a new set of skills that were not necessary for success in a more centralized economic environment. Regional expertise, cross-cultural competence, and language proficiency beyond the intermediate-mid (or operational) level are no longer skills reserved only for those who plan for a career overseas - they are skills that can enhance all careers,

encourage international investment to our state, and develop a workforce that is successful working on diverse international teams. Providing international perspective, particularly as it relates to career-focused learning, has become a vital need for national security and economic development nationwide and in our state. Our students, parents, and business leaders across Georgia are telling us that these skills are the fastest route to success in a global job market.

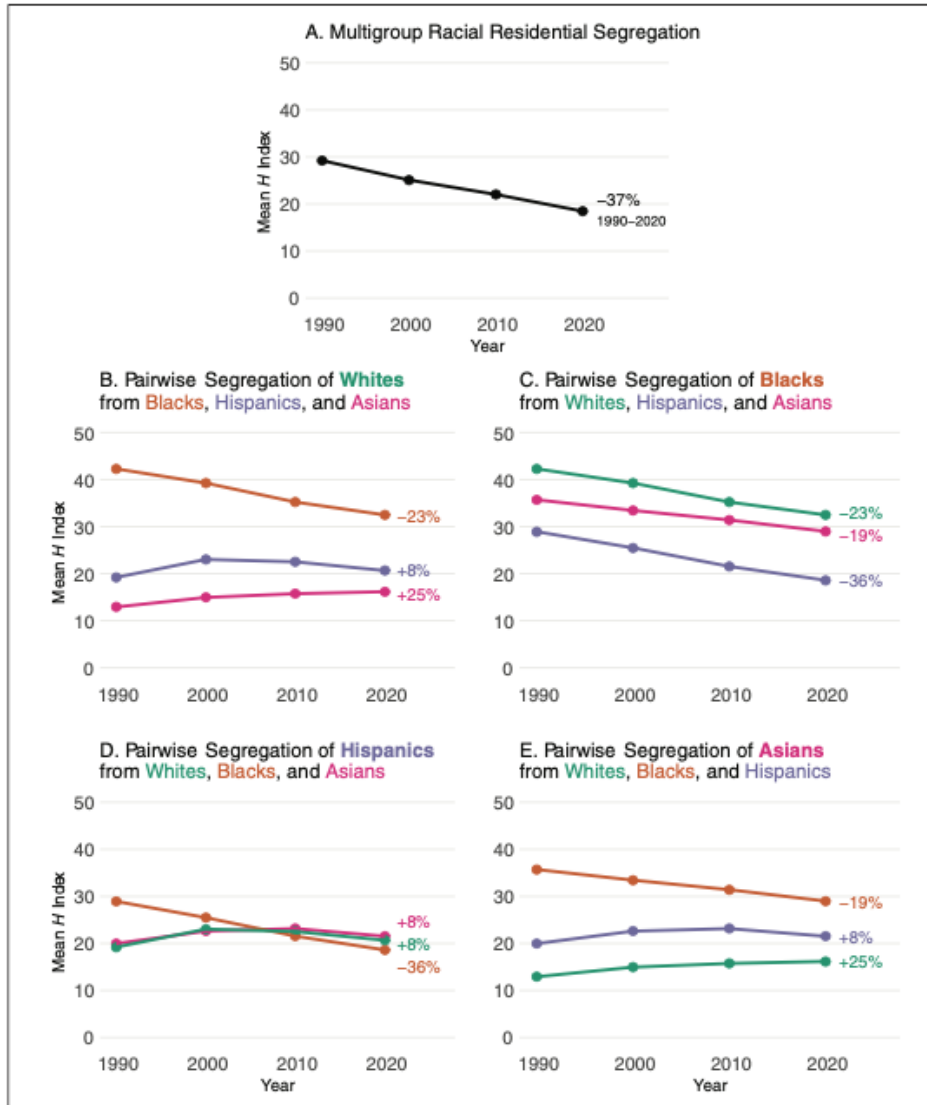
Policy at the state level is enacted in many different ways so it is difficult to generalize from the developments in just one state. Nevertheless, in reviewing policy makers' efforts in Georgia, it appears the state views global competency development among its residents as a priority.

This study documented – in the survey, interviews and review of exchange archives -- that majority of the participants believed their identities and views about the global world were enhanced by their IVE experiences. At the same time, national surveys and studies continue to report ongoing disparities in study abroad and global competency development. Given this background, if local, state and national leaders want to develop a viable global workforce and culturally competency society, it must create and support more legislation and allocate more funding to eradicating barriers to greater diversity in on-the-front-lines practices like international virtual exchange.

### **7.3 Future Directions**

Over the last few decades, census data show, segregation in U.S. residential areas, overall, has declined. For example, in an analysis of segregation patterns, Elbers (2021) found that the population of the largest metropolitan areas in 1990 was about 73% White, 13% Black, 10% Hispanic, and 3% Asian. In contrast, three decades later, those areas were 53% White, 21%

Hispanic, (still) 13% Black, 8% Asian, and roughly 5% from other ethnic and racial groups (Figure 7.1). Yet, Elbers and others (Frey, 2018; Kucheva, 2022; Logan & Stults, 2021; Spader & Rieger, 2017; Spader et al., 2017), maintain that the increasing diversity – largely due to more Hispanics moving into White and African-American neighborhoods – has not changed the underlying problems created by segregation. For instance, Kucheva (2022) found that, regardless of the race of the family head, households are less likely to stay in neighborhoods with a higher percentage of Black residents (p. 448). Similarly, Logan and Stults (2021) found that while upwardly-mobile BIPOC tend to follow Whites to more affluent areas the reverse rarely happens for Black and Latinx neighborhoods which are often served by the worst performing schools, the least valuable housing stock and the highest crime rates (p. 13). As with segregation, the 2020 U.S. Census shows those racial and ethnic groups living in the most segregated area are those living in the most impoverished areas. A Census report based on 2020 data (Shrider, Kollar, Chen, & Semega, 2021) shows that the poverty rate for Asians was the lowest at 8.1% followed closely by non-Hispanic Whites with 8.2% in poverty. In contrast, Blacks had a poverty rate of 19.5% and Hispanics had a poverty rate of 17.0%.



**Figure 7.1** Trends in U.S. residential racial segregation, 1990 to 2020 (Elbers, 2021)

Educators, sociologists, activists, ethicists, religious leaders, and many others have grappled with these poverty and U.S. residential patterns for decades. How do we reverse these cycles that keep people locked into the worst conditions? How can we atone for past segregationist laws and hegemonic practices designed to relegate many racial and ethnic groups to second-class citizenship? This study offers one possible, technology-based piece to the puzzle. It proposes IVE as an affordable, scalable path to help hypersegregated students escape under-

resourced, higher-poverty communities. It does not suggest IVE is the answer but, rather, one practice with the potential for closing the gap in study abroad, language acquisition, and other skills that will enhance students' self-efficacy and make them more marketable in our increasingly global society. According to a 2020 Stevens Institute report, at least 224,168 students around the world, between September 2020 and August 2021, up from a count of 125,000 in 2018, participated in an IVE (Stevens Initiative, 2021). Increasing awareness of this scalable global exchange option can contribute to the internationalization of curricula at the state and local level. In Georgia, for instance, the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) World Language and International Baccalaureate programs, the Georgia Foreign Language Conference, the Foreign Language Association of Georgia (FLAG), the Office of Global Citizenship at the Association of American Colleges & Universities, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) all are poised accelerated their missions with the implementation or expansion of virtual exchange initiatives.

As with any study of an emerging practice, this study has several significant limitations. One is the limited number of students who have even participated in an IVE, no matter the background. Consequently, after much effort, I was only able to identify six past IVE participants whose demographic profiles qualified them for the study. This affected the study in many ways. Access to a larger number of participants in both the survey and interviews would allow for more statistically-significant survey findings and interview themes.

Another limitation is access to students who are truly hypersegregated. The ideal sample for a study on hypersegregation and IVE would consist of students who live in segregated and under-resourced communities. The ideal study would survey and interview students at the high school level who have lived and attended school most of their lives in very homogenous

communities where they share the same racial or ethnic background with more than 90 percent of the population. It is with this narrow focus that we can learn the most. But limited resources, the COVID-19 pandemic and IRB protections made it impossible for me to pursue a study focusing on that demographic at this time.

The overall enthusiasm shared by the interview participants, however, suggests much more is to be learned and gained from exploring this topic. Future research might involve a similar study with a control group to allow for a comparison of participants' perceptions of the same exchange experience. More specifically, new research could delve further into the shift from "minority" to "American" identity in international encounters, arguably most profound for those from segregated backgrounds. This study contributes to the relatively new and growing scholarship on digital intercultural exchanges in higher education. In contrast to previous research, the findings here focus on underrepresented U.S. students' experiences on these platforms. The data in the surveys, interviews and archives provide insight into how participants' backgrounds can significantly limit access to intercultural experiences. It also reveals how phenotype and ethnicity can keep individuals separated from mainstream global advancements, whether by or systematic oppression or self-imposed choice emanating from fear of racism and rejection in unfamiliar environments. The findings of this study will help IVE facilitators develop better and more diverse exchanges, which, in turn, will assist school districts, foreign language educators, international student groups and others meet overarching goals of attaining greater diversity and understanding in international exchange. In addition, consulting and collaboration opportunities include local, regional and national organizations that have established goals to increase cultural competence and better serve underrepresented populations.

At the dawn of this century, Manuel Castells postulated that "new information

technologies allow the formation of new forms of social organization and social interaction along electronically based information networks” (Castells, 2000, p. 693). IVE offers an accessible, affordable, scalable platform for expanding the identities and increasing self-efficacy of people in our most isolated, hypersegregated communities. With continuing research into best practices in its use it offers great potential to contribute to forming a more egalitarian social organization in the United States and around the world.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Survey

#### International Virtual Exchange (IVE) Participant Survey

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##### Start of Block: Consent Form

##### Consent Form

*This is a web-based survey on international virtual exchange (IVE). It is being conducted by Janita Poe, a graduate student at Georgia State University. It should take approximately 5-7 minutes to complete.*

*To participate please read the following. We will need your consent before you begin the survey.*

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

**BENEFITS:** You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about the benefits of IVE. If invited to

participate in an interview about your survey responses, you will receive a \$20 Amazon e-gift card upon completion.

**RISKS:** There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating other than those encountered in day-to-day life.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your survey answers will be sent to Qualtrics.com where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Qualtrics does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. After completing the survey you may receive an invitation to participate in a follow-up interview using a virtual platform such as Zoom or Webex. If you choose to provide contact information such as your phone number or email address, your survey responses may no longer be anonymous to the researcher. However, no names or identifying information would be included in any publications or presentations based on these data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

**CONTACT:** If you have questions at any time about the study or procedures, you may contact Janita Poe's research supervisor, Dr. Tony Lemieux, Co-Founding Director of the Atlanta Global Studies Center (AGSC), at [alemieux@gsu.edu](mailto:alemieux@gsu.edu). If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or that your rights as a participant in research have not been honored during the course of this project, or you have any questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, you may contact the Georgia State

University Institutional Review Board at [irb@gsu.edu](mailto:irb@gsu.edu) or 404-413-3500.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

Agree (1)

Disagree (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If This is a web-based survey on international virtual exchange (IVE). It is being conducted by... = Disagree*

End of Block: Consent Form

---

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1

This survey is designed to assess your international virtual exchange experience and your overall experience in multicultural settings. You have been invited to participate because you have participated in an IVE at your university in the 2018-2019, 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 academic year. If this is correct, please indicate that by selecting "Yes." If this is not the case, please

indicate by responding "No."

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If This survey is designed to assess your international virtual exchange experience and your overall... = No*

---

Page \_\_\_\_\_

Break

Q2 In your IVE, did you participate in at least one video chat (using a platform similar to Zoom) with students from a country or territory that is not part of the United States?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Recall (3)

*Skip To: Q3 If In your IVE, did you participate in at least one video chat (using a platform similar to Zoom) wi... = Yes*

*Skip To: Q4 If In your IVE, did you participate in at least one video chat (using a platform similar to Zoom) wi... = No*

---

Q3 How many video chats would you say you participated in as part of your IVE?

- 1-2 (1)
- 3-4 (2)
- 5 or More (3)
- 

Q4 Did your IVE include any other exchange experiences -- e.g. DMs, phone, Dropbox sharing, etc. -- besides video chat(s)?

- Yes (1)
- Yes, But Do Not Recall Platform Name/Many Details (2)
- Not Sure/Do Not Recall If Exchange Included Communication Beyond Video Conferencing (4)
- No (6)
- 

Q5 If you answered "Yes" to Q4, please describe what you do remember about the other exchange experience(s) you had with international students. (Optional)

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Q6 On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "very unsatisfied" and 5 being "very satisfied," how would you rate your overall IVE experience?

1      2      3      3      4      5

Slide bar to respond ()



---

Q7 Have you ever participated in a study abroad program?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

---

Q8 Which option best describes your international travel experience?

- I have never traveled outside my country. (1)
- I have traveled once outside my country. (2)
- I have traveled more than once outside my country. (3)

End of Block: Default Question Block

---

Start of Block: Block 4

Q9 What is your age? (Please write "prefer not to say" if you do not want to include your age)

---

Q10 What is your gender? (Optional)

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Non-Binary (3)
- Prefer Not To Say (4)
- Prefer to Self-Describe: (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q11 What is your student classification?

- Freshman (1)
- Sophomore (2)
- Junior (3)
- Senior (4)

---

Q12 Please select your primary interest area at GSU.

- Business (1)
  - Education (2)
  - Health Professions (3)
  - Humanities & Arts (4)
  - Law (5)
  - Political Science (6)
  - STEM (7)
-

Q13 Which best describes your racial or ethnic background? Please check all the boxes that apply.

- Caucasian (1)
- African American (2)
- Latinx or Hispanic (3)
- Asian (4)
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
- Native American (6)
- Other or Unknown (7)
- Prefer Not to Say (8)

End of Block: Block 4

---

Start of Block: Block 3

Q14 Which option best describes your mother's highest level of education?

- Did not finish high school (1)
  - High School Diploma or GED (2)
  - Associate's Degree (4)
  - Bachelor's Degree (5)
  - Master's Degree (6)
  - Ph.D./M.D. (8)
  - Unknown (9)
- 

Q15 Which option best describes your father's highest level of education?

- Did not finish high school (1)
  - High School Diploma or GED (2)
  - Associate's Degree (3)
  - Bachelor's Degree (4)
  - Master's Degree (5)
  - Ph.D./M.D. (6)
  - Unknown (7)
-

Q16 We would like to know more about the racial and ethnic makeup of the neighborhood(s) in which you grew up before going to college. Please select the choice that comes closest to describing your overall experience.

- Homogeneous neighborhood(s) where I shared the same racial or ethnic background with 90 percent or more of the other residents. (1)
  - Somewhat integrated, with 10 to 20 percent from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own. (2)
  - Integrated, with 20 to 40 percent from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own. (3)
  - Very Integrated, with 40 to 90 percent from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own. (5)
  - Homogeneous, where I shared the same racial or ethnic background with less than 10 percent. (6)
-

Q17 We would like to know more about the overall racial and ethnic diversity you experienced -- in school, place of worship and part-time jobs -- before going to college. Please select the choice that comes closest to describing your experience.

- Homogeneous, where I shared the same racial or ethnic background with 90 percent or more of the other residents. (1)
  - Somewhat integrated, with 10 to 20 percent from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own. (2)
  - Integrated, with 20 to 40 percent from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own. (3)
  - Very Integrated, with 40 to 90 percent from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own. (4)
  - Homogeneous, where I shared the same racial or ethnic background with less than 10 percent. (5)
- 

Q18 Thank you for answering the previous questions.

Would you be willing to participate in a 45-60-minute virtual interview about your personal

experiences and views about intercultural exchanges with students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, if invited?

All interview participants will receive a \$20 Amazon e-gift card immediately upon completion of the interview.

Yes (1)

No (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If Thank you for answering the previous questions. Would you be willing to participate in a 45-60 mi... = No*

---

Thanks for your willingness to participate in a virtual 45-60-minute interview about your IVE experience. Please provide a name, email and a phone number (indicate if the researcher may contact you by text) in the text box here.

If you are a candidate for an interview, we will contact you. Feel free to contact the researcher team if you have any questions.

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## Appendix B: Researcher-Designed Interview Guide

### Questions/Comments

### Line of Inquiry/Focus

Thank you for agreeing to talk about your virtual exchange experience! I know you have a busy schedule so I appreciate your time and willingness to participate in this project. As stated in the email, I am a doctoral student at Georgia State University and I am interviewing first-time international virtual exchange participants to learn more about their impressions of the exchange and assess the potential of using the format to give more students study-abroad-like experiences.

*Interview introduction and procedure review.*

This interview will be recorded and should take about an hour and 10 minutes, though we could finish earlier than that or actually need a few more minutes to wrap up. Also, I want to make sure you know that:

1. Any information you share will not be attributed to you or used to identify you in any way.
2. You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from this research.
3. You also are free to decline to answer any question I ask or chose to discontinue the interview at any time.

*Aim to make sure interviewee is comfortable with the process and line of questioning. They can halt entire interview at any time!*

Do I have permission to continue?

Any questions before we begin the next set of questions?

I'd like to start by just confirming some of your responses in the survey.

- You indicated that you participated in an IVE at your university within the last three academic years. Is that correct?
- You also indicated that in that IVE, you participated in at least one video chat (using a platform similar to Zoom) with students from a nation-state or territory that is not part of Washington, D.C., or the 50 United States. Is that correct?

Did you live in one place up until college or move around?

*Question for checking survey measurement.*

*Question for survey checking. communication, technology, time difference, etc.*

What was extent of interaction with other racial, religious and ethnic groups in the community(ies) in which you grew up?

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, I'd have some questions about your childhood up to college. You may decline any question at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline comment.

Also, some of the questions sound similar but my goal is to learn from you so please bear with me. Is it O.K. for me to proceed?

In the survey, when asked to rate your overall IVE experience you chose [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]. Please tell me why you selected that rating?

You also indicated on the survey that you grew up in a \_\_\_\_\_ neighborhood. Can you describe it a little for me and tell me how long were you there?

\*\* Thinking about that background, did you feel this exchange experience, in any way, offered something that you could not get in that community? Please elaborate, if so.

Before this exchange, did you have any interest in study abroad?

In the community(ies) in which you grew up, did you know many people who had traveled or lived abroad?

Did you have any family members who had traveled or studied abroad?

\*\* Has your interest in international travel, studying abroad, the global world and/or global careers changed in any way due to your IVE experience?

Anything else you'd like to say about growing up in a neighborhood where [*most of the, some of the, few of the*] people shared the same ethnic, cultural and racial backgrounds and how that might influence your IVE experience?

*Informs RQ1: What basic demographic characteristics, if any, correlate to a students' perception of their first international virtual exchange experience?*

**Identity, Hypersegregation, Contact**

*Explores RQ2: Does participation in an international virtual exchange influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from underrepresented groups in study abroad?*

**Hypersegregation, Equity**

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, I'd like to ask you just a couple of questions about international initiatives for students at your university and in this country. Any questions before we begin the next set of questions? Do I have permission to continue?

Please describe your university in terms of diversity, think not about race and ethnicity but things like percentage of first-generation college students, political social climate, acceptance of identities outside of the gender binary.

Do you think study abroad programs, foreign language departments and other international initiatives at *your university* target and serve all students equally?

Do you think study abroad programs, foreign language departments and other international initiatives at *the national and federal government level* target and serve all students equally?

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, some questions about the format we used in your exchange.

What opportunities did this experience give you to share with others about your background, culture, identity?

Now, thinking about our goal of bringing students together from different cultures, how would you describe this platform?

Do you think it would be easier, harder or the same to dialogue and collaborate with students from other countries in a traditional face-to-face international, intercultural setting? Please elaborate.

Do you believe this experience gave you a chance to learn about the culture, identity and backgrounds of your exchange counterparts?

Do you think it gave you a chance to share with others about your background, culture, identity?

Thinking about all this, what would you change to make it more effective?

What potential do you see? Do you see any issues that we might not ever be able to change?

*Again, it is very important to make sure interviewee is comfortable with the process and line of questioning. They can halt entire interview at any time!*

Decolonization, Hegemony,

Racial Identity and

Diversity, Gender Identity

and Diversity, Cultural Identity

and Diversity

*Explores: RQ3: In what ways*

*do IVEs expand a student's*

*identity, self-efficacy and*

*cultural competence in the*

*global world?*

Contact, Hegemony,

Hypersegregation

Social Identity, Contact

Contact, Hegemony, Positive

Peace

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, to close I'd like to focus on racial, culture and ethnic identity in exchanges. You may decline any question at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline comment. Is it O.K. for me to proceed?

Before participating in this exchange, how would you describe your view of the racial/ethnic/cultural stereotypes of \_\_\_\_\_ held by people from the country with whom you had your exchange?

Did this exchange change that in any way?

Before participating in this exchange, how would you describe your view of the racial/ethnic/cultural stereotypes about both U.S. residents and people who share your culture and identity?

Did this exchange change *that* in any way?

Thinking now about race and identity in this exchange, is there anything about this exchange that made you uncomfortable?

Thinking of the same topic, is there anything about international travel and study abroad that makes you uncomfortable?

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, We're done with my questions. Is there any question I didn't ask that you'd like to address?

Anything you want go back to clarity or elaborate on?

Thank you, so much, for your valuable time. I'm going to review your transcript and would like to know if I might contact you if I have any questions? [Check email and/or phone].

Of course, you also may contact me at any time if you have any concerns or questions. In few weeks, I should have a final transcript ready for you to review for accuracy.

O.K. So, you now I'm going to email you your \$20 Amazon e-gift card. I will send now and confirm receipt before we sign off

*Reminder: it is very important to make sure interviewee is comfortable with the process and line of questioning. They can halt entire interview at any time!*

*Further Explores RQ2: Does participation in an international virtual exchange influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from underrepresented groups instudy abroad?*

**Hegemony, Decolonization**

**Identity, Decolonization,**

**Positive Peace**

*Seek to make sure interviewee was comfortable with the interview. Determine if some question wasn't addressed or if they have questions about the process and what is next.*

*Check name spelling, email, phone and other essentials.*

## Appendix C: Student Recruitment Letters to Professors, Facilitator

*Greetings Dr. \_\_\_\_\_:*

*I am reach out to you to see if I might send a 5-7-minute survey to you to forward to your U.S.-based students who have participated in an IVE within the last three academic years.*

*I've tested the links and code and they work. Your help would be very much appreciated! Feel free to contact me at JPoe5@gsu.edu or 404-444-2955 if you have any questions.*

*Thank you, so very much, for any help you can provide!*

---

Dear Former International Virtual Exchange Participant,

The following survey is from a graduate student at Georgia State University who is affiliated with The Atlanta Global Studies Center and researching virtual international exchange (IVE).

The survey – which includes a consent form – should take no more than 5-10 minutes to complete. Completing it can help the IVE community at FIU, GSU and other universities improve their understanding of online exchange in the global context.

The survey is optional and participants will not receive compensation for completing it. However, if a respondent chooses to accept an invitation to participate in a follow-up interview, they will be able to choose between a \$10 e-gift card immediately upon completion of the interview.

**1) If interested, please follow this link to the survey:**

[Take the Survey](#)

**2) Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:**

[https://gsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV\\_eKilOooGLFslhxs?Q\\_CHL=preview](https://gsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_eKilOooGLFslhxs?Q_CHL=preview)

**3) Or scan this QR code:**



Janita Poe,  
Graduate Research Assistant, [GSU/Georgia Tech Atlanta Global Studies Center](#)  
Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Communication, Georgia State University  
[404-413-5600 \(o\)](tel:4044135600)  
[404-444-2955 \(c\)](tel:4044442955)  
[@PoeCommunicate](#)  
[f](#) [t](#) [in](#)

## Appendix D: Survey Participant Recruitment Email

Greetings \_\_\_\_\_,

Are you available to take this 5–7-minute survey about your international virtual exchange (IVE) experience with me and Dr. xxxxxx last year?

Completing it will help me finish my dissertation here at GSU and provide more information to the IVE community about online exchange in the global context.

I don't have compensation at this stage but, if you choose to accept an invitation to participate in a follow-up interview, you will be able to choose between a \$10 e-gift card immediately upon completion of the interview!

Thanks, and Have a Great Week!

**1) If interested, please follow this link to the survey:**

[Take the Survey](#)

**2) Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:**

[https://gsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV\\_eKilOooGLFslhxs?Q\\_CHL=preview](https://gsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_eKilOooGLFslhxs?Q_CHL=preview)

**3) Or scan this QR code:**



Janita Poe,

Graduate Research Assistant, [GSU/Georgia Tech Atlanta Global Studies Center](#)

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Communication, Georgia State University

404-413-5600 (o)

404-444-2955 (c)

[@PoeCommunicate](#)



## Appendix E: Interview Participant Recruitment Email

Greetings \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for agreeing to a 45-min-1-hour interview about your virtual exchange experience.

I've set this Doodle poll to allow you to pick up to three 45 min-one-hour slots from **Wed., Jan. 26**, through **Fri., Feb. 15**. After reviewing your votes, I will send you a Zoom meeting invitation for a specific time.

All participants will receive a **\$20 Amazon e-gift card** at the end of the interview.

Looking forward to learning from you!

[Doodle poll link]



## Appendix F: IRB Approval Letter



### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Mail: P.O. Box 3999      In Person: 3rd Floor  
Atlanta, Georgia 30302-3999      58 Edgewood  
Phone: 404/413-3500      FWA: 00000129

September 07, 2021

Principal Investigator: Anthony Lemieux

Key Personnel: Lemieux, Anthony; Poe, Janita L

Study Department: Georgia State University, Communication

Study Title: Identifying and Eradicating Barriers to Greater Diversity in International Virtual Exchange

Submission Type: Exempt Protocol Category 2

IRB Number: H22068

Reference Number: 366118

Determination Date: 09/02/2021

Status Check Due By: 09/01/2024

The above referenced study has been determined by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to be exempt from federal regulations as defined in 45 CFR 46 and has evaluated for the following:

1. Determination that it falls within one or more of the eight exempt categories allowed by the institution; and
2. Determination that the research meets the organization's ethical standards

If there is a change to your study, you should notify the IRB through an Amendment Application before the change is implemented. The IRB will determine whether your research continues to qualify for exemption or if a new submission of an expedited or full board application is required.

A Status Check must be submitted three years from the determination date indicated above.


## Appendix G: Survey Participants Sociodemographic Characteristics

Survey Participants Sociodemographic Characteristics												
Student Survey Completion Date	Age	Gender ID	Race/Ethnicity	College class	Major/ Area of study	Study Abroad	Inter travel	Mother's highest education	Father's highest education	Neighborhood diversity before college	Community diversity before college	How rate IVE experience?
3/15/22	28	F	W	Junior	Arts and Humanities	N	1	Bachelor's	HS D	Homogenous 90%+ same	V Integrated	2
2/16/22	23	F	W	Senior	Education	Y	1+	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Integrated	S Integrated	4
2/14/22	22	Prefer Not Say	Prefer Not Say	Junior	Political Science	Y	1	Bachelor's	Master's	V Integrated	V Integrated	3
1/20/22	20	F	B	Soph.	Business	N	0	HS D	HS D	V Integrated	Homogenous 10% or less the same	4
1/19/22B	24	F	W	Senior	STEM	N	1	Master's	HS.D.	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	4
(1/19/22A DNQ)												
1/19/22-P5	21	F	A	Senior	Business	N	1+	Master's	Ph.D.	V Integrated	Homogenous 10% or less the same	3
1/12/22	20	F	W	Junior	Arts and Humanities	N	1	Associate's	HS D	V Integrated	V Integrated	3
1/12/22C	21	F	L	Junior	Edu	N	1+	DNF HS	DNF HS	S Integrated	S Integrated	4
1/12/22B	20	F	W/L	Junior	Arts and Humanities	N	1+	HS D	HS D	Integrated	S Integrated	5
1/12/22A	24	M	B	Senior	Education	N	N	DNF HS	DNF HS	Homogenous 90%+ same	V Integrated	5
12/26/21	23	F	W	Senior	Arts and Humanities	N	1+	Bachelor's	Master's	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	5
12/20/21	20	M	W	Soph.	Edu	N	N	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Integrated	V Integrated	3
12/13/21C	22	F	W	Senior	Law	Y	1	Master's	Master's	Integrated	Integrated	3
12/13/21B	20	M	A	Junior	STEM	N	1+	HS D	HS D	S Integrated	S Integrated	4
12/13/21A	22	F	W/A	Senior	Arts and Humanities	Y	1	HS D	Unknown	Integrated	V Integrated	5
12/12/21B	41	M	W	Senior	Business	N	1+	Master's	HS D	S Integrated	S Integrated	5
12/12/21A	41	M	W	Senior	STEM	N	1+	Master's	HS D	V Integrated	Integrated	5
12/11/21C	30	F	B	Senior	STEM	N	2+	HS D	Master's	Homogenous 90%+ same	Integrated	3
12/11/21B-P4	23	M	L	Senior	STEM	N	1+	HS D	DNF HS	V Integrated	V Integrated	5
12/11/21A	25	F	W	Junior	Edu	N	1+	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	V Integrated	V Integrated	2
12/10/21C	28	NB	L	Senior	Edu	N	1+	DNF HS	DNF HS	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	5
12/10/21B	20	M	W	Senior	STEM	N	2+	Master's	Bachelor's	S Integrated	S Integrated	4
12/10/21A	22	NB	W	Senior	Arts and Humanities	N	1+	HS D	HS D	S Integrated	S Integrated	NA
(12/6/21 DNQ)												

12/5/21	21	F	W	Senior	Edu	N	N	Master's	HS D	S Integrated	S Integrated	4
12/5/21	21	F	W	Senior	Edu	N	1	HS D	DNF HS	S Integrated	S Integrated	4
(12/3/21 DNQ)												
12/2/21B-P6	29	M	B	Junior	Poly Sci	N	0	HS D	Unknown	Homogenous 90%+ same	V Integrated	4
12/2/21A	20	NB	W/N/L	Soph.	Arts and Humanities	Y	1+	Ph.D.	Bachelor's	S Integrated	V Integrated	5
11/14/21	24	F	B	NA	Edu	N	N	Associate's	Bachelor's	Homogenous 90%+different	Integrated	3
11/12/21	28	M	W	Junior	Business	N	1	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	S Integrated	S Integrated	1
11/11/21B	25	F	W	NA	Edu	N	1	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	S Integrated	S Integrated	3
11/11/21A	22	F	L	NA	Edu	N	1	HS D	HS D	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	3
11/5/21	21	F	W	Senior	Business	N	1+	HS D	HS D	Integrated	V Integrated	4
11/4/21	26	M	B	Junior	Health	N	1+	Ph.D.	Ph.D.	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	5
11/3/21C-P3	19	F	A	Soph.	Health	N	1+	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	V Integrated	V Integrated	5
11/3/21B	29	F	B	Senior	Edu	N	1+	DNF HS	HS D	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	5
11/3/21A	22	F	Native A	Soph.	Health	N	1	Associate's	HS D	Homogenous 90%+ same	V Integrated	1
11/2/21C-P2	50	F	W	Junior	Arts and Humanities	N	1+	HS D	Associates	Homogenous 90%+ same	Homogenous 90%+ same	3
11/2/21B-P1	19	M	W	Soph.	Edu	N	N	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	S Integrated	V Integrated	3
11/2/21A	22	F	W	Senior	Arts and Humanities	N	1	Master's	HS D	V Integrated	Integrated	2

<i>Pilot</i>	34	F	O/U	Senior	Education	Y	1+	Master's	Bachelor's	Homogenous 90%+ same	S Integrated	3
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## Appendix H: Dissertation Defense Prezi



The image shows a YouTube video player interface. The video content features a woman with glasses speaking in front of a green background. To her right is a white graphic titled "Presentation Outline" with four numbered sections:

- 01. Preface/Positionality  
Literature  
Theory  
Research Questions
- 02. Methodology  
Findings
- 03. Limitations
- 04. Future Directions  
Conclusion

The video player includes a search bar at the top, a progress bar at 0:36 / 33:29, and interaction buttons at the bottom: 24 likes, DISLIKE, SHARE, DOWNLOAD, CLIP, SAVE, and a menu icon.

<https://youtu.be/rmd8kj-6QLA>

## **Appendix I: Participant #1 Interview Transcription**

### **Participant #1**

**Age:** 19

**Gender ID:** Male

**Ethnicity:** White/Jewish|

**Area of Study:** Education

**Mother's Highest Education:** Bachelor's

**Father's Highest Education:** Bachelor's

**Study Abroad:** None

**International Travel:** Never

**Childhood Neighborhood(s):** Predominantly Jewish, Somewhat Integrated

**Childhood Community(s):** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 3

**Researcher** 0:02

All right, [REDACTED]. Thank you for agreeing to talk about your Virtual Exchange experience. I know you have a busy schedule. So, I appreciate your time. As stated in the email, I'm a doctoral student at Georgia State University. I am interviewing first time participants in International Virtue Exchange, which I will also call IVE. To learn more about your impressions and assess the potential of using this format. To give more students study abroad like experiences. This interview is being recorded and should take about an hour to complete that we could finish earlier than that or, actually, we might need a few more minutes just to wrap up. Also, I want to make sure that you know that (1) Any information you share will not be attributed to you, or use to identify you in any way, (2) You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from this research and, (3) You also are free to decline to answer any question I asked, or you can choose to discontinue the interview at any time. So, do I have your permission to continue?

**Participant** 1:14

Yes.

**Researcher** 1:15

All right. Any questions before we begin the first round of questions?

**Participant** 1:20

No.

**Researcher** 1:21

All right. So, I'd like to start by just confirming some of your responses, in the survey. You indicated that you participate in an IVE in the 2019-2020 to 2020-2021, academic career, is that correct?

**Participant** 1:40

Yeah.

**Researcher** 1:41

Okay. I just want to get here, when was your exchange and with what course was it affiliated?

**Participant** 1:47

It was with Climate and Weather. It was a lab course. I want to say it was the Spring Semester. So, 2021.

**Researcher** 1:59

Okay. Spring 2021. I can look that, up and confirm. I just want to confirm, did you participate in an actual video chat, using a platform similar to zoom at any point in your exchange?

**Participant** 2:30

Yes.

**Researcher** 2:30

Great. All right. Now, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your childhood up to college. You may decline any of it. You may decline any question at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline. Also, some of the questions may sound similar. But my goal is just to learn from you. So, please bear with me. Is it okay for me to proceed?

**Participant** 2:57

Yes.

**Researcher** 3:17

Thank you. All right. So, on scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Very Unsatisfied and 5 being Very Satisfied. You rated it right in the middle. Please elaborate on why you gave that response.

**Participant** 3:53

Because I thought, like during the, I think it was zoom we use but like during those video exchanges, it was really helpful and interesting. Having like an international exchange, talking about the differences, especially with climate and whatnot. However, outside of those meetings, there really wasn't much to it, you know.

**Researcher** 4:20

What could make it better in your mind?

**Participant** 4:26

I'd say more collaboration between the United States students and then the we did Hong Kong students, but in the Hong Kong students, just a little bit more, maybe like group assignment together something where we really are forced to work with each other, to really get a full, you

know, get more of a exchange than just, you know, talk about the differences every, like once a month. We did that.

**Researcher** 4:59

That's a good point. So, just actual assignment where you have a task together where you have to work together not presenting together.

**Participant** 5:08

I think that'd be interesting. Something like that.

**Researcher** 5:10

Anything else?

**Participant** 5:15

No. I think overall was pretty good.

**Researcher** 5:17

All right. Let's see here. So, you said that you had never traveled outside of your country.

Is that correct, outside of the States?

**Participant** 5:47

Yes.

**Researcher** 5:47

All right and you said you grew up in a somewhat integrated neighborhood with about 10% to 20%, from racial backgrounds, or ethnic backgrounds different from your own, is that correct?

**Participant** 6:12

Yeah.

**Researcher** 6:13

Just want to confirm this in your work, or school, or neighborhood, or life, outside of the neighborhood, before going to college, it was actually very integrated?

**Participant** 6:23

Yes.

**Researcher** 6:23

Okay. So, can you describe a little bit for me more about your neighborhood, where you grew up? Particularly in terms of diversity and meeting people from other cultures and so forth.

**Participant** 6:51

Yeah. I grew up in Decatur, the Toco Hills area. So, that's mostly Jewish. You know, it's a very Jewish neighborhood. You know, some exceptions like as a, and then I went to Jewish Hill High School and that's very diverse. I think the demographics are pretty close with between African Americans, and white people, Mexicans, and then a decent Asian population there.

**Researcher** 7:29

As well. Right.

**Participant** 7:30

Yeah.

**Researcher** 7:31

So, I know you told me but can you tell me again what part of Decatur?

**Participant** 7:35

Toco Hills.



**Researcher** 7:36

Yeah, I knew, Toco Hills. Now, thinking about growing up in Toco Hills do you feel this exchange in any way offered something that you could not get in that community? And let's just start with the neighborhood.

**Participant** 8:13

Yeah, for sure. Definitely, I wasn't, I didn't meet that many people, my neighborhood. Anyways, during childhood, yeah, there definitely did offer an exchange of like, I really did get to meet people that I never would have met.

**Researcher** 8:32

Yeah. But then as you pointed out earlier and this is by the way, a similar structure interview. So that, I may go off a little bit, but you did point out earlier that this exchange is not like you were really meeting. So I guess, do you see the potential for exchanges like this to allow people to meet people from very diverse from other backgrounds?

**Participant** 8:57

Absolutely. I think by like, the last Zoom meeting we had. We were becoming friendlier and stuff. So, there wasn't quite enough time because of this. Sparseness of the Zoom meetings. Definitely have way Zoom meetings or something more intimate them. Yeah, I could definitely meet these people more to the place.

**Researcher** 9:24

Do you see then when you think about things like study abroad or just summers abroad and that sort of thing. Do you see that this could possibly work to help you get meet people? And if so, in what way? Do you see things that you would not really be able to get that you could get an actual face to face travel abroad?

**Participant** 10:09

You're saying, you mean compare it to my thoughts on studying abroad?

**Researcher** 10:14

Yeah, I'm curious about like this format. Do you see any benefits to being able to just quickly do that? You know, because like, if you travel abroad, there's money, there's time, I don't want to, like, put yeah, do you see potential for this being kind of another way for human beings to just connect?

**Participant** 10:46

Oh, absolutely. Because I don't have a strong desire to study abroad for a semester. Because it's such a large commitment, where it's kind of the opposite, where you like, have to just be there all the time. You're going to meet people, because you know, you can't be alone for a semester. I think this has a lot of benefits, especially if it's a little bit closer studying abroad. Where you know like, there is more into it. It's definitely we're pursuing because you really, I mean, I got somewhat of like, a culture shock of learning about Hong Kong, just from what it already is. I can imagine that if it went any further, there really wouldn't be a lot of the same benefits of studying abroad, with the comfort of being in your chosen city.

**Researcher** 11:41

Tell me more, you said you had a culture shock. Tell me more about that.

**Participant** 11:44

I mean, it's all relate to Climate and Weather, obviously, because that's the class I took but learning about because you learn about climate change and you always shared about affecting places, but I think [REDACTED] I'm very lucky that there's very minimal consequences of climate change in [REDACTED]. That's not the case in Hong Kong. There's a lot of air pollution and specific things that

they were talking about. They're very serious and like, extreme, not super extreme, but fairly extreme, things they have to do to deal with the consequences of the climate.

**Researcher** 12:26

I noticed that as well. I was kind of in and out of your sessions, but I was learning as well about that. And then thinking about it makes sense. I mean, so many people concentrated in one area.

**Participant** 12:50

Because it is real people you're talking to and then they are talking about, like, it's not just, yes, somewhere out there people struggling. It's these people right now talking to you, or just like you. They're in school doing the same program you're doing, but also dealing with the massive struggle of air pollution and flooding and I think there was a big problem.

**Researcher** 13:19

Now, what are some of any disadvantages of this of platform? Do you see any disadvantages? You know, meeting people this way versus actually, again, I'm thinking in terms of just international exchange, connecting with people from other parts of the world.

**Participant** 14:04

You know, I might be a boomer by I'm a believer that there isn't of 100% replacement for human interaction. I think, video chatting is very, very close but there is that something about actually meeting people in person. Can you also do things with people, which you can do with video chat? Like, it's hard (if) like, we want to do like an outside of class thing. We all like go get coffee or something, but we can't do that. We can't do activities like I think that's a big disadvantage. Other than that, not much disadvantage in just terms of meeting people.

**Researcher** 14:57

Oh, yeah. However, then let me ask you this. So, on the one hand, like you say, okay, you go get coffee after class and then just kind of have an informal chat and get to know people on another level and another dimension or whatever. But then again, we're here, like, when you have this format, where everybody's an equal box. Now, some people aren't showing their faces, you got all that thing going on. Like you and I are, right now you got those things. But nevertheless, everybody's there. There's kind of a structure where everybody's communicating, maybe in a classroom. I'm just wondering, maybe, along those lines, if there's more equality or more, because it's, I don't know, it's just a different structure. Do you have any thoughts along those lines, you see where I'm heading? I mean, because I don't even know.

**Participant** 16:08

[16:09 inaudible] and I agree somewhat. I do think, though, unless there's, I mean, there could be a lot more video chats, people get a lot more comfortable. I think in person, they're just you have that inherent anything could happen type thing. You know, you will have conversations about rent. You don't know what you're going to talk about when you have a conversation with someone in person. Whereas over the video chat, at least because we as a population is just now really getting into it at least. It's very structured. We almost never talked about anything other than the climate questions we're supposed to talk about.

**Researcher** 16:49

Yeah, good point. Very good. Okay, great. That helped me. All right. Let's see now.

**Participant** 17:01

I will say though, maybe no, as we get more used to it, there will be more of that. You know, anything we could talk about.

**Researcher** 17:10

Okay. Have your interest in international travel, studying abroad, the global world, or possible a possible global career changed in any way due to this IVE experience?

**Participant** 17:41

I do think I'm more interested in meeting more international students. I want to say I've more student going abroad or having a career abroad. But you know, whenever I do see a student around here, with some sort of accent that can tell they're from another country, I am interested. I try to talk to them.

**Researcher** 18:02

Okay, are you on campus now?

**Participant** 18:06

Yes.

**Researcher** 18:06

I'm curious, any interesting career that might involve kind of a global focus, or a global art?

**Participant** 18:43

As it opposed to like, against that, but I never really pictured myself and globally focused career.

**Researcher** 18:50

Okay, gotcha. All right. Anything else you'd like to say about growing up? You know, your neighborhood, meeting people from different backgrounds, cultural backgrounds, and how this IVE experience might have influenced that?

**Participant** 19:07

I will say did going up because there was a lot of international kids in my high school. I think this shows a lot of advantage of not even meeting them in person instead doing it like we did it.

**Researcher** 19:19

You're going to occur like you said what now?

**Participant** 19:22

I said it, I think it kind of showed an advantage of this program as opposed to actually meeting people in person. Because when international kids at my high school, it would come up sometimes. And I learned a lot of stuff about, you know, where they're from their culture. But not nearly as much because they're here, assimilating almost for the most part. So, they're this program, I think, like growing up in high school really showed me the value of us talking to each other in our own cities like me being **Atlanta**, then being in Hong Kong, because there's no forces are pushing us towards each other. It's just straight up our culture of what we're doing with nothing influencing it to assimilate it all.

**Participant** 19:22

Yeah. So, in other words, these aren't people who have moved from Hong Kong to the states for a reason, a specific group, maybe you know, these are people who just live right in Hong Kong or live right in achievement. Right, right and vice versa you guys just live. So, they are suddenly going, yeah. Okay. Whereas you're saying like in the high school, I'm just making sure I'm understanding. These were kids who were children of immigrants.

**Participant** 20:34

Yes, children are immigrants themselves but it's been in the United States long enough, like maybe even just a year, you really pick up a lot of the culture.

**Researcher** 20:47

Yeah, they are also American now. I mean, like, when we think of ourselves as living a year in Europe, we think of ourselves as, oh, you know, I've kind of had this European living, right? If we live five years in Europe, I'm thinking, okay, you know, I'm kind of part European.

**Participant** 21:08

Right. If I lived in Europe, we had talked about the United States five years from now, it would be your memory, whereas the Hong Kong students, it's not a memory. They're actively telling me about their life.

**Researcher** 21:20

Great point. All right, now, moving on. I'd like to ask you now, just a couple of questions about international initiatives for students at [REDACTED]. Okay, here's the question. Do you think study abroad programs, foreign language departments and other international initiatives at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] serve all students equally in study abroad programs?

**Participant** 22:05

I really have no idea. I have not looked into any programs like that anything.

**Researcher** 22:10

Right. And what about on the federal level and if it's no idea, no problem that No.

**Participant** 22:17

There are also I was, this is not that not into?

**Researcher** 22:21

Right. Gotcha. So, not a problem.

**Participant** 22:24

They're not targeting me at the very least. I mean, I've heard some things about it. Like they do, like, talk about, like on the tour of [REDACTED]. They talked about their study abroad programs. I think I get like an email once a year from interested but other than that, I really have no idea what's going on.

**Researcher** 22:42

Got it. All right. Okay, here's a one question. Now, before participating in this exchange, how would you describe your view of actual, of what stereotypes did you have, if any of people from the two cultures you interacted with? How would you describe your impressions, the stereotypes, your image, whatever information you've had been able to gather from people from Hong Kong and from people from, I guess we could just say, China. China's such a big country. But that's, you know, what would you describe was your impression of and maybe do break them up Hong Kong? What was your image, or idea of who people of Hong Kong were like, and then same with China?

**Participant** 24:03

You now, all along you're just saying this, but yeah, really was the no race to try not to have any sort of stereotypical impressions of people. I'd never knew a lot about China or Hong Kong. Hong Kong though being even before for my understanding, because there was that whole you know, international news about Hong Kong. I think, the summer before. You know, Hong Kong really was similar to the United States, people wise. And then there was China bearing down on them. So, I really was picking the Hong Kong people to be very similar to myself.



**Researcher** 24:53

And then China, you know, I mean, certainly in the media, we have the, I mean, the stereotypes. So, I'm not saying you have stereotypes. Maybe what was your impression of what we were told about people from China? How would you sum up what we've been told her about the Chinese government and communism?

**Participant** 25:22

This is a thing that Chinese government, I have lots of opinions about. You know, we're in a time now, where I think people are pretty good about separating the government from its people. There's so many countries, including the United States that can oftentimes are in a lot of ways have bad or oppressive or a little bit messed up government, at least governments disagree with morally, but the people in every country, they're all people. They're just doing their thing most of the time.

**Researcher** 25:54

Right. And how are we? Why do you think we are there now? Because I don't know, historically, we've certainly had, if you just look in history, yeah, lack of information.

**Participant** 26:07

I think it's a mixing a lot of things, obviously, I think, because there now is easy international communication. We can just talk to people like, I can just talk to people that live in China and they are just people. For the most part, so there's that communication, where we directly know international people. There's also...

**Researcher** 26:30

You mean, in just your neighborhoods, you mean more like that, not so much to the exchange, but you just...

**Participant 26:36**

You just possibly to the exchange by doing online, like Instagram, sending people posts from all over the world, when people you know, there's someone posting in every single country right now, their morning breakfast. We're all there's also as at least the United States population. We're getting more progressive. We're trying to be less racist, where not all of us but you know, for the most part. We're trying to have more of an understanding of every bit of other people, especially internationally, because we look at our past and we do see how poorly we've done.

**Researcher 27:16**

Yeah. Great. Now did this exchange, again, and this is kind of like I said, in the beginning, you'll hear some of the same questions but did this exchange help in any way along these lines of what you're saying?

**Participant 27:42**

I'd say, yeah. Even if it's just a confirmation, it's a confirmation that these students are exactly the same as the students here. We're all just studying climate change in our class.

**Researcher 27:58**

Do you think it could help? This might be a stretch, but do you think just having more changes in what you're saying about Instagram is a great point. I mean, that was, see I'm not that Instagram, I mean, I'm 58. So, I'm the Facebook, folks. And we're the folks who didn't have the technology. But what you're saying about Instagram, and just how you all are seeing each other every day, they're, you know, people posting breakfasts and all that. So, there's this more just exchange happening just because of technology, it sounds like.

**Participant 28:29**

Yeah.

**Researcher** 28:30

Yeah. So, again, I'm really trying to learn. I mean, these are, you guys have the answers in some of this. I mean, it looks like we have some improvement to make and some of the things you were saying about more frequently, more in activities together and then there's limitations. You can't go have coffee or whatever, but can you talk a little bit about like, is this something that would help peace building just by knowing that folks are just regular people?

**Participant** 29:30

Yeah, I think almost all communication helps peace building, unless someone has genuine values, but I don't think most people do obviously. It's just a different type of communication with Instagram. You know, because Instagram, like I said, people are posting stuff. I don't talk to any of these people. I just see what they post. So, I'd say you know, the IVE, it very important from making that connection, building friendship, building an early some sort of relationship. And then like maybe we shouldn't have followed each other on Instagram and then we'd see what each other's posts because he really learned a lot about someone based on the stuff they're interested in really. So I think I wouldn't say we could do stuff like Instagram as an alternative, but more of a supplement.

**Researcher** 30:21

Alright. Okay. Now, the last question, a question area and it might be one or two. I'm curious about race and identity and culture. I did not ask you in the beginning, by the way, if you are from a Jewish background, if you describe yourself as Jewish. Okay, so thinking about your race and identity in this exchange, is there anything about this exchange that made you uncomfortable?

**Participant** 30:59

On the virtual exchange or?

**Researcher** 31:02

The virtual, the virtual exchange experience that we had? Just I don't know, you know, you mentioned you were mostly talking about climate, but I don't know, if there's any discussions, or if you felt any identity issues, anything that made you uncomfortable, around race, your identity with your race and identity in general, however, that is. Yeah. Okay.

**Participant** 31:29

No, I don't remember anything that made me uncomfortable though.

**Researcher** 31:32

I got you Is there anything about international travel and study abroad that makes you uncomfortable? That you fear like if I go there, these people might think this or that, or they're like I would not want to go? Or like me, obviously, there's some places people don't want to go, but any fears you have that being accepted or how you might be viewed or whatever?

**Participant** 32:04

No, I think it's more just, I like the feeling of being away from what I know, for so long. It's not a specific reason that I think I'd be in a bad situation somewhere else.

**Researcher** 32:18

I got you. And, again, just one thing I want to clarify. So, tell me more, just so I'm making sure I'm clear on your interest now, in studying abroad or travel. Let's revisit that just one more time before we close out. Again, because of this one exchange that you just that, you know, has it had anything changed for you? Do you think, maybe I would like to visit Hong Kong one day or something, anything along those lines?

**Participant** 33:00

Yeah, I think I'd like to travel outside the country because of the exchange. Maybe I'll up for the whole semester abroad. I'd like to get around.

**Researcher** 33:12

Tell me more about, why? What happened in the exchange that made you think?

**Participant** 33:17

They're just seeing people from different cultures in their own authentic element. There's a big thing difference between talking to people, in other countries in their countries and talking to them in my country. You know, there's a big gap there. So, I'd like to go to other countries and talk to more people in their own country.

**Researcher** 33:59

All right. Anything else you'd like to say, anything you want to reiterate or clarify from this discussion?

**Participant** 34:09

No.

**Researcher** 34:09

I'm done with my questions, anything at all?

**Participant** 34:12

No. I feel like I'll talk pretty good.

**Researcher** 34:17

All right. Great. Wonderful. So, thank you so much for your valuable time. I'm going to review the transcript and would like to know if I might contact you if I have any follow up questions.

**Participant** 34:31

Absolutely.

**Researcher** 34:32

Okay. Now, in your case, I have your email address. Fine, if you want just to communicate by email, but if you have a phone number where I can text you that might help but I understand if you want to just stick with email, whatever.

**Participant** 34:50

Yeah, yeah, you can get those, my number.

**Researcher** 34:50

Oh, I did get your number?

**Participant** 34:51

Yeah. You can get my number. I'm putting on chat.

**Researcher** 34:53

Oh. I'm sorry. What is that?

**Participant** 34:54

I'll put it in the Zoom chat.

**Researcher** 34:58

Okay, that's fine. Right. And I'll put mine in there too. Okay, so now, of course, you may contact me at any time if you have any concerns or questions in a few weeks, I should have a final transcript, it might be more like month, ready to review for your accuracy, if you want. It might probably just be the recording. I had to make sure I'm following the proper guidelines on that. But whatever information is standard to provide to you guys I will be providing that. So, now I'm going to send you the gift card. I don't know if this email is okay to use or if you have another one.

**Participant** 36:15

No. That stuff is perfect.

**Researcher** 36:18

Okay, great. All right. Let's see here so we can stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

## Appendix J: Participant #2 Interview Transcription

### **Participant #2**

**Age:** 50

**Gender ID:** Female

**Ethnicity:** White

**Area of Study:** Arts & Humanities

**Mother's Highest Education:** High School  
Diploma

**Father's Highest Education:** Associate's

**Study Abroad:** None

**International Travel:** 2 Trips (Haiti, Mexico)

**Childhood Neighborhood(s):** 90%+ White

**Childhood Community(s):** 90%+ White

**IVE Experience Rating:** 3

**Researcher** 0:02

Okay. Thank you for agreeing to talk about your Virtual Exchange experience [REDACTED]. I know you have a busy schedule, so I appreciate your time. As stated in the email, I am a doctoral student at Georgia State University and I am interviewing first time participants in International Virtual Exchange, which I also will call IVE, to learn more about your impressions, and assess the potential of using this format, to give more students study abroad, like international experiences. This interview is being recorded and it should take about an hour to complete though we could finish earlier than that, or actually need just a few more minutes to wrap up. Also, I want to make sure that you know that, (1) Any information you share will not be attributed to you, or used to identify you in any way, (2) You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from this research, and (3) You are free to decline to answer any question I asked or just choose to discontinue the interview at any time. So, that's it. Do I have your permission to continue?



**Participant** 1:14

You do.

**Researcher** 1:15

Great, any questions before we begin the next set of questions?

**Participant** 1:19

No.

**Researcher** 1:20

Okay. So, I'd like to start by just confirming some of your responses in the survey. You indicated that you participated in an IVE at your university and I know [REDACTED] in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021, academic year, is that correct?

**Participant** 1:37

It is.

**Researcher** 1:38

Were you in [REDACTED] class or was it another one?

**Participant** 1:40

No, that was the class chosen, yeah.

**Researcher** 1:40

Any of the climate?

**Participant** 1:46

Yes.

**Researcher** 1:47

Okay, great. You also indicated that you participated in at least at least one video chat, is that correct?

**Participant** 2:07

Yes, more than one.

**Researcher** 2:08

Good. Good, good. All right. So, now I have some questions about your childhood. You may decline any questions at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline. And then also, you should just know, some of the questions I asked may sound similar. You might be like, oh, I thought she asked that but my goal is really kind of to learn from you. So, I hope that's okay and if so, is it okay for me to proceed?

**Participant** 2:43

So does.

**Researcher** 2:44

All right. In the survey, when asked to rate your overall IVE experience, you just see something needs to change right now. You chose 3 right in the middle, on a scale of 1 to 5, please tell me as best you can, why you selected that rating? And there's no wrong or right answer, just please let us know anything.

**Participant** 3:04

Okay.

**Researcher** 3:04

Learning only.

**Participant** 3:05

It had more to do with the technical challenges to connect with the students. The instructions were not very clear and the process was not very streamlined.

**Researcher** 3:34

Why we're staying on this part before we go to whatever you might have liked? What do you think we could do better?

**Participant** 3:41

Well, when we would log on to that page, a lot of people and I initially thought this, but then I was able to figure it out. They felt that once they logged on to that page that they were in their group. So, you had to find the next step to be able to get into your group.

**Researcher** 4:10

He wasn't here.

**Participant** 4:13

No, no and there, it looked as if there were supposed to be several of us from the State logging into our own small group. But I was the only one except for the very last call that we had as a group and there was a different problem with that, we had the daylight savings time but China does not have daylight savings time. And so, there was an American who, he and I got on and we're like, where's everybody? Oh, well. We were the ones that were not on the right time. Because then after he and I talked and we did what we could together. I went over to try again and there were the Asian students waiting for me and him. I mean, it was just the very last meeting that we had. It was really not something that it would have been nice as a student to have. The professor said, keep in mind that we've had a daylight savings time change. Because by the time we met, it wasn't like, day after daylight savings time. It was probably a couple of weeks after. So, anyway, getting connections was the most challenging part, I think.

**Researcher** 5:54

Yes. Thank you for that. I was aware of that and that is something I think we need, I'm not going to spend much time on that, because that's not the focus of this study. This was our first time working with this size. We were learning ourselves, but this is very helpful. So that indicates that there may be something that was productive. Tell me anything more about your experience.

**Participant** 6:47

Well, I did enjoy talking with the students because I am probably as old as their parents are. I did feel bad for them. They didn't have students in their generation to talk to so. But there's still something I think that both sides gained. Not only because it was different cultural perspective but different generational perspective, maybe as well. But I did enjoy talking with them. Initially, it was just like, in the first meeting. There were four or five girls and then when the other students came on. So, I guess it was the girls from Hong Kong and Mainland China. We had some young men from Mainland China come on, about in the middle of it. The boys probably did not speak as much just because they didn't feel like they knew enough English to speak very well. So, that was a challenge for them but the girls, they were on it. They were very dedicated and organized. So, I really enjoyed just watching how excited they were with their studies.

**Researcher** 8:40

I'm taking notes in addition to, so, this is a good point, what you're kind of touching on now, you had the four for girls and yourself, is that correct? Four at the beginning.

**Participant** 8:51

Right.

**Researcher** 8:52

Okay. And then can you talk a little bit more about just that experience of them being there, in their place, in their environment. This is not like people who have moved from Hong Kong to the States and live in the States now. But really kind of connecting with people just instantly, really, from far, far away. Anything else you'd like to share about beyond what you were actually studying, what that experience was like?

**Participant** 9:32

Well, one thing that was interesting is that all of the girls knew each other. They were in the same classes. They were all getting their degrees for secondary education. Was that, oh, no, actually, I think it was primary. So, I think that was good for them because then they had that, they were familiar with each other.

**Researcher** 10:09

This is Hong Kong, is that correct?

**Participant** 10:11

Yes.

**Researcher** 10:12

Okay. You had the girls from Hong Kong you met first and their English is going to be better generally than the kids from China. And then they were female and then males come and then they have less knowledge of English, is that correct?

**Participant** 10:33

Right. So, one thing was and I kind of got the feeling that they weren't really, you know, they were supposed to speak in English. And so, when the boys came into the mix and like, I would ask a question, or they would ask a question, the English. The young men were not, really aware

that they were being asked a question. And so, I didn't want to get the girls in trouble for speaking Chinese, but the boys were not able to engage. And so,, I just have one of the girls with the do you want to go ahead and just translate? So that they can know what we're talking about and she did and it was fine.

**Researcher** 11:30

That happened with some that I assisted with. There were students who spoke very good English and very good in Chinese.

**Participant** 12:00

Right.

**Researcher** 12:01

So, can you first describe where you grew up from me a little bit? And just describe the community and then, I just want to talk about thinking about that background. Do you think this exchange experience kind of offered you something that even within our age range? That it allowed you to I don't know. I want to learn from you.

**Participant** 13:32

Well, my father worked for IBM and so we did. I lived in four States growing up between the ages of birth through 12 years old, but pretty much wherever we lived, it was typically a white suburban, although in Kentucky it was more rural area.

**Researcher** 13:59

Where in Kentucky? If you don't mind my asking.

**Participant** 14:01

Richmond.

**Researcher** 14:03

Okay, I just asked because ironically and I know this is not all Kentucky, but I just watched Hillbilly last night and it was, I don't know if you know about that documentary, but it was great. It's really good. Have you heard about it?

**Participant** 14:15

No, I haven't.

**Researcher** 14:17

It's really worth watching. So anyway. But Kentucky but you were in, aside from Kentucky, where else?

**Participant** 14:29

I was born in Florida, but we moved when I was 1 and then we moved to Minnesota, and then Kentucky and then Georgia, when I was 12.

**Researcher** 14:42

I see okay. But in all of these areas, you said you were saying it's pretty much, except Kentucky, pretty much white bourbon.

**Participant** 14:51

Suburban, yes. And when we moved here to Georgia, I was in the sixth grade and I hung out with a small group of girls that have one of the girls. She was American Chinese. So her both of her parents were immigrant Chinese. Although they had her father worked for "See The Vision". He was one of the inventors of the colored contact lenses.

**Researcher** 14:55

Wow.

**Participant** 14:59

And their grandmother lived with them. She did not speak any English. One night I spent the night over at her place and her grandmother made theme songs which were amazing. But aside from that I would say I really, it was probably in my 20s and 30s, before I was experiencing a more diverse community.

**Researcher** 16:09

Okay. In Georgia, where was the Georgia town? Was that here in Atlanta, Metro Atlanta?

**Participant** 16:18

Alpharetta.

**Researcher** 16:20

Okay. This is just more for my background. It sounds like your father worked for IBM, would that be right? Upper middle class or middle?

**Participant** 16:53

Middle. Let's say middle.

**Researcher** 16:55

Middle. Okay. So, middle class communities and not until your 20s and 30s, where it was kind of really starting to get more diverse. Tell me how this exchanging experience influenced you? You've traveled a lot outside of the country to I remember from your notes.

**Participant** 17:18

Not a lot. No, I was

**Researcher** 17:20

Well, more than once.



**Participant** 17:21

Just like I went to Haiti on a mission trip back in 2012. In, let's see, I think it was the early 2000s. We actually were involved in friends of internationals through our church. And so there were three. Two men and one woman. They were graduate students at Kennesaw State University that's were assigned to our family. And so, we interacted with them over the course of that year and it was very interesting. They each had one child back home with their spouse. They came over to our place for dinner on Halloween and then, went with us trick or treating with our kids around our neighborhoods. They invited us over to their place and made us dinner in their student dorms. They joined my family up in Young Harris, Georgia for Thanksgiving. And let's see, they invited us to Chinese New Year celebration that they had in Atlanta, as part of the Friends of the internationals in the Chinese community. So, that was probably my first, like, big cultural exchange experience.

**Researcher** 19:01

And these were male?

**Participant** 19:06

Two of them were male and one was female.

**Researcher** 19:10

And the female had a child back home.

**Participant** 19:13

Yeah.

**Researcher** 19:13

Okay. Alright. So, I think, that's more when you said early 2000s but in terms of international travel aside from Haiti, was there any other place?

**Participant** 19:27

I don't think you would consider it international travelers came from my honeymoon.

**Researcher** 19:37

Okay. All right. Now, again, so going back, thinking about this background, do you think this exchange experience in any way offered something more for you?

**Participant** 19:53

Definitely.

**Researcher** 19:54

Let me know or what?

**Participant** 19:57

Well, I think it's always good to be aware that there are people outside of our own personal world, even though I know that like we're all connected so much more because of technology. But having that real time one on one conversation and exposure just highlights that even more than just turning on the news and watching other people, connect with other people across the oceans. So, it helps to put faces with a place to make it more real.

**Researcher** 20:51

Yeah. So now, correct me if I'm wrong, this is kind of where you're headed, are pointing, what you're pointing out. So now, like, if you see news about Hong Kong, maybe you think back to the students, you know, like, okay, I know, I wonder how? Such and such is doing or you kind of feel like, you know the place a little bit more because you are, is that right?

**Participant** 21:14

I would say so, especially since we were talking about climate issues and parts of China definitely have issues with some areas, of course, the more industrialized ones are much worse than those that aren't. But in terms of smog and visibility and breathing issues. So, yes, if I were to see that on television, I would definitely think about my experience with the IVE program.

**Researcher** 21:50

Now, in your case, you are an older student and you have traveled outside the country more than once but has this exchange influenced your interest in international travel in the global world? I don't know, a career that has a global focus moving forward, has that changed in any way due to this experience?

**Participant** 22:15

I wouldn't say due to this experience, because before COVID, I actually was planning to go to Africa to various countries, in Africa on mission trips and we were supposed to leave for Kenya about a week and a half before the international travel completely shut down.

**Researcher** 22:39

So you've always been interested in international or for a long time, you've been interested in international travel in global world?

**Participant** 22:58

I've been interested in it for several years. Yes, but I'm glad that I wouldn't say that this experience, like, changed my mind and propelled me to that. But I think that if you can get an opportunity to engage in something more than what you'd see on a daily basis then that's a good opportunity to take advantage of.

**Researcher** 23:33

Okay, great. Well, before we go on anything else you'd like to say about that topic, before we move on?

**Participant** 24:01

I think we can move on.

**Researcher** 24:02

Okay. Now, so again, looking at international change, look at this is the platform that we use, basically the where you're like on Zoom, like, you've got several people right there and they're from other countries and they're talking to each other.. So, think more of the study abroad context, where like you did, like your mission trips, where you're really interacting with people. Think about that and then tell me, do you think there are any things that this format offers that actual in person contact doesn't, and then the reverse is there something that the in person contact offers that you just can't get from these type of exchanges?

**Participant** 25:55

Well, I think that to do it over zoom, of course, it's definitely cheaper. There's the financial benefit, of course and traveling to places like China, there is just a lot in terms of not only financially, but preparation time wise, and all your packing, and things that you're planning on taking, and deciding all of your details in terms of your flights, and where you're going to say, and what you're going to do while you're there. It's just they're very different. Definitely, I don't think you can replace. It's just not the same not being there in person. I think that even locally, we've through the pandemic figured that out. Everybody can getting zoom fatigue and wanting to see people in person and have that personal connection. And so, as much as we can even talk to somebody one on one over zoom, even though I mean, what a blessing it is to be able to do that

and to have the ability to find convenient times for both sides of the world. It's just, you need to have your expectations in terms of what's your limitations of being on a zoom call, as opposed to of course being somewhere in person.

**Researcher** 28:02

Aside from the financial benefits of this platform, do you see any other pluses at all?

**Participant** 28:15

Well, I think you can still exchange ideas.

**Researcher** 28:21

That's more of the same.

**Participant** 28:23

Right.

**Researcher** 28:23

But I'm wondering if like, so in this platform, do you think that people in any way might feel more comfortable? Do you think in any way, there's more opportunity for equal exchange? Since everybody's there in a box, where in the classroom like, let's say, if you're, of course, again, like for you, it might not be as much study abroad that you might be looking to do, but like in study abroad, there might be a classroom and you're interacting, but maybe you have discussions and people are in different parts of the room. I'm just curious about, if there's anything about this medium, this space that makes people more comfortable about sharing?

**Participant** 29:37

I think it's a good runner up. I think it's a good plan B.

**Researcher** 29:43

Good. Okay, now moving on. Let's see a little last thing we have here. This goes back to our earlier discussion. What do you think could make this more effective? I guess we talked about the technical stuff. So, I don't need to go back over that because you explained that very well. But any other thoughts on what can make this work more? Besides the technology, I get that, but anything longer sessions, different types of sessions, I don't know we may have?

**Participant** 31:33

Well, I think when you have people communicating with other people from a different culture, I think it would be beneficial for them to have kind of an introduction as to what makes their culture, what are some similarities and differences between the two cultures, just to give them kind of a foundational place to start. Because if you want peace, then people have to get a personal connection with each other and you're going to need a foundation for that. So, doing it in such a way that creates curiosity, instead of judgment would have to be well thought out I think, or removing some of those assumptions and stereotypical roles on both sides. None of that was addressed in this particular IDE, because it was more about just the exposure experience and within the scope of talking about climate change in the different areas. But I imagine that your study is going beyond those types of requirements.

**Researcher** 33:18

Well, certainly, yeah, but actually, interestingly enough, when you hit on something that we've already discovered. So, there are some exchanges that have been created, that were that were designed to be conflict resolution upfront, but then you come in the door with this understanding that you know, like, okay, so there's a group from the Mena district from the Middle East area. And then there's a group from the United States and Canada and they're going to all certainly talk

about whatever or you know, Palestine and Israel and whatnot, there are those out there. And so, what where people are moving. There's also some that have just been for late language study, nothing more than language study. And so, now we're starting to move into there's opportunity for cultural competency building. It's a big production traveling to another country. There's also from the environment mentalist point of view I have an environmentalist on my committee. But anyway, well, so do you see any issues in, in this platform of Virtual International Exchange, perhaps some limitations that we may never be able to overcome, in the goal of again, peace building, getting to know each other's people and so forth. Do you see anything we just might not ever be able to change?

**Participant** 35:38

Well, historically speaking people, when they come together, a really beneficial and successful way to come together is like over a meal, or meal. Something about that time and that sharing of the meal. It's more than just consuming food. There's something relational that happens. And so, even if I'm on zoom in Kennesaw, Georgia, in their own zoom in Hong Kong, and we're both eating at the same time, I don't, it's just not the same thing as your personal contact. But I would say that it's beneficial, of course, it's far more beneficial than, you know, email, of course, because people read into so many things in like email or text because they don't have those, visual cues where they can see people. Like the camera on Zoom, or in person to see if somebody is like, not understanding what they're saying, or they're uncomfortable or in agreement or so.

**Researcher** 37:09

Non-verbal.

**Participant** 37:10

Yeah, right. Right. So, I mean, that is a benefit of zoom. But, yeah, you're just not going to get the same effect that you would, not only being with people, but yeah, definitely, sharing meals, sharing experiences are they go a long way.

**Researcher** 37:43

So, it's progress but there's some things in correct me if I'm wrong, but there's just some things you're not going to be able to ever duplicate and this format.

**Participant** 38:19

Right. Yeah.

**Researcher** 38:19

You're not going to be able to have that. That non-verbal stuff and like you said, those sitting around breaking bread, just talking to folks. Sharing, that's powerful.

**Participant** 38:31

It is.

**Researcher** 38:32

Yeah. And it's just yeah, great point. All right. Anything else? Any question that I didn't ask anything you'd like to revisit or reiterate before we wrap up?

**Participant** 38:45

Not that I can think of, but I do appreciate, being in on this conversation with you and this is an interesting topic. So, I appreciate the opportunity to expand more on the experience that I went through. So, thank you for that.



**Researcher** 39:08

Thank you again for your time. All right. So, this is the formal interview. I will say that I have sent your Amazon card. I sent it because the last time it took a couple of minutes and we the guy had to just email me later. If you have access to your email now, if you could check and confirm receipt. That would be great.

**Participant** 39:33

Okay.

**Researcher** 39:33

I'm going to stop the recording now. But I'm here.

**Participant** 39:36

Okay. I do have it. Thank you.

**Researcher** 39:40

Great.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

## Appendix K: Participant #3 Interview Transcription

### **Participant #3**

**Age:** 19

**Gender ID:** Female

**Ethnicity:** Asian/Filapina

**Area of Study:** Health

**Mother's Highest Education:** Bachelor's

**Father's Highest Education:** Bachelor's

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** 2+

**Childhood Neighborhoods:** Very Integrated,  
Bronx and New Jersey up to age 6, then  
suburban Atlanta with immigrant diversity

**Childhood Communities:** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 5

**Researcher** 0:02

Okay. Thank you for agreeing to talk about your virtual exchange. I know you have a busy schedule. So, I appreciate your time. As stated in the email. I'm a doctoral student at Georgia State University and I am interviewing first time participants in International Virtual Exchange, which I will call IVE. To learn more about your impressions and assess the potential of using the format to give more students study abroad like experiences. This interview is being recorded and should take about an hour to complete though we could finish earlier than that or actually need a few more minutes. Also, I want to make sure that (1) Any information you share will not be attributed to you, or used to identify you in any way, (2) You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from this research, and (3) You are free to decline to answer any question I asked, or you can choose to discontinue the interview at any time. So, do I have your permission to continue?

**Participant** 1:14

Yes, yeah.

**Researcher** 1:16

All right. So, I'd like to start by just confirming some of your responses in the survey. You indicated that you participated in an IVE in the 2019-2020, or 2020-2021 year is that correct?

**Participant** 1:38

Yes.

**Researcher** 1:39

And were you in [REDACTED]'s Climate class?

**Participant** 1:44

No.

**Researcher** 1:45

No. Okay. What was the class you had?

**Participant** 1:48

The class was perspectives 2001 is taught by [REDACTED]

**Researcher** 1:53

Great. How many students were there in the class? And then who was your exchange with?

**Participant** 2:19

Here, let me estimate of work, maybe like 20 or 30 students.

**Researcher** 2:25

Yeah, that's fine. I just wanted to get an idea if it was a large lecture hall. Okay.

**Participant** 2:30

And it was an online course. I should probably clarify.

**Researcher** 2:33

That's fine. And your exchange was this was with what country, or European countries?

**Participant** 2:40

Students from China.

**Researcher** 2:41

Students from China. You know, what part of China?

**Participant** 2:47

Oh, I cannot remember.

**Researcher** 2:48

That's all right. Not a problem. Okay. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the format that we use to communicate with people from another country. So in the survey, when asked to rate your overall IVE experience, I hope I have this right because I read it this morning. I was going to pull it up you chose 5, is that correct?

**Participant** 3:29

What was it out of again?

**Researcher** 3:31

I'm sorry. 1 out of 5 to rate your exchange experience actually, let me just pull yours up here.

**Participant** 3:37

Okay. Yes, I believed.

**Researcher** 3:41

Okay, I'll check and I should have done that too.

**Participant** 3:55

More.

**Researcher** 3:56

Okay, yes. So, here it says on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very "Unsatisfied" and 5 being "Very Satisfied". How would you rate your overall IVE experience and you indicated here 5. Please tell me why you selected that rating?

**Participant** 5:08

I like with that because I thought the process was like really interesting. I also didn't have any difficulties with communication or anything like that. It was very smooth.

**Researcher** 5:14

Any other reasons?

**Participant** 5:24

No, it was just really interesting being able to hear about education from students in other countries.

**Researcher** 5:41

Now, in your exchange, did you have at least one visual sort of like a zoom platform where you have lots of faces in the boxes?

**Participant** 5:56

No, what we did, was we had like a video sharing platform. We have like each presented, like videos on our topics to one another.

**Researcher** 6:09

Was there ever a time where you were all synchronous, like, yes, the same time sharing on anything?

**Participant** 6:17

No.

**Researcher** 6:18

Okay. So, it was the video share? Did you use the WeChat? Is that it?

**Participant** 6:24

I can't remember the exact platform. It was the platform, we could all upload videos and comment on each other's videos. We can hear each other's voices.

**Researcher** 6:35

So. How would you describe this platform, the video sharing? Do you think you are able to feel that you were learning about people from another culture?

**Participant** 7:42

It's like a lot of, yeah, a lot of the information they share with, it was really informed by like, how they actually experienced it and we could comment on all each other's presentations. You'd be like, oh, this is different from how we do it here, but this is really interesting.

**Researcher** 7:55

Yeah, yeah. So, you were able to compare and contrast how you did certain things?

**Participant** 8:01

Yeah.

**Researcher** 8:02

Can you give me an example of something that we do here in the States and they do it differently in China?

**Participant** 8:14

Okay, this might be a little broader, because it's been a while since I took this class. But I think they do remember that with them, their parents are a lot more hands on with their education.

**Researcher** 8:25

Parents?

**Participant** 8:27

Yeah. Like they're very focused on making sure their kids do like, after school, like tutoring and like other supplementary classes price here. We're kind of more focused on like extracurricular and things like that.

**Researcher** 8:43

Anything else? That's a good one, anything else you discovered? What about the stereotypes, if you will of China and other Asian countries have been really serious about education in contrast to ours? Did you feel that whatever stereotypes there are out there were indeed proven? I shouldn't use the word stereotypes but because in some ways, it's quite positive. You know, the idea that they're serious about education. You mentioned that the parents are more hands on and after school tutoring and so forth but just wondering if by meeting people directly, even if it's in just video sharing, if you maybe learned something about the culture that is different from or reinforces, what we've been taught here and what we learned from the media.

**Participant** 9:48

Speaking to them, give it more, identity to that whole, very like strict education thing in (their) country. So, just like they're able to talk. So, yeah, we do these things, but it's very stressful and like, it was just able to give us like a more well-rounded view, rather than just oh, they're more strict in that country with education. Like they reinforce some things, but they also discuss like, oh, it's not always or it's not always the best thing.

**Researcher** 10:19

Yes. Okay. Maybe they humanized it more.

**Participant** 10:24

Yeah.

**Researcher** 10:38

Now, what differences do you see if any, in meeting people in their actual cultural context, which would be like, say, if you were to go to a university in China and visit, or just be a tourist, or whatever? Is there anything that you feel can happen in this format that can't happen face to face?

**Participant** 11:25

Well, I guess if you are in person, you get to see a little bit more of like mannerisms and smaller things like how you should react to one another in a face to face environment. With online, you have like different opportunities of discussing things with one another. Again, you can do things like share videos, or using you know, there's a lot of ways that Internet gives us opportunities to communicate with one another. So how can we use tools like those? I remember, at one point, I think they pulled up a video from China showing like parts of their education system and that kind of was interesting to see, because it was from their perspective, to see things like that.

**Researcher** 12:07

Instantly, right. Even if you're like, in a classroom, in another country, maybe study abroad, you still might not have the everybody doesn't have the technology control right there. But on a platform, as long as somebody is allowed to share information, then you all could upload anything, all of you equally, not like sitting in a classroom, in China and the professors at the front and you're talking.

**Participant** 12:40

Yeah.

**Researcher** 12:41

Yeah, you can share video, that's a great point.

**Participant** 12:45

It does kind of equalize things a little more to theirs. (We're all in) like our own environments, and we're sharing equally on the same platform. No one's going to like a place they don't really know and they're not familiar with.

**Researcher** 12:56

Right, right. Everybody's in their home cultural context and their home and space and yet, there's this exchange happening. But like you said, it's not like what, when you go overseas, if you're there, they're here, but not those are great points to share in the videos instantly and equalizing. Then there's also those boxes, you know, everybody's kind of in a box, and that's equal, you know, so.

**Participant** 13:29

As long as everyone has the cameras on.

**Researcher** 13:31

Well, that's true, yeah.

**Participant** 13:34

We're all the cameras off.

**Researcher** 13:34

We're all off or the place, either one of the three, right. Everything's off, everything's on or you all, maybe you put your faces up, like I have the little face thing. Maybe if everybody had a picture of themselves and you at least, but there's a very good point, that's a whole another thing that's emerging. Okay, let's see.

**Participant** 13:55

I know my photos, because I haven't done this on my iPad yet.

**Researcher** 14:03

All right. Okay. I'm going to still explore this because maybe we can learn from your perspective. Okay. I'm going to ask some questions about your childhood up to now. You may decline any questions at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline to comment and also some of the questions may sound similar, but my goal is to learn from you. So, please bear with me. Is it okay for me to proceed?

**Participant** 15:53

Yes.

**Researcher** 15:53

Okay. You indicated on the survey, that you grew up in a very diverse neighborhood. Can you describe it a little bit more for me, where you grew up, or where there several neighborhoods if you moved around? I just want to get a feel for like, the environment you were in like in elementary school age in high school.

**Participant** 16:18

All right. I was born in the Philippines and my family immigrated here when I was two.

**Researcher** 16:25

You were two years old?

**Participant** 16:26

Yes.

**Researcher** 16:27



Okay.

**Participant** 16:27

So for a while we were living in the Bronx. We lived in New Jersey, and we moved to Georgia when I was about six. I grew up in a pretty nice area when I first came. It was a little less diverse, but you could really see the population grow more diversity I feel. A lot of other immigrants were coming in, especially Asian immigrants, more specifically, a lot of Korean and Indian immigrants.

**Researcher** 16:53

So, you moved to Georgia at age six. Was it the Metro Atlanta area?

**Participant** 17:01

It was Forsyth County.

**Researcher** 17:02

You moved to Forsyth County. What city or what town?

**Participant** 17:11

Suwanee, right outside of the Lambert High School or right next to Lambert High School.

**Researcher** 17:16

What's the name? What's the town?

**Participant** 17:17

Scwanee. Scw... .

**Researcher** 17:20

Suwanee. Yeah, yeah. That's right.

**Participant** 17:22

Sorry.

**Researcher** 17:23

No, no, it's not you. It's probably my volume is low. So, Suwanee. Okay. Because I grew up here and now live here, when you say Suwanee, I know what's Suwanee is like. Somebody else might be like, I grew up in California, in LA, and I'd have to ask them to describe the area and so forth. All right. So, Bronx first, then New Jersey, but you were six years old still pretty young and then it was Suwanee. Did you grow up in Suwanee?

**Participant** 18:02

Yes. I still live there now. I can be up to GSU.

**Researcher** 18:02

Okay, can you describe like, outside of your neighborhood and Suwanee for the neighborhood itself, you did say also that your school and any place of worship and any, you know, when you were in high school part time jobs, or whatever, you know, after school activities, those communities also were quite diverse. Is that correct?

**Participant** 18:42

I think so, yeah.

**Researcher** 18:44

Okay and describe that, was it different in anyway? Was high school more diverse in elementary school?

**Participant** 18:53

I would say so because I mentioned earlier that area kind of grew more diverse as I grew up and then diverse coming in.

**Researcher** 19:05

While you were growing up.

**Participant** 19:00

Yeah. It was nice. My high school had an international there. So, it was really interesting thing could be to do.

**Researcher** 19:14

What were the largest immigrant populations growing up in Suwanee?

**Participant** 19:18

[19:19 inaudible] Korean and Indian.

**Researcher** 19:24

Many Mexican Americans?

**Participant** 19:27

Not a lot in that area but I did spend a lot of time in coming which have a few more Mexican American. That's where I did ballet and stuff.

**Researcher** 19:38

Okay. And then, let's see here.

**Participant** 19:43

I grew up Catholic and I was really involved in church and there were a lot more Hispanic people in the church.

**Researcher** 19:55

Did you have any family members who traveled or study abroad? Did you know anybody like an aunt or uncle who had literally you know, gone study abroad, high school, college?

**Participant** 20:12

Most of my family members live abroad and I know his towns but I had a great uncle who studied in Spain.

**Researcher** 20:21

Of course yeah.

**Participant** 20:22

But it was for the priesthood, which is a very different thing.

**Researcher** 20:27

So, uncle studied in Spain for the priesthood. It could also be like, even like doing peace course or something like that any anybody just spending time abroad you know, besides tourist stuff. What part of Spain?

**Participant** 20:57

Oh, hold on either let me find it real quick.

**Researcher** 21:01

If you haven't, no worries.

**Participant** 21:33

Yeah. He studied in, oh, he also studied in India. He studied in Kerala. He studied in Navarre, Spain.

**Researcher** 21:42

Navarre and also India?

**Participant** 21:46

Yes. He studied Philosophy apparently and he went to Spain to study Theology in Spanish.

**Researcher** 22:08

I studied Spanish in Madrid, it's been a long time ago, just a summer.

**Participant** 22:14

Cool.

**Researcher** 22:14

Yeah, it was great. Okay. All right in your community, did you know anyone who had studied or traveled abroad like worked abroad, studied abroad, any anything like that? Anyone come to mind?

**Participant** 22:42

Many. I know someone who did. I don't know if he worked abroad, but he worked with like an international company. So, we did communicate a lot with like, people abroad. I think he traveled too. He worked to Sapporo. So, there was a Japanese company.

**Researcher** 22:56

Right. I'm familiar with that. Was that a neighbor?

**Participant** 23:08

Yes. Oh, you know, I had, I clearly forgot, one of my friends or my neighborhood growing up was from Korea. So, we're here in the fourth grade.

**Researcher** 23:25

And that's I got that, from how you mentioned the immigrant communities kind of people coming in but a good friend I still will add it. A good friend grew up in Korea and moved and the fourth grade to your neighborhood in Suwanee?

**Participant** 23:45

Yeah.

**Researcher** 23:49

South Korea, you know was it Seoul or you know, just asking?

**Participant** 23:53

I'm pretty sure was Seoul.

**Researcher** 23:54

Okay. How would you describe your overall knowledge about international travel and the global world at the time?

**Participant** 24:19

At the time of this, I think...

**Researcher** 24:24

I'm sorry, you know, and that's a good question. Yeah. How would you describe your overall knowledge about international travel and the global world, when you were growing up in Suwanee?

**Participant** 25:10

I guess there's pretty familiar with the areas that a Somalia with or I knew people were from. So, definitely a lot more familiar with like the Philippines, like Southeast Asia, and lots of like other areas, like I guess, East Asia and China.

**Researcher** 25:28

Right. Did you ever go back to the Philippines?

**Participant** 25:32

Yes, we have.

**Researcher** 25:34

Oh, great. Okay. How often? And how old were you?

**Participant** 25:38

I think the first time, I was like seven or eight, next time, so I was 11 and 14, then 15. We try to go every three or four years.

**Researcher** 25:53

It's wonderful.

**Participant** 25:54

We haven't since the pandemic, because quarantine. It's forever in the Philippines. Because, they're a little behind on their vaccine rollout.

**Researcher** 26:03

Yeah. So, you're bringing like growing up in Suwanee, which I'm familiar with to a degree.. But going back to the Philippines, and the neighbor who works for Sapporo and so forth.

**Participant** 26:31

I think, yeah. I also got to travel a lot growing up to. I went to you know, oh, sorry.

**Researcher** 26:41

I don't know. Go ahead. Some places you traveled.

**Participant** 26:45

In elementary school, went to Mexico. We went to Tokyo during one of our Philippine trips, because we were in Tokyo anyway. Because you can go straight to the Philippines from Atlanta. We've been to and then we went to Paris and Rome.

**Researcher** 27:05

Oh, wonderful. You've only family vacations?

**Participant** 27:09

Yes. I was supposed to go on a school trip to Spain but that didn't happen because is that summer?

**Researcher** 27:17

Ah, okay. I started elementary school on an Air Force Base outside of Tokyo. But it was I will only be there for a year, then we settled here in Atlanta, but I still remember.

**Participant** 27:30

Cool.

**Researcher** 27:31

Yeah, so. All right. Okay, so the last real question I have is around peace building and understanding, just kind of bringing people together what I'm studying and really, the virtual exchange is new, it's emerging, it's certainly grown with the pandemic.

**Participant** 28:23

[28:23 inaudible]

**Researcher** 28:23

Yeah and they would practice their English and the student, and that's how it started. You said you are studying Health Sciences, are you looking to teach become an educator?

**Participant** 28:50

I'm in a nursing program.

**Researcher** 28:51

Okay. So what potential do you see for using this format, using Virtual International Exchange? What potential do you see there for peace building and just greater understanding? Do you think it's a format that could allow more of that to happen?

**Participant** 29:57

It's definitely a really good format for that to happen because like I said earlier, I try to help humanize like all these different things we learn about other cultures and gives like a face to them.

**Researcher** 30:08

Right. Anything else?

**Participant** 30:13

Also, it's just really cool to like actually, like hear from students from other cultures, no, I was like what the subject of the class itself is.

**Researcher** 30:21

Right. Do you see any issues that that are problems with the format, something that we may never be able to address or a change?

**Participant** 30:45

I guess that's more like what you're trying to do with the format like, I suppose if you're looking for like full language or like full cultural immersion. You can get that same aspect as you would with like, a full study abroad. But if you're looking for just like communication and understanding one another and learning like specific things about a culture, this is like a great format to do that in a very easy way.

**Researcher** 31:11

Affordable.

**Participant** 31:13

Yeah.

**Researcher** 31:13

All right. Anything else you'd like to discuss something a question maybe I didn't ask that you were expecting me to and you want to respond to or is there anything you want to clarify from earlier add to?

**Participant** 31:56

I guess one thing I can add was specifically the project that we were working on in your headless exchange of students. What we were doing on those we were, as we were discussing different educational issues from our own school systems. So, educational systems were our like, I think mine was like the homework gap. When it came to like early COVID and the lack of like, the differences and that people had access to the internet. Whereas they talked about other things

that had to do with their own educational systems like, again, that stress that parents put onto their students to do a lot of supplemental learning. I guess that's all I can think of.

**Researcher** 32:38

It's all right. Anything else?

**Participant** 32:45

No. Not that I can think of right now.

**Researcher** 32:49

Okay. All right. Well, great. I really do appreciate your time and I'm going to review your transcript within the next, it's going to be a while because I've got a lot of interviews to do. So, within the next month, basically the month of February and I'd like to know if I might contact you if I have any follow up questions.

**Participant** 33:10

Yes, of course.

**Researcher** 33:11

Thank you. And then, of course, you may also contact me at any time if you have any concerns or questions. And then, like I said, in a few weeks, probably be late February, early March, I should have the final transcript ready for review. So, I sent your Amazon gift card. Can you confirm it?

**Participant** 33:30

Yeah. I got your email.

**Researcher** 33:31

You got it. Great. I just want, that's what I wanted to do is confirm before we hang up and make sure you got it. So, thank you so much for your valuable time. I really appreciate it and have a nice afternoon.

**Participant** 33:43

Thank you.

**Researcher** 33:44

All right. Take care.

**Participant** 33:45

Bye.



**Researcher** 33:45

All right.

**Participant** 33:46

Take care. Bye.

**Researcher** 33:47

Bye, bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

## Appendix L: Participant #4 Interview Transcription

### **Participant #4**

**Age:** 23

**Gender ID:** M

**Ethnicity:** Latino

**Area of Study:** STEM

**Mother's Highest Education:** High School  
Diploma

**Father's Highest Education:** Did Not Finish  
High School

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** 2+

**Childhood Neighborhood:** Very Integrated

**Childhood Community:** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 5

**Researcher** 0:02

Okay [REDACTED] Thank you for agreeing to talk about your Virtual Exchange experience. I know you have a busy schedule. So, I appreciate your time. As stated in the email, I am a doctoral student at Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia. And I am interviewing first time participants in International Virtual Exchange, which I also will call IVE. To learn more about your impressions and assess the potential of using this format. To give more students study abroad, like international like experiences. This interview is being recorded and should take up to an hour to complete. Also, I want to make sure you know that any information you share will not be attributed to you, or used to identify you in any way. You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from this research. You also are free to decline to answer any questions are that I asked or choose to discontinue the interview at any time. So with that said, do I have your permission to continue?

**Participant** 1:05

Yes.

**Researcher** 1:06

Great. Okay, I'd like to start by just confirming a few things from the survey. You indicated that you participated in an IVE in a university, either in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 Academic Year, is that correct?

**Participant** 1:23

Yeah, it was Spring of 2020.

**Researcher** 1:25

Spring 2020. Great. And can you just tell me, you told me when your exchange was you tell me what the course was and if you recall, and then if you happen to recall, approximately how many students in your class and approximately how many students in the class that you will exchange with. I don't need I just need a general idea like small class, medium, large that sort of thing.

**Participant** 1:52

So, it was as a Science Fiction Writing class. My class actually contained about I believe it was around like 50 people, and the class that was joining us, was around, I'm sorry, it was like 30, in the class that joined us was like about 20.

**Researcher** 2:21

30 in yours?

**Participant** 2:23

30 in mine and 20 in the other class.

**Researcher** 2:24

Okay, gotcha. A total of about 50.

**Participant** 2:28

Yes.

**Researcher** 2:28

Okay. And what country or location was the other class?

**Participant** 2:33

The other class was actually from China.

**Researcher** 2:37

You know, what part of China?

**Participant** 2:40

I believe, I'm not too sure where the class or the actual university was.

**Researcher** 2:49

That's alright. Not a problem. I wanted to just make sure that you did participate in at least one sort of, if not, it's okay. We'll still do the interview but were you in one, at least one video chat, like a platform similar to zoom in the exchange?

**Participant** 3:08

Yes, we had around, I believe, three different interactions in zoom, it was in zoom.

**Researcher** 3:20

Great, great, great. Okay. I'm taking notes to an end addition to this recording. Okay. So, now I'm going, I like to ask you some questions about your childhood up to college. You may decline any questions at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any more questions about your decision to decline to comment. And also, is that okay?

**Participant** 3:48

Yeah, that's fine.

**Researcher** 3:48

And also should point out that some of the questions, may sound similar, like you might be like, well, okay, she sort of asked that, but it's really like, I'm just trying to learn from you. So, sometimes helps me. If I just kind of rephrase it. Alright.

**Participant** 4:03

No, of course.

**Researcher** 4:02

Great. Now, you indicated on the survey that you grew up in a very integrated neighborhood with 40% to 90% from racial or ethnic backgrounds different from your own. Can you just describe that a little bit for me? I'm looking to learn more about like, we're looking at this global setting. And so, I'm trying to learn more about like, how integrated or segregate how homogenous if you will, or not homogenous neighborhood was for an individual that I interviewed. Can you just describe, like the neighborhoods that you grew up in?

**Participant** 4:40

So, I grew up in the Suburbs of Chicago. So, a lot of the country the neighborhoods really consisted of, I would say maybe like 20% White, 20%-30% Latino or Hispanic, 20%-30% Black and I would say like maybe 5%-10% was Asian. And you know, the elementary squared row contain like ESL courses for children who didn't speak English. And yeah, I would say I grew up in a rather integrated neighborhood.

**Researcher** 5:27

I actually worked for the Chicago Tribune for seven years. So, this is great, because, because I can not like, I also grew up here in Atlanta, but I worked in Chicago. So, that's great. Because I can understand when you tell me of the neighborhood, which is not again, we're not identify, we're not even going to say DePaul University will say, Midwestern University larger middle, when we describe people. So, you mind telling me the community?

**Participant** 6:02

Yeah. So, I grew up between one time was Skokie and the other time was wheeling.

**Researcher** 6:11

Yeah. Okay. I know Skokie. You really were in the Suburbs. Okay, gotcha. All right. Now, just one other question, would you do you recall the name of your elementary school? And this is the reason I'm asking this is because I have decided to look up census tract data to learn more about the makeup of different people's areas. Again, I would not identify you in any way and what not named the school anywhere. It's just sort of, I can describe that area more accurately. Do you remember your elementary school? Would you mind sharing?

**Participant** 6:51

I want to go into two different elementary schools. I only went to the one in Skokie, for half of kindergarten actually. And then the one in Wheeling, I went for the rest of my career, Kindergarten and 5th grade and that was the one in Skokie was Madison Elementary School. And the one in Wheeling was Booth Tarkington Elementary School.

**Researcher** 7:20

Tarkington. You said Blue Tarkington?

**Participant** 7:25

Booth Tarkington.

**Researcher** 7:26

Booth. Okay. Really great. That will just help me so much. You did a good job of describing the diversity. So, thinking about Wheeling in that community, did you know many people who had traveled or lived abroad studied abroad traveled? Well, let me rephrase. Because I need to change this in here. People who actually lived abroad, or who had studied abroad first, did you know people in that category?

**Participant** 8:20

So, do you mean abroad like in an academic sense, or just people who?

**Researcher** 8:26

Right. So, there's some people who you know, they've moved. They have immigrant backgrounds. But there are also people who actually study abroad who you know, for a period of time and then there are people who have had global careers, you know, who have just Doctors without borders or who work for an international company. So, that's kind of actually what I'm looking for.

**Participant** 9:21

So, I'll just say both. I did know people who, you know, including my own family, just first generation immigrants and I also knew people who did work abroad. That would include like a couple of my friend's parents. And at my high school, they would do like the majority of your Spring break. I think our Spring break was like two weeks, would spend that depending on which language you chose to study in high school. You will go abroad to that country. So, if you were

studying Spanish you would go to. I believe they would actually take you to Spain. If you spoke Italian, they would take you to Italy.

**Researcher** 10:13

How was this fund do?

**Participant** 10:16

You will pay for it, out of pocket.

**Researcher** 10:18

Okay, so there was available.

**Participant** 10:21

It was available through the school, you know, the teachers who had constructed you, would be along there with you.

**Researcher** 10:29

So, was it the case that maybe some students weren't able to go just for financial reasons or was there some funding to help that?

**Participant** 10:39

There were actually like, you could do waivers and they would give you a discounted price and obviously, like, you would still continue to need to pay out of pocket because you need to pay for your food.

**Researcher** 10:56

Gotcha. And this was, I'm going to move on, but I just wanted one other thing and that some of this, I might maybe just follow up, but was this required? What I said actually...



**Participant** 11:16

It was optional. Yeah.

**Researcher** 11:18

Did a lot of people do it? Was it a kind of...?

**Participant** 11:20

Yeah. Yeah, I knew. So, my class, I took Italian, in high school and in my class around, it was a class over like 25 and around 10 to 12 went.

**Researcher** 11:40

To Italy, right?

**Participant** 11:41

Yeah, definitely. I'm not too sure what part.

**Researcher** 11:45

That's a great program. I love that idea. All right and you mentioned you knew first generation. Did you have any family members who had actually studied abroad, or live, not just kind of a vacation for two weeks taking pictures or week or whatever? You know, I'm talking more really living abroad or studying abroad for a longer period of time.

**Participant** 12:11

I now personally, I don't know anyone who has been there for like, more than like a month.

**Researcher** 12:16

Right. Okay. All right. Okay.

**Participant** 12:20

Excluding like immigrants.

**Researcher** 12:22

Right. That experience, right. So how would you describe your overall knowledge and perception of international travel at that time?

**Participant** 12:39

At that time, I would say like, my experience is a bit biased, because my parents are immigrants. So, I knew that like, if they wanted to they could go somewhere else. But I know my sister also had the opportunity to go to France because she was studying French.

**Researcher** 12:58

Oh, do you have a family member who's...?

**Participant** 13:02

She didn't go.

**Researcher** 13:03

She didn't go. Okay, go ahead. But you did have the opportunity. Thank you.

**Participant** 13:07

Yeah.

**Researcher** 13:09

So go ahead, you were saying may be your view is just going to be different. Because...

**Participant** 13:16

I would know, I feel like I would know a lot about international travel. I remember my parents. Actually, around my junior year of high school, they were trying to get me to go to specific schools where my major would contain a program where I could go abroad and we're trying to reinforce that. It would be an awesome experience to go abroad and to study there and to really take in other cultures.

**Researcher** 13:49

Your parents encouraged it and we're here, yeah, that's okay. Where were your parents?

Who immigrated? Were you born here in the States?

**Participant** 14:02

I was born here in the United States. Yeah.

**Researcher** 14:04

Were both of your parents born in another country?

**Participant** 14:07

Yeah, both of my parents are born in Mexico.

**Researcher** 14:09

Okay, what part of Mexico?

**Participant** 14:12

My mother is from New Choka and my father is from Guadalajara.

**Researcher** 14:26

I studied years ago at a school in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Definitely, Spanish. That was like one of my first post high school little trips. All right and I lived in a Mexican American neighborhood also in your city and in Pilsen.

**Participant** 14:46

Oh, yeah. Pilsen. I know Pilsen very well.

**Researcher** 14:48

Yeah, I was in Pilsen, way back. It's been a while it was in the 90s. But I love and miss Pilsen.

**Participant** 14:56

I will say that it has changed a bit.

**Researcher** 14:58

Yeah, I know because I've visited and I'm like, wow. Yeah, it was different. Then and I was kind of in an artsy creative, you know, because I wrote for the terbium but a lot of my friends were like, kind of artists and so forth. So, it was a great, great thing. All right, we're going to move on. Is there anything that that offered you that you maybe didn't have access to growing up? I mean, your situation you've already pointed out is different. But I'm talking to some people who've never had any international experience, but nevertheless, I feel compelled to ask you that. So, watching, how would you respond?

**Participant** 16:09

Yeah, I would say, it was a really eye opening experience to even communicate with people who were international like, you could say that when you go on a vacation to somewhere like, yeah. You can speak to locals but you won't speak to them. In a level you would speak to in this type. Of course, I remember specifically, like, I was up at 3am, because I needed to do some homework. I was about to finish up and I was going to go to bed and the training students were actually they were up. It was, I think it was around their afternoon. I remember that I spoke to them about like a specific. It's actually like a franchise, Japanese franchise called Gundam and it's very popular to build something called Gunpla, which are these, you know, Gundam are robots. And you can build these models that are replicas of that mission. I remember speaking about that, in the group chat, saying that I had just bought one. Actually multiple students had come and said that they also really enjoyed building. It was so weird to find like a common thing from someone

who's halfway across the world. It was really interesting to see that a lot of times, people can be very similar to you, regardless of you know, that language barrier.

**Researcher** 17:51

Right. Right. And then, you're really kind of getting at just what I'm looking to explore. So, I would like to focus on this a little bit more. He pointed out first, that it was eye opening because you were saying that in this format, in this platform, you were able to share some things that you don't really share with people when you're a tourist, one.

**Participant** 18:20

Yeah.

**Researcher** 18:22

And then also, correct me if I'm wrong, but you could do something different. Correct me if I'm wrong, about when you are communicating with people when they're actually in their own cultural contexts. You know, like, you're in yours and they're there. You're not one person somewhere, you know what I mean? Can you talk about that, is that? What was that like for you?

**Participant** 19:11

I would say like, yeah, it was, though they could, we were in like a group chat platform called WeChat. So, it's only available in China

**Researcher** 19:24

Yes, yes. I didn't know WeChat.

**Participant** 19:27

And so, it was awesome to speak to them on that platform because regardless if they were speaking to me directly or not. I remember that they would speak to each other about things, sending some photos of what they had eaten that day and he was really interesting to see the food

and the way they interacted and the way they spoke and it was a lot. Like it was almost like peering like, through a window. I would say it was a lot similar like keep watching but virtually, without having to leave my home we can. Although I can feel like maybe that is an improper way of experiencing something like that, I would say it would be just the same as going out there in person and being in like a bookstore or something and watching people interact, but not knowing what they're really talking about.

**Researcher** 20:49

Were they able to see things that the kids from Stateside were doing as well? Do we you guys sometimes? So, that was...

**Participant** 20:57

We used to talk to. Yeah.

**Researcher** 21:00

So, the way it works then, because I know WeChat, but not this well. So, I know it because one of our professors is from China, one of my dissertation professors is from China and she uses it. I was sitting with her one time, when she was on the phone talking to her students and all of this, but I didn't know. So, let me ask, when you're in WeChat, you are able to see conversations that other people are having with each other, you're able to just kind of see them?

**Participant** 21:27

Yeah, it was like a group chat between the Chinese students and the students from Nepal.

**Researcher** 21:34

Okay. I got it. Yeah.

**Participant** 21:37

So, everyone was involved and you know, both professors, all the students, they would give announcements like, hey, that this day, we're going to have the meeting. That's going to include video from both the Chinese students and the American students.

**Researcher** 21:54

Yeah.

**Participant** 21:54

And yeah. So, you would all sort of speak in there, it was like, just I wouldn't know, like a common area really.

**Researcher** 22:01

Okay. Common areas that way. In this franchise, you mentioned, I just I'm just curious from my background, I want to look it up. I don't think I would mention it. But is it GM Chum?

**Participant** 22:26

Now, it's Gundam. So, it's called G U N D A M.

**Researcher** 22:33

Okay.

**Participant** 22:34

It's about it's like, a near future sort of setting where people use robots for fighting.

**Researcher** 22:44

Is it gaming or something else?

**Participant** 22:48

It's actually an animation and it's also in literature. So, it's a manga and then animate.

**Researcher** 22:48

Okay. You were into that and then it was just nice, you said, to be able to talk to people who knew a lot about this as well.

**Participant** 22:58

Yeah. They also showed me their models and it was actually really awesome. I mean, though, it also was really cool. Because they would show me like, the models that they had built but in the background, it would show me like that, the background of their home. And it was also awesome to see like, the parallels between the American home and the Chinese.

**Researcher** 23:41

Right, thank you. Just the little detail like this is happening you know, that we're able to have. This sort of stuff happening where you can see the background. Yeah, I remember that too. Some thing you could see the background like things what was interesting to me was how things are so compact, how well they use smaller space, you know, just very compact scenarios but a different, I don't know if you notice that at all.

**Participant** 24:31

Yeah. You know, the population density channel is so large that the homes like I mean, I don't know the scale to size of everything, but like the homes are filled, but they look so perfectly welcoming.



**Researcher** 24:51

Yes.

**Participant** 24:52

And that was like so interesting to see like how you can have bookcases and shelving all in one area but still have enough Personal space to where you don't feel sort of cramped.

**Researcher** 25:03

Different design and so forth. I actually spent half of my you were talking about half a year kindergarten, I spent half of my kindergarten in Suburban Tokyo. And so, I remember our home.

**Participant** 25:15

Oh.

**Researcher** 25:15

Yeah, our home was so, it was Eastern and Western. It was an Air Force Base. I mean, like, yes, but what was interesting is but they it still was built in Japan by Japanese. So, we had the bath was a low bath like Japanese. We had, I remember, I have a very good memory. Plus there are some pictures too, but a lot of is from memory. But I remember we had for whatever reason, we had Western table for in the kitchen but when the dining room we had low table in the dining room Hall.

**Participant** 25:52

Oh. Okay. Yeah.

**Researcher** 25:53

Yeah, it was just so, it was very wonderful experience. Anyway, moving on. Okay. Again, these your situation and what you're describing is a little different. But I'm just going to ask very

quickly, did this exchange in anyway influenced your interest in international travel? I have a list of these.

**Participant** 26:23

I would say it actually would reinforce my views reinforced like, I definitely wanted to travel to just different continents. In general, like, seeing the different cultures is always really interest me. But I would say that definitely made me want to go or even, if I could travel to China, I definitely would.

**Researcher** 26:23

So, it kind of reinforced you. You were already interested, but it definitely made you say, yeah, I do want to do. So, how often have you been abroad and where?

**Participant** 27:11

I'm sorry.

**Researcher** 27:13

You're in your case. How often have you traveled outside of the United States and where?

**Participant** 27:18

I have traveled about so, I've traveled like five times to Mexico, where I've spent like multiple weeks and months there. You know, once I spent like two months and other I spent like two weeks and then I didn't go wants to Canada for a little while.

**Researcher** 27:42

Okay, great. Anything else in the other country?

**Participant** 27:47

No.

**Researcher** 27:48

Okay and how long were you in Canada?

**Participant** 27:51

Oh, it was like about a week. I was just, I had the opportunity to visit a friend that I hadn't met online. So, I decided to think.

**Researcher** 28:02

Okay, great. Now, did this exchange, in a way influence your interest in global careers working or volunteering abroad in any way?

**Participant** 28:14

Volunteering abroad would be awesome. I had a friend who did volunteer work in Tibet. She didn't have signal. But when she came back, she showed me the pictures that she had. Really, the projects that were completed there and, you know, I first like when I saw, I'm like, oh, that's cool. Like, she was able to do that. I don't know if I would really do that. But through this, my professor would actually tell us about he would clarify some things to us about just China in general. I remember thinking like, although, you know, we know China as this like, huge country with like, a huge population. I think the median income there is like \$20,000 American.

**Researcher** 29:14

US?

**Participant** 29:14

Yeah. And there are parts of China which are incredibly impoverished. And so, if I could do volunteer work, just it doesn't have to be China just anywhere. But I think that'd be very we're just cool.

**Researcher** 29:33

Right. Okay, anything else you'd like to say before we move on to one the next topic about the neighborhood you grew up in and this exchange. Anything, else to reiterate before we move on.

**Participant** 30:01

Oh, no.

**Researcher** 30:03

Okay, great. Now some questions about the format used in your exchange. In the survey, when asked to rate your overall IVE experience, you chose 1, this is what I have. Here that you chose 1 out of 5, with 1 being Very Unsatisfied, and 5 being Very Satisfied, is that correct?

**Participant** 30:29

I said, I was unsatisfied with the?

**Researcher** 30:31

I saw one and now after talking to you, I'm wondering if that was, if you were saying that.

**Participant** 30:39

There might have been, I misunderstood the placements and want to be the best.

**Researcher** 30:44

So, out of 1 to 5, and we can change that. That's one of the reasons we'd like to do these interviews, because we know you're busy. And so, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Very Unsatisfied, and 5, being Very Satisfied. How would you rate your IVE experience?

**Participant** 31:04

I'd say it was like, 4.5 to 5.

**Researcher** 31:08

Okay and why would you select that rating?

**Participant** 31:11

I was actually, I really enjoyed the sort of the overall feeling of the mutual experiences that we have, regardless of, you know, where we're located, as well as learning new things about Chinese students at how they really just interact with each other and others most definitely, very interesting experience.

**Researcher** 31:42

I've heard this, you mentioned this before, so the mutual experiences you have, regardless of where you're located, tell me more.

**Participant** 31:52

I'd like I know entering university in China can be very difficult. I'm not too sure about the standards. The university to the Chinese students were at. But I just know that a lot of times very rigorous, depending on the prestigiousness of the school that they're going to and I would compare that to really just the standardized testing that we have here. Although I do believe that it's, I'll be the sort of try to hammer that in over there. If you really care about secondary education here in

the United States, then you're really going to want to do well. I know students who, like when I was in high school students who dedicated weeks, days, hours upon hours studying for the ACT here and for some it paid off for others, maybe they got something slightly higher than what they wanted. But I know there's cram schools in China, where they just stay there and like, it can be a very serious you know, the results of the tests can be very serious within the family of the Chinese students.

**Researcher** 33:28

So, we mutually...

**Participant** 33:30

Although I...

**Researcher** 33:30

Go ahead. I'm sorry.

**Participant** 33:31

I'm sorry. No, you can. You can go ahead.

**Researcher** 33:32

Well, you said there were mutual experiences you had regardless of where you're located. I think maybe being college students, I see what you're saying here, I'm wondering if there's anything else that you feel you discovered about, you know, like you said, it sounds like you're saying you have discovered you had a lot in common. And I'm wondering if you can articulate that feeling more.

**Participant** 34:18

Other than like the topic of Gundam being similar, I also know that some of the female students of that class four I really enjoyed it. Although I did specify their female, I'd say like, I really, I actually enjoy cooking and they also enjoy cooking and they had like similar Western cuisines that they enjoyed preparing more than others. And also like, I actually was given like, I'm not to share what the YouTube equivalent in China is what, there was a link to a website for a cooking recipe of a recipe that they had just prepared.

**Researcher** 35:11

So, they shared a link from, was this just a general link on their YouTube? And I can look it up too. I have read before what it was because I remember when we had ours, but did they share a link from their YouTube a general link of cooking? How to prepare something? Or are you saying that they even showed something they had posted?

**Participant** 35:33

It was just a general link, some creative had made that, you know. Yeah.

**Researcher** 35:38

They shared with you or they were sharing this?

**Participant** 35:39

They shared with me.

**Researcher** 35:40

Did you share any recipe?

**Participant** 35:42

I did not share any. My professor did state that we shouldn't really share links unless it was from a Chinese website. I just want to know how to go about looking that up, but I just wouldn't want to get any of the students in trouble.

**Researcher** 36:03

Right, right. I understand. And this was, so you got this kind of friendship connection going with some of your cohorts there to the point that you were actually sharing recipes. Like here how you prepare. Here's probably parents this just like, I mean, you just like, here's the recipe, like if I'm learning about another culture, and a friend says, oh, it's not that hard to make you can make. Here's a recipe. It was just like that.

**Participant** 36:34

Yeah.

**Researcher** 36:36

And what was the, do you remember it? Was it one recipe or were there several?

**Participant** 36:39

It was the one that stood out to me and that I remember is one from, it's called WA CCM, I think. It's a [36:56 inaudible].

**Researcher** 36:39

Okay. Can you put it in chat? You know how to spell it?



**Participant** 36:58

Yeah.

**Researcher** 37:00

That would be great.

**Participant** 37:01

I'll do the Romanization of it.

**Researcher** 37:03

And if you even have the link, if I can look at it would be so awesome.

**Participant** 37:07

Yeah. Let me look it up. I remember because like...

**Researcher** 37:10

Thank you.

**Participant** 37:10

You know, stood out to me. I don't have the link. I don't have the link too. Do you get this what I mean?

**Researcher** 37:15

That's alright. Whatever you can share.

**Participant** 37:17

That's the one. That I looked at. This is like a, something that I looked up after they had showed it to me because I didn't want to really. It was I found it really considerate that they sent me the link to that, but I didn't want to really visit the website for too long. That's one of the things that I found during that when I just looked up on my own. This is a little bit after the course had

been finished. I was just thinking about it the other day, but yeah, it's just noodle, it has like snails in it. They told me that it was their absolute favorite that they loved it. But they said that maybe like a lot of Western people wouldn't enjoy it because at the center of it. Between the pickled bamboo sheets and snails. I heard it's lovely appetizing, but that's a cultural difference. I really enjoy [38:27 foreign name], which are [38:29 foreign name], which you know, a lot of my friends really don't enjoy it. It wouldn't. I may consider you've been eating it.

**Researcher** 38:38

Yeah, it's great. All right. Moving on. Anything else before we leave that topic? I have just one more topic. We will be wrapping up. Anything else about?

**Participant** 38:50

No.

**Researcher** 38:50

Okay, so now, to close, I'd like to focus a little bit on racial, cultural and ethnic identities in exchange. Again, you may decline any question at all. If you do, I will confirm your decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline. Is it okay for me to proceed? Now. Okay. Before participating in this exchange, how would you describe your view of the stereotypes of US residents by people in China?

**Researcher** 38:50

I've like maybe the Chinese share the same sort of stereotypical out views of Americans really just the most obviously be like overweight or loud. Perhaps like I'm very patriotic and I know some people believe that most Americans are dumb.

**Researcher** 40:10

And uninformed about other cultures like, don't speak any, we only speak English. We don't. I mean, I'm not trying to throw, you know, but yeah...

**Participant** 40:22

I know what you mean. Yeah, like very ignorant of other people's cultures to a point where it's like, oh, you're in America speak American, you know.

**Researcher** 40:30

Right, right, right. Like we just all about us. Right. So, you would say that was there, maybe the true thought they might have thought about you. So, after the speech, did you put that view change at all?

**Participant** 40:46

I can't really confirm if any, anything that we did really change their mind. I know that you know, speaking on that new experience that I had earlier about like Gundam, you know, they didn't really feel like people would have known what that was out here.

**Researcher** 41:09

Right. So, I get you what you're saying. Let me ask, let me praise a little bit differently. So, do you think that, did you come away from this exchange thinking? Yeah, that's what they really think of us. They think we are just overweight and patriotic or you know, they think we are loud.

**Participant** 41:38

I would say that like, yes. Some of my things my apprehensions were sort of undressed. I think one student like, candidly did say like, oh, like, I thought all Americans were like this. I can't remember exactly what they said and I wish I could bring up the chat log to really do that. But I got a new phone, so that chat log is raised. Yeah, I do remember specifically one, student going like, oh, I thought all Americans are like this and then like a couple of other students were like, oh, like, you know, they have translate.

**Researcher** 42:30

Okay. Now, that's one way I wanted to address this. Now, I'm going to ask it, just a little differently. Before participating in this exchange, how would you describe your view of stereotypes about the Chinese?

**Participant** 42:56

The stereotype that I had, the impression is that I had, all the attorneys would be like, I always felt like they'd be more, you know, sort of, like, uptight. I always felt like they'd be, like, incredibly intelligent to the point where maybe like, communicating with them would just result in me being insulted in some manner. I always thought that really, like, I never really even knew that I could even speak with them. Like, to put it bluntly like, I just felt like, either they wouldn't speak the language or if they knew the language that they would not be able to speak with me due to some circumstance within their country, between the different governments.

**Researcher** 43:53

Did this exchange change that view in any way for you?

**Participant** 44:00

Yeah. I had. They also gave us like a student counterpart. So like, for some people, we were given another student from that Chinese University to speak to you and introduce yourselves and sort of talk with. I had a student named Max Wong. She was really cool because she told me that she only had like an hour where she could talk on a different platform. So, we would be had to use Instagram because that was easy for me. She was willing to make that. You know, give me that time a day. I remember speaking to her and finding that the music she was into was a lot similar. It was although it was like, the Chinese equivalents with music and it was really interesting to see that, how many people have seen stuff like that. Honestly like, I would say, I mean, you're in the fact that I even know like, the type of music that they have in China.

**Researcher** 45:11

Right. So, you found had similar interest in music but not the same bands or artists.

**Participant** 45:19

No. Similar genre like, I would say, the genre would be like, maybe an alternative rock band. Although, obviously songs would like not be the same, genre wouldn't be the same. A genre is defined by sort of the same instruments the same time signature, the same scales and notes that they use. And so, I don't remember the band, she told me and I want to try and save that. But I do remember listening to wins and hearing the similarities. Obviously, once you reach the point where

the lyric said, come on. It was very different. Singing in China, isn't the same as in here. It's the same, you know, the same can be said about any culture in between. American pop singers, and Mexican pop singers, and Russian pop singers.

**Researcher** 46:27

Right. Now, thinking about race and identity in this exchange, your identity as Latina X person from with roots in Mexico. Is there anything about the exchange that made you uncomfortable?

**Participant** 46:45

I don't, to be perfectly honest. I don't know if they really knew that I was like, a different culture rather than just by telling from the color of my skin and they were considered enough to not really address that. I know that can be sort of off putting to some people due to whatever preconceived notions that they may have, but they were nice enough to not really address, that I was like, a darker skin by them of.

**Researcher** 47:24

Okay, all right. Would you say, you would you describe yourself as a Latino who have a more Mestizo, or would it be more Rubio?

**Participant** 47:36

Oh, I'm definitely Mestizo.

**Researcher** 47:38

Okay. All right. So, you might look what they may see as someone who is Latin American.

**Participant** 47:46

Yeah.

**Researcher** 47:47

In other words, you know, because there are some people from I mean, I know people I've met, because I have traveled in Mexico more than once and so forth. You know, if you didn't hear there, maybe the accent or anything you think, they weren't White European?

**Participant** 48:05

Yeah.

**Researcher** 48:06

Yeah. So.

**Participant** 48:07

I have a couple of friends like that White appearing but really insights are very like, my friend was born in Mexico, you know I mean, people just assume he's White.

**Researcher** 48:18

Exactly. I actually people don't realize it as much because it's very complicated in Black America because there are people who, many more people who appear. Now we wouldn't be quite as much but they are appear maybe like, Italian, or Latino, and they're actually just like you said, totally from a Black community and so forth. So, one second, hold on.

**Participant** 48:50

No worries.

**Researcher** 49:00

Sorry about that. We're almost done. Okay, great and I see. Okay, now, so in that platform, no, we knew there wasn't anything that really made you feel uncomfortable. You didn't feel like somebody was saying, no one was asking you anything you didn't feel.

**Participant** 49:18

Yeah.

**Researcher** 49:18

Okay, good. Now, just one last question and we'll be done i. Thinking now about this same question. Is there anything about international travel and study abroad? Thinking about your race and ethnicity that would make you feel uncomfortable.

**Participant** 49:35

Yes. I can flash, the previous job that I had, my bosses were Russian. I had expressed to them that potentially, it'd be amazing to just go to Russia just to see. I know, it's like a huge, huge country and there's so many different climates within that same country. You know, expands 11 time zones, it's crazy. You know, it'd be awesome to go and they told me like, the interesting to me very nice manner like, Yeah. Well, you would have to go exclusively to hugely populated cities in order to remain safe. I just have known that for a while that a lot of times. It's as you know, someone who's not the same, someone who's not White. It may be a little bit dangerous for me to travel to places that are lighter skin tones.



**Researcher** 50:48

So, it's all very interesting. I do want to just say before we wrap up with the Russian bosses. I want to just make sure because sometimes people will say, well, that might not be that they were saying to him that it was because he was a darker skin person. Did you think they were just saying their areas that are not safe just in general?

**Participant** 53:23

No, they informed me that they're just they call them Gopnik. Gopnik technically...

**Researcher** 53:30

What's that?

**Participant** 53:31

Gopnik. So, it's like I compared to sort of like, for lack of a better word and really a better term. It'd be like, sort of like the rednecks of Russia. So, there are sort of articles in cases. Now, too well documented, but you know, from their experience. Regardless, I'm not too sure how they know about of this. They know that some may be offended at the sight of someone who is not the same skin color as them. So, they may even like it may even be the point where they would attack on.

**Researcher** 54:27

And this job was, can you just generally describe what type of work it was?

**Participant** 54:32

Yeah, it was just IT work.

**Researcher** 54:34

Okay. They were this was a company.

**Participant** 54:37

Yeah.

**Researcher** 54:38

Okay. All right. Is there anything else you'd like to address some question that I didn't ask that you thought I might ask or something you want to clarify before we wrap up anything? Kind of on your mind? I want to say I wanted to tell her this or I thought she would ask me that.

**Participant** 54:56

No, I don't really think so.

**Researcher** 54:59

Okay, All right, thank you so much, Brandon for your valuable time. This is great.

**Participant** 55:05

Of course.

**Researcher** 55:05

I'm sorry, you shared some amazing stuff. I just really appreciate your openness, and willingness to talk to me. So, what I have done now, well, first of all two things. I am going to review your transcript. And we'd like to know if I might call you if I have any questions or need

to clarify anything and if it could be a call or email or texts or what would be best for you doesn't matter.

**Participant** 56:13

I would say any more would be the best way to contact me. Yeah.

**Researcher** 56:18

Gotcha.

**Participant** 56:19

Phone calls, I don't do well, if I don't. Typically, you'll hang up.

**Researcher** 56:23

I understand. I hear you. Oh, it's getting crazy. Okay. And then of course, if you may contact me to at any time, if you have any concerns or questions, you can think of something later you like this, that whatever. And then in sometime in March, I'm going to have a final transcript ready for everyone to review for accuracy. So, the details of that, because it's my first time doing a dissertation. I don't, I'm not clear on exactly how it is. But I will be following the protocol that set out by our IRB, which regulates basically, research involving human subjects. So, I will definitely whatever I'm supposed to do, we'll do that. But the lines are open, you have to have my email address, of course. Now, last but not least. I sent you an Amazon gift card to that email address. Are you able to check and see if it's there?

**Participant** 57:16

Just give me a moment.

**Researcher** 57:18

Take your time.

**Participant** 57:21

Ah, I see the email here.

**Researcher** 57:23

Wonderful. Wonderful. Okay. Well, thank you so very much for your time. I really appreciate it.

**Participant** 57:29

Of course, was really just to put my feelings in perspective and definitely put them out there.

**Researcher** 57:38

Yeah, you're great. You just really have a bright person with a great future. So, and I love this dog image. I'm I have to say, this is just the nose that part of the, I love animals.

**Participant** 57:56

I have one quick question.

**Researcher** 57:58

Yes.

**Participant** 57:58

Would you send me your dissertation when you're finished?

**Researcher** 58:05

Sir, I'd love to. Yes, yes, I can definitely do that.

**Participant** 58:09

And it'll be interested in reading. Yeah.

**Researcher** 58:11

Yeah. This is great. I'm actually writing a journal article too. But I guess the dissertation will come before the journal article. So yes, I'm involved in a group called IAVC, it's the International Virtual Exchange. "C", what's the C for? International Virtual Exchange Conference. Yeah. And we present also on this stuff. So eventually, there may be something that is on YouTube and I'm also pitching this for something called Three Minute Thesis, where you present your topic. You know and so I probably let you guys see that too. Because that's going to be recorded. I was accepted to go to the next round. So, I'm going to review.

**Participant** 59:00

That's awesome.

**Researcher** 59:01

Yeah, so I was just happy to share with all of you guys because you've been so helpful to me, what comes out of this? Okay. All right.

**Participant** 59:12

Awesome.

**Researcher** 59:12

Great. Thank you so much. You have a nice afternoon.

**Participant** 59:15

Thank you. You as well.

**Researcher** 59:15

Okay. Bye, bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

## Appendix M: Participant #5 Interview Transcription

### **Participant #5**

**Age:** 21

**Gender ID:** F

**Ethnicity:** Asian

**Area of Study:** Business

**Mother's Highest Education:** Master's

**Father's Highest Education:** Ph.D.

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** 2+

**Childhood Neighborhood:** Very Integrated

**Childhood Community:** Homogenous 10%-less

**IVE Experience Rating:** 3

**Researcher** 0:03

All right, [REDACTED] Thank you for agreeing to talk about your Virtual Exchange experience. I know you have a busy schedule. So, I appreciate your time. As stated in the email, I am a doctoral student at Georgia State University and I am interviewing first time participants in International Virtual Exchange, which I also will call IVE to learn more about your impressions and assess the potential of using this format to give many more students study abroad like experiences. This interview is being recorded and it should take up to an hour to complete. Also, I want to make sure that you know that (1) Any information you share will not be attributed to you and are used to identify you in any way, (2) You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from your from this research, and (3) You also are free to decline to answer any question I asked or choose to discontinue the interview at any time. So, with that said, do I have your permission to continue?

**Participant** 1:02

Yes.

**Researcher** 1:03

Great. So, I'd like to start by just confirming somebody's responses in the survey. You indicated that you participated in an IVE at your university in the 20 that within the last three academic years, is that correct?

**Participant** 1:18

Yes.

**Researcher** 1:19

Okay, so then, when was your exchange? And what was the course that it was affiliated with? What semester? If you remember, what year?

**Participant** 1:31

I believe it was Spring 2021.

**Researcher** 1:33

Okay, and what was the course?

**Participant** 1:37

Geography.

**Researcher** 1:38

Alright. And where was, I'm sorry, if I don't have your school, but what was the school? Because I'm talking to people outside of [REDACTED] and who was the professor, if you recall?



**Participant** 1:51

It was Georgia State University. I don't remember, I think the professor was [REDACTED].

**Researcher** 1:58

Okay. [REDACTED] So now, I have some questions about your childhood up to college. You may decline to answer any questions at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline to comment. And then some of the questions also, I should say, will sound similar, but my goal is just to learn from you. Is it okay for me to proceed?

**Participant** 2:57

Yes.

**Researcher** 2:58

Okay. So, you indicated on the survey, that you grew up in a very integrated neighborhood. Can you just describe it for me?

**Participant** 3:24

So, I kind of grew up in like two different places. I grew up in Michigan, Farmington Hills, which is 20 minutes from Detroit. And then I finished high school in Savannah, Georgia.

**Researcher** 3:35

Okay, so Farmington Hills. How long were you there?

**Participant** 3:39

For 1st.

**Researcher** 3:41

What grade? How long?

**Participant** 3:43

Until I was 15.

**Researcher** 3:44

Oh, okay. Were you born there?

**Researcher** 3:48

Yes. Okay. So, I do know, Farmington Hills and Familiar with it. And then it was Savannah. Savannah at age 15. And so, in both of these communities, would you say they were very integrated, very diverse?

**Participant** 4:20

Yeah. They're very diverse.

**Researcher** 4:22

Do you remember your elementary school? If so, just for my background from my research. Could I write that down? The name of the elementary school?

**Participant** 4:58

Yeah, the elementary school was Gill. G I L L Elementary.

**Researcher** 5:03

Okay. That was in Farmington Hills or nearby?

**Participant** 5:07

It was in Farmington Hills.

**Researcher** 5:09

Great.

**Participant** 5:11

Then, for middle school, it was Power Middle School.

**Researcher** 5:16

Okay.

**Participant** 5:18

[5:18 inaudible]

**Researcher** 5:19

Okay. And so you were in Savannah at age 15 and what was Savannah like for you in terms of diversity, meeting people from other places and so forth.

**Participant** 5:39

It was pretty diverse. I feel like, so moving from Michigan, they didn't really have like ROTC and stuff in my school, moving to Savannah was like a whole new concept. I didn't even know what ROTC was but that was popular and a lot of people were in Savannah, because of ROTC. Oh, sorry, because of the military, because it is a base camp. So, I feel like that kind of

brought people with different backgrounds. And then it was also very diverse in the fact that a lot of, there was a huge Indian population, because a lot of businesses down there. Yeah, it was pretty diverse.

**Researcher** 6:20

Okay. And you describe yourself as Asian? Could you share? Tell me a little bit about your background ethnically.

**Participant** 6:33

Yeah. So, I was born in Michigan, but my parents are both North Indian.

**Researcher** 6:38

Okay. Well, what part?

**Participant** 6:41

They're from Delhi.

**Researcher** 6:42

Okay, great. And when did they do they immigrate here, married with kids, or were they both like young and met here and met in Michigan?

**Participant** 6:57

They had an arranged marriage in India, but my dad came here to study for his PhD.

**Researcher** 7:01

Okay. All right, that's great. And did he study in Michigan?

**Participant** 7:21

Virginia Tech.

**Researcher** 7:22

Virginia Tech. So, he did that first and then eventually ended up in Farmington Hills.

**Participant** 7:29

Yeah, for his job.

**Researcher** 7:31

Gotcha. All right. Now, also, in the survey, you indicated that you lived in a homogenous. I'm sorry. So we talked about the neighborhood you lived in. But I also asked a question about like, when you went to school, where you like, if you work or a job at some point, or your house of worship. And you indicated that the best description would be homogenous. Where you share the same racial or ethnic background was less than 10% of the community. Is that correct? And if so, could you describe that area that was homogenous?

**Participant** 8:15

Well, now that I guess I said there are a lot of Indians. I guess that doesn't kind of go with it. I feel like in school. It was mainly Caucasian or African American, there wasn't many Asians in Savannah at least.

**Researcher** 8:37

And Farmington Hills a little bit more?

**Participant** 8:40

Farmington Hills had a little bit more maybe like 15%, but not that many. It was also mainly more like Caucasians and African Americans.

**Researcher** 8:49

So, when you say 15%, are you talking about all Asians? That would be people from China or background from China, Japan, as well as India and in other parts of the world that are considered part of Asia?

**Participant** 9:19

Yeah, all of Asia.

**Researcher** 9:22

From that would be about 15 and what percent would you estimate?

**Participant** 9:51

Maybe 5%.

**Researcher** 9:52

Okay. And then would you say it was about an even split between a Caucasian and African American otherwise.

**Participant** 10:04

I think there was a higher African American, Caucasian.

**Researcher** 10:06

Caucasian in Savannah. Yeah. High School. And what about Latino?

**Participant** 10:22

Maybe 10%.

**Researcher** 10:25

Okay.

**Participant** 10:26

Maybe 8%.

**Researcher** 10:27

Okay, gotcha.

**Participant** 10:30

I'm trying to see I need to make sure they add up to 100.

**Researcher** 10:32

No, no, I get an idea. That's what, this is fine. Now in the communities that you grew up in Farmington Hills in Savannah, growing up, did you know many people who had traveled or lived abroad sounds like your dad, but I'm going to get to family member, so other than your family members. Did you know people who had traveled or lived abroad? Not visited taking pictures as a tourist but really, truly like you mentioned. A study for a global career, are someone who had lived in several countries, maybe the military or whatever. Did you know many people like that?

**Participant** 11:17

And Michigan? No, but definitely in Savannah, a little bit higher just because of the military. So, a lot of people, I think they lived in Germany. That was a big one.

**Researcher** 11:29

Gotcha. And family members that had studied or who had traveled are studied abroad.

**Participant** 11:48

My family members?

**Researcher** 11:49

Yes.

**Participant** 11:54

We traveled too.

**Researcher** 11:56

Yeah, so with your father, he fits him. But I still want to just kind of ask the question, did you have family members? You know, who had traveled? Maybe somebody studied in Europe? I don't know. Did you have any family members who had lived abroad for a long period of time or studied abroad?



**Participant** 13:03

No, but I have cousins that are from Canada. That is now, but my sister hasn't lived abroad, but she's traveled to so many countries as a tourist.

**Researcher** 13:17

That's fine. That helps. That still helps. Is that an older sister?

**Participant** 13:24

Yeah, she's 12 years older than me.

**Researcher** 13:30

Great. Okay, moving on. So, that's good. Is there anything before we move on that you want to address or add?

**Participant** 14:08

No, I'm good.

**Researcher** 14:09

All right. So, moving on. Now, I'm going to ask you just a few questions about the exchange experience that you had in with [REDACTED] class. And then we're going to talk about the format and your rating, it's a 3. It's just for me to understand. First, do you feel that the exchange experience that you had, short though it may be just a semester just new encounters, but do you

feel in any way it offered you some something that you were not able to get in your communities growing up? Was there anything about that exchange that in terms of international experience?

**Participant** 15:15

Yeah. I definitely, I think, so our exchange was with students in China and Korea, I believe.

**Researcher** 15:25

It was actually, Hong Kong.

**Participant** 15:37

Okay. Yeah. I think it definitely, like, got me exposure to talking to people from that side of the world and definitely learning about their country in a different way. Because I feel like even if I didn't know someone from China, we don't really just talk about the climate in China. The learning a different person. I don't know if that answered your question.

**Researcher** 16:05

No, no, this is. All right. Did it influence your interest in international travel in any way?

**Participant** 16:18

Yeah, it definitely did.

**Researcher** 16:20

Oh, tell me about that.

**Participant** 16:23

Well, I've always had, like, the countries that I did want to go to and like, China was never like, super high on the list. But now after like talking to them and meeting them and just learning about like, the weather over there and stuff like that makes me want to go travel to China. My travel has always been more like South America, Europe. After speaking to them. I'm like, oh, I actually should go over to Asia and goes about I'll do.

**Researcher** 16:51

Do you think, can you talk about that, like, do you did you feel a connection, even if it was about talking about climate like, okay, well, gosh, would be interested in learn more like, oh, I want to see where they live now. Was there any that type of feeling? Is that what you're saying or like put that watching you?

**Participant** 17:27

No. Yeah, that's what I was saying.

**Researcher** 17:29

Yeah, yeah. So, it was never super high but after meeting them, it's like, okay, maybe go to China. Now, what about like Hong Kong? What about your career or working or volunteering abroad? Did it influence any interest in that?

**Participant** 17:45

It didn't change my career. But yeah. Volunteering abroad, I thought that would be interesting. But honestly, what like, COVID and everything, I felt like everything kind of went on a pot. So, maybe after COVID definitely have to revisit the idea.

**Researcher** 18:11

You thought but you could say, would it be correct to say that it influenced in some way impacted affected in any way even if it's a slight way it's like make you think. Hmm, maybe I could study a volunteer abroad or was that something you already had thought about doing before?

**Participant** 18:29

No, I influenced it.

**Researcher** 18:30

Okay. Tell me more if you don't mind, what about this exchange make someone think about volunteering abroad?

**Participant** 18:50

Well, I feel like once you talk to someone from a different country and actually like build that connection, it kind of gives you like a different perspective of the world. Then it kind of like made me like, okay, if I volunteer in America, I could probably go do it somewhere else, I guess.

**Researcher** 19:20

So, it says then, once you talk to a person directly makes you have a different perspective of the world. Does it make the world seem smaller? You know, symbolically, I mean, or how does it I guess change your perspective?

**Participant** 19:46

Well, I guess like, a lot of people think people from different countries are so different, but by talk just realizing like, oh, they're in school too everyone I was talking about them, but we were talking about like, how it's like so cold in the morning. And then by the end of the day, it's like hot, and you have to take all your layers off and stuff. So you can't ask for the weather, because it's always changing. So, that was interesting, because Georgia is very like that, too. Like it's cold in the morning and then hot. So, it definitely does, like, open your eyes and it's like, okay, yeah, like, we're all people. We're all the same. We're all like going through the same stuff, rather than looking at people so differently.

**Researcher** 20:30

That was great. And I've heard several students mentioned specifically, that their students too. Anything very different though that you noticed.

**Participant** 21:10

About the people or about the other?

**Researcher** 21:13

Yeah, about them, where they live, how they live anything that struck you. Oh, that's different. We have this in common, but we're not in common this way, just curious.

**Participant** 21:34

I think one thing they said was like, well, this is what the weather they said hail, was just normal. And they have forgot if it was typhoons or cyclones, but it's because of water.

**Researcher** 21:52

And there was pollution, right?

**Participant** 21:56

Yeah.

**Researcher** 21:56

But more pollution issues that they deal with.

**Participant** 22:00

Yeah. So then it's like, their air quality and all of that. Like, Britain, I feel like you don't really, like pollution. You hear about it in big cities with a lot of people like India and China, stuff like that. I feel like even in America is not. You don't really care about pollution, if anything you hear about like the fires in California.

**Researcher** 22:20

Yeah. Yeah. I would love this, like, what is it? This is a hurricanes that we're having, I don't know. But yeah, here is different issues. All right. Anything else you'd like to say about how, you know, the experience, how this exchange experience influenced your interest in the global world? And possibly a career that has a global focus in volunteering and so forth, anything else? Are you wondering anything you want to reiterate or stress?

**Participant** 23:13

I'd have definitely think like, I work in insurance right now. For the actually the biggest broker in the globe. Oh, they have company.

**Researcher** 23:30

What the name of the company? So I know background.

**Participant** 23:33

Marsh.

**Researcher** 23:34

Okay. Okay, gotcha.

**Participant** 23:36

So, I definitely think just like, this would help, maybe like if I ever had international clients, just learning, like their culture and how they do things, and their countries.

**Researcher** 23:51

Possibly, maybe if you had a client soon from say, a part of China, or Hong Kong, exchange with in the conversation, you know, how did it change recently with some students from Hong Kong? It sounds like you're so more informed. You know, you're able to talk with people and develop a rapport in business. When you know a little bit about their country and their culture in a real way. Now, in this other countries, one country and then another location. Is that correct?

**Participant** 24:46

Conversation starter.

**Researcher** 24:47

Yeah. Yeah. That's a great point.

**Participant** 24:52

And I feel like it just shows people that you're, like, well rounded kind of and you have a perspective of things, I guess.

**Researcher** 25:03

I mean, if I'm a hire hiring, especially now as we're becoming more and more global. If I'm hiring people, I'm looking for folks like you who have lived. Well, okay. In your case, you but your parents, you have, you know about. Have you ever gone to India?



**Participant** 25:21

Yeah, I've gone twice, one when I was 2 and then, when I was 12.

**Researcher** 25:26

You've been twice to India, you've been in an exchange with students from China and so forth and you have cousins in Canada. So, it's like a plus to have a global perspective and we need that more in the United States. Because it's such a big country, everybody, we're all only speaking English, not ever.

**Participant** 25:26

Yeah.

**Researcher** 25:26

Okay, now, moving up. So, first of all, in the survey, when asked to rate your overall IVE experience, you chose 3 out of 5, with 1 being Very Unsatisfied, and 5 being Very Satisfied. So, with that said, please tell me why you selected the rating that you did.

**Participant** 27:25

I forgot what platform it was, but one of them just wasn't like the most user friendly. That's kind of confusing.

**Researcher** 27:39

Can you describe it because I might be able to figure out?

**Participant** 27:43

It was the one that we had to do our Virtual Exchange through. I think it was just hard to like, find the group and make sure we were in the right group. And then

**Researcher** 27:53

Yeah, I remember.

**Participant** 27:54

There was an app. So, I feel like sometimes messages would be missed.

**Researcher** 28:03

What part of it the different than just the time differences as well? Can't do anything about that internet.

**Participant** 28:11

They probably responded while we were sleeping or something.

**Researcher** 28:14

Yeah, so could we need to be right? Yeah, go ahead.

**Participant** 28:17

You I guess we would overlook it then, because we were probably sleeping during the time they responded. But was it top hat? Was it top hat?

**Researcher** 28:32

So, top hat and I'm starting to even get fuzzy now, could further we move away from it. So, there was top hat slate, and top hat was the overall too. And then slate was where you guys would go to like chat, and to post stuff. And wherever we would have you guys post your recorded exchanges. And so it very, because there was so many students, we had several 100s of you guys and we broke you all up in four groups. So, some of us allowed our students to just use any platform that they want it, as long as it was virtual. So, like if it was zoom, or if they even there's something called WeChat that is used in China. So, we just want it to see the final result. But the communication with such a large group, which we're trying to learn and improve on was challenging in telling people, even the technology, everybody has different levels of skills of using technology. So that was a challenge. And then also here was another thing and maybe you have some thoughts about this. In China, there are some restrictions by the government on what they can and cannot use. So, there were times, yeah. Did you have any encounters with that? That you remember.

**Participant** 30:03

No.

**Researcher** 30:05

All right. Anything else? That was aside from the platform was not user friendly. Any other? What can be done to improve this experience?

**Participant** 30:19

Oh, I know when I talk to my relatives in India, we use WhatsApp. I don't know if we would, but that is also connected with your phone number. Oh, maybe that wouldn't be the best.

**Researcher** 30:33

Yeah, I use WhatsApp with friends, my international friends too. Yeah.

**Participant** 30:39

Maybe they're allowed, have to be, maybe that would be a better.

**Researcher** 30:46

See, that's the problem. They're like, so WhatsApp is definitely a good one, because that's one that seems, I don't know, with China, it's got to be really complicated. Because even when we were setting up, there were a lot of platforms we had to throw out because they couldn't get in. I'm just kind of fuzzy now. But like, even with emails, there were some people who had to change and they had to use a Gmail or something, it was just kind of, like, complicated getting around the red tape stuff. And probably stuff on the part of the United States too. You know, the things that we're not allowed to, we're not, we're blocking this and they're blocking that. And so, we had to work around all the nation state stuff, to just get to where we could just share. Okay, now, let's go on and see.

**Participant** 31:42

But I guess another recommendation would just be maybe, I feel like we didn't have enough time to talk to them. I wish we could talk to them a little bit more.

**Researcher** 31:51

Okay, tell me more about that.

**Participant** 31:55

I forgot how many times we had to meet them, but

**Researcher** 31:58

Three times.

**Participant** 31:59

Three times?

**Researcher** 32:00

Hmm.

**Participant** 32:00

Yeah, I just, I don't know. After like, the second time, it felt like more personable. We were like, we knew each other's names and we like asked each other how our days were and all that.

Maybe our meetings, I feel like we could have formed like a really a better bond with them, I guess.

**Researcher** 32:16

Do you think there should have been more students, fewer students and was there enough of a balance between the students from the various schools?

**Participant** 32:26

Yeah, there was a balance. The only thing I think with my group was, it was literally just me and this other girl because the other guy just wouldn't show up.

**Researcher** 32:34

You from Georgia State?

**Participant** 32:39

Yeah. I'm from Georgia State.

**Researcher** 32:40

Okay. Yeah. We encountered that too. Yeah. And then what about the language issue? I mean, what were your thoughts about that? Is it fair? I don't know. We don't know the solution to it but is it fair that some people are having to use a second language and for you guys it's your first language?

**Participant** 33:06

No, I think they were doing pretty well, because I know they also take English as a class there.

**Researcher** 33:10

Right. Then the more Hong Kong and China though.

**Participant** 33:16

Yeah. Yeah. Like some of them. I was like, wow, their English is really good. But then the other, yeah, have some kind of practice, which was nice.

**Researcher** 33:28

Yeah. Do you have any students who were shy about speaking because it was a second language?

**Participant** 34:27

Yeah, their English was pretty good. The only thing I guess that made it hard was the connectivity. I don't know if it was a platform or their Wi Fi or our Wi Fi, but it just seemed like people got cut off a lot. Also, like being in a video thing with so many people, it's like, you kind of interrupt each other and talk over each other anyways.

**Researcher** 34:54

Yeah. One last question. Thinking now about the goal of bringing students together from different countries. How do you contrast it to students going to another country, like in the traditional face to face, study abroad or international experience? Is there anything that you can actually get from this platform that you might not be able to get by going over there? And then of course, the reverse what can you only get in face real face to face exchange? It's a multi-part question.

**Participant** 36:18

I guess the exchange kind of helped us like, have a structure for what we were supposed to learn. Like, probably going there, we wouldn't just like, we'd experienced the climate and stuff but we wouldn't go in depth into like, how it affects them, how the pollution affects them and all this other stuff. But going there, I feel like you will learn more about the culture pick up on the language. Just see how the life is over there. That you couldn't really like, because you can't like see exactly what they're doing. Like just from a screen, how their life is.

**Researcher** 37:00

Right. Anything else?

**Participant** 37:04

No.



**Researcher** 37:06

So, what about you? Do you feel you were able to learn something or just get a feel for someone's lifestyle that way or was that not the case in your group?

**Participant** 38:12

Not really from the background. It was meeting like asking questions.

**Researcher** 38:17

Gotcha. All right. So, with this, in this exchange, in this format, you are given a structure for discussion, right?

**Participant** 38:29

Yes.

**Researcher** 38:29

And you can share stuff on a screen, maybe where you're actually going there. You're moving and so forth. So, maybe for exploring a certain topic. This might be better.

**Participant** 38:47

Yeah, yeah.

**Researcher** 38:49

But going there, you're actually seeing the culture, you're hearing in the language and maybe practicing the language. Anything else that you can only get by going to another place?

**Participant** 41:28

Yeah, I thought it was cool that we were in our own homes, like, I know. I think it was kind of cool. Like how we were talking, I keep talking about weather but that's because that's what we were talking about. So, like me and the other girls on the US like, we were explaining to them like what the weather was and we can just like, look outside and tell them but they will outside and tell us like, oh, it's raining over here something like that.

**Researcher** 41:56

Right. That's cool. Okay. Now to close, I'd like to focus on Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identities in exchanges. Again, you may decline any question at all and if you do, I'll just confirm that decision and we'll move on. Just tell me I'm not really comfortable answering that, whatever you are. And then I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline any comment. Is it okay for me to proceed?

**Participant** 42:52

Yes.

**Researcher** 42:53

Okay. So, first question before participating in this exchange, how would you describe your view of, let me see, before participating in exchange, how would you describe the view of your cohorts, view of people from the United States? Did you learn anything from them about how they view Americans?

**Participant** 43:39

I feel like there's this like thing that like other countries don't like Americans but like after talking to them, like they were so sweet, and they were nice, and they wanted to like know more about us and like, I guess they kind of like made that go away, like the whole like, oh, they probably don't like us because we're American. Like this is just a school thing but it seemed genuine.

**Researcher** 44:07

They seem genuine. Did they seem to be hesitant at first and they want to get to know you kind of warm up to you or do you think maybe they will bring in that stereotype or wasn't that they just may be that overblown? That we think, they don't like us, but then when you get them they were not like that. I'm just curious.

**Participant** 44:27

I think it's like we think they don't like us but it's not like that. At first they were just shy but that's like normal, but it wasn't any like, oh, they're right.

**Researcher** 44:35

Right. All right. Now. So, now before participating the exchange, how would you describe your view of people from China and Hong Kong and was that changed in any way?

**Participant** 45:12

I guess I kind of viewed done like, they kind of say to themselves, or they might be a little, like standoffish but for them like I said earlier, like they're just really, they warm up to you really quickly and they like actually want to talk to you and stuff like that but I think that might be because of like, me being raised. Indian, I know that cultures can be standoffish that they would be like that as well, but they were.

**Researcher** 45:49

All right. And then, the last one I have relates to your, how people see you by being from North India? Before participating exchange, how would you describe yours? But it just exploring that, was there anything that you detect it that was changed about stereotypes, that they might have had of you or stereotypes?. Now we've talked about them but any change you think that came, when you were able to teach people about your culture and who you were anymore in that exchange?

**Participant** 47:18

I guess like being from India, like I've heard about the weather in India, is kind of similar to the weather in China and Hong Kong. So, I could relate to like, different weather that they don't have in America, like monsoons and stuff like that. Whereas like, the other girl from the United

States, like she's only lived here and she was American. So, I guess she didn't have that background of being from a different country.

**Researcher** 47:55

All right. And lastly, thinking now, the last, thinking about Race and Identity in general, is there anything about the exchange that made you uncomfortable with all the ethnic groups that were there together? Was there anything that wasn't, you know, were you uncomfortable with anything?

**Participant** 48:16

No.

**Researcher** 48:17

Okay, and then one last question. If you were to travel abroad, is there anything about traveling abroad, studying abroad, living abroad in different parts of the world that makes you uncomfortable considering your ethnic identity and racial heritage?

**Participant** 49:22

So, I am Indian and I'm Hindu. Like I know India is fine. India is pretty split between Hindus and Muslims. Maybe like the Middle East, I don't just because like in history and stuff, there's a lot of like stuff between Hindus and Muslims and then just like, the country of India and like what the religion should be. So, maybe like the Middle East, some countries like that, like I

think Dubai would be fine because it is such a high tourist. But maybe like some of the world, I wouldn't necessarily go there by myself.

**Researcher** 50:08

That maybe. Gotcha. All right. Good. So now, before wrapping up, is there anything about this topic, again, about Race, Identity, Culture coming together, that you want to share? Not just this exchange as it was, but maybe even as a potential? Like if it, if there could be problems that we might encounter, bringing people together from different backgrounds.

**Participant** 50:58

No, I don't think so. I think everyone just needs to have an open mind.

**Researcher** 51:18

All right. Now, we are done with the questions I have. I just want to say again, if there is a question that I didn't ask that you'd like to address, please let me know we can address that, or say anything you want to clarify your thinking, I should have said it this way, or really should have explained this more, anything we want to revisit before wrapping up?

**Participant** 51:43

No, nothing else.

**Researcher** 51:45

All right. Well, thank you so much for your valuable time Anusha. So, the next step, I'm going to review your transcript and others. It's going to take about, because this is in the mix with other things. It's going to be about at least a month actually, before I get through everything. I might be three weeks if I'm lucky. So, I want to know, if I might contact you during that time. If I have any questions, anything I need to clarify and if so, if it's email, phone, or both, what's the best way to contact you?

**Participant** 52:17

Yeah, email or phone is fine, either one to contact, my number too.

**Researcher** 52:21

Great, thank you. And then if you need to contact me at any time, feel free to do so. If you have any concerns or questions about the study. And then at some point, I should have a final transcript ready for everyone to review for accuracy. Now on this one, I must say, I am going to be following the guidelines of Georgia State's IRB, which is basically the organization that regulates all of our research involving people humans. So, I've got to follow whatever guidelines they have for me, I don't know, how I'm going to be presenting that, because it's my first time doing a dissertation so, but there should be a final transcript ready, and I'm going to be following whatever the standard procedure is and sharing that with you guys. So, just know that that should be forthcoming. All right?

**Participant** 53:12

Okay.

**Researcher** 53:12

And then last but not least, I sent you an Amazon gift card to that email address to thank you for your valuable time. My fellowship is paying for these, so I'm happy to give them because otherwise I don't I don't get the money. It just goes right back. So, I want you all together to know if you can confirm receipt of the gift card.

**Participant** 53:33

Yes, I got it.

**Researcher** 53:34

Wonderful. All right. Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it.

**Participant** 53:38

Thank you. I enjoyed talking to you.

**Researcher** 53:40

I enjoyed talking to you too. It was this great additional stuff is really, you had some great things to say. I appreciate it.



**Participant** 53:46

Thank you and have a good day.

**Researcher** 53:49

Thank you. You have a good one. Bye, bye

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

## **Appendix N: Participant #6 Interview Transcription**

### **Participant #6**

**Age:** 29

**Gender ID:** M

**Ethnicity:** African American

**Area of Study:** Political Science

**Mother's Highest Education:** High School

**Father's Highest Education:** Unknown

**Study Abroad:** N

**International Travel:** N

**Childhood Neighborhood:** Homogenous 90%+ same

**Childhood Community:** Very Integrated

**IVE Experience Rating:** 4

**Researcher** 0:03

Okay. Thank you, [REDACTED] for agreeing to talk about your Virtual Exchange experience. I know you have a busy schedule, so I appreciate your time. As stated in the email. I am a doctoral student at Georgia State University and I am interviewing first time participants in International Virtual Exchange, which I also will call IVE to learn more about your impressions and assess the potential of using the format to get more students study abroad like experiences, international experiences. This interview is being recorded and should take about an hour to complete though we could finish earlier than that are actually need a few more minutes to wrap up. Also, I want to make sure you know that, (1) Any information you share will not be attributed to you or used to identify you in any way, (2) You will remain anonymous in any presentations or publications that may develop from this research, and (3) You are free to decline to answer any question I asked or continue or choose to discontinue the interview at any time. Do I have your permission to continue?

**Participant** 1:06

You do.

**Researcher** 1:07

Great. All right. Now, you indicated on your survey that you participated in an IVE in either the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 academic year, is that correct?

**Participant** 1:24

That's right.

**Researcher** 1:24

Okay. And do you know when it was, do you recall what semester?

**Participant** 1:29

It was Spring of 2021.

**Researcher** 1:35

What was the class?

**Participant** 1:37

The class was the Global Evolution of Cities. It was taught by Professor [REDACTED].

**Researcher** 1:45

Okay. For Global Evolution of Cities and what university?

**Participant** 1:53

This [REDACTED].

**Researcher** 2:14

Okay. And with whom are the course affiliate? What country or countries, did you have your exchange?

**Participant** 2:28

It was affiliated with a university in Italy.

**Researcher** 2:32

Okay. Wonderful. Do you know what part? It doesn't matter, if you don't recall the details.

**Participant** 2:39

Yes. I believe they were in Rome.

**Researcher** 2:43

You happen to know, how many students were in that class approximately?

**Participant** 2:48

Then, I do not know.

**Researcher** 2:50

That's all right. And do you know, even it was yours, where you are an online class hybrid or was it in person?

**Participant** 2:56

It was an online class.

**Researcher** 2:59

Okay, so then you might not know the students as much. Okay. Anything any knowledge about the size of the class?

**Participant** 3:10

The size of the class at [REDACTED]?

**Researcher** 3:12

Yes.

**Participant** 3:13

I think, I want to say we had no more than, definitely no more than, I want to say 15.

**Researcher** 3:23

Okay. Much as quite a small class. Okay. That's good. Because at some of these have been like, I was a research assistant for a class with two or three universities, Georgia State, and then one in Hong Kong and one in TN, China. And so we have like, 160 students. So, knowing 15 that's helpful for me. So, thanks.

**Participant** 3:46

Yeah, the 15 are those students that were from GSU not combined with the...

**Researcher** 3:51

That's helpful. Thanks for just trying to recall that. Okay, and you also did indicate and I remember just looking over this morning. You did have at least one video chat that was similar platform to zoom, where you saw the people, is that correct?

**Participant** 4:33

That's correct. Yes.

**Researcher** 4:34

Okay. All right. So, now I have some questions about your childhood up to college. You may decline answering any questions at all. If you do, I will confirm that decision and move on to the next. I will not ask any questions about your decision to decline to comment. If you decide to continue to decline. I'll just move on. And then also some of the questions may sound similar like you might say, well, she kind of asked that. But I might ask it in another way, just slightly just to continue to learn from you. So, please bear with me if that's okay. Is that all right?

**Participant** 5:07

Yes.

**Researcher** 5:08

Great. All right. Now, on the survey, you indicated that you grew up in a homogenous neighborhood. And so, can you describe that neighborhood for me?

**Participant 5:43**

Okay, yeah, sure. So, I was born and raised in Macon, Georgia, which is about maybe an hour and a half drive South of Atlanta. The neighborhood that I lived in, and so that's kind of what I assumed the questioner me as kind of where I was lived in was relatively racially homogenous. I'm African American. So, was my family and most of the people that lived in, the neighborhood that I was on the edge of a neighborhood called Bloomfield is relatively, not terribly affluent and most of the people in those areas weren't terribly affluent working class.

**Researcher 6:32**

Is that you were, or you more in a middle class setting? Because you sit on the edge of Bloomfield.

**Participant 6:38**

Yeah. No, even at the edge, it was still a lot in the same setting. My family itself had, I want to say, I guess, would have been three generations living under the same roof. So, all of them with different levels of educational attainment and income. So, our actual financial situation was probably a bit different than a lot of the people in the neighborhood but the neighborhood itself was relatively working class, maybe kind of on the lower end of that.

**Researcher 7:15**

It sounds, I can relate, because I grew up here in Atlanta and it was very similar, just what you're describing. Yeah. And you are 29. Is that right?

**Participant** 7:26

That's right.

**Researcher** 7:27

Okay. Yeah. You're a little older. You might remember more of that type of scenario where you had an intact Black community in one area, whether it was the most affluent or the homeless, just all together. And you could, like you said, a family could be a little bit more financially stable, but you're still part of the same community.

**Participant** 7:52

Exactly.

**Researcher** 7:53

Yeah.

**Participant** 7:54

That's right. My schooling gave me, my schooling through my grade school, and more access to a lot more diversity.

**Researcher** 8:02

Was at your elementary school, or just your high school?



**Participant** 8:06

So, both actually. Should I talk about schooling?

**Researcher** 8:10

Yes, yes. I do like to know. I'd like to know, because a lot of what I'm doing and I'll tell you more about it. You'll be able to see the study eventually, is dealing with our backgrounds and how our experiences affect, how we view the exchanges, and react to the exchanges, and so forth. So, anything you tell me about growing up in Macon, in the diversity you given me the neighborhood setting gives me an idea.

**Participant** 8:40

Okay, yeah. Sure. Absolutely. I can do that. So, my elementary schooling was split between two elementary schools, from kindergarten through 3rd grade, I went to basically one of the neighborhood schools, Beauregard Elementary. It was a school in a pretty poor neighborhood. The resources available. It didn't seem to be super expensive, but you know, made the most of what they had, and my mother worked for...

**Researcher** 9:18

And the racial diversity.

**Participant** 9:20

Racial diversity was, it was relatively homogenous. So, it was majority of Black, if I recall correctly, we did have some White students as well.

**Researcher** 9:32

What? 10% White, 5% White?

**Participant** 9:35

I would say, it probably, it wasn't 5%. I feel like 5% is high.

**Researcher** 9:42

Just a few, there were just a few.

**Participant** 9:44

Yeah, from my memory, which my memory isn't ironclad from that.

**Researcher** 9:48

No, no. Any Latinos?

**Participant** 9:50

I'm not that I'm recalling.

**Researcher** 9:57

No other ethnic group, distinct ethnic group besides the about less than 5% White?

**Participant** 10:04

Yeah, that's seems right.

**Researcher** 10:06

Gotcha. And then you said Bearcat B U R K...

**Participant** 10:08

Burghard, Burghard. B U R G H A R D.

**Researcher** 10:15

Gotcha. Okay. And then after that school, what was next?

**Participant** 10:20

While the rest of my K through, at the time would have been K through 6 grade.

**Researcher** 10:26

So, the 4 through 6.

**Participant** 10:28

Right, 4 through 6 grade was, I managed to get into a magnet school. And we got into Alexander to Elementary Magnet School, which was a Math and Science focused magnet school and that was, what neighborhood would that have been next to. That would have been near the campus of Mercer University.

**Researcher** 11:06

Okay. And makeup there.

**Participant** 11:10

So, the makeup there at that school was more heterogeneous. It was, Oh, gosh. I want to say maybe a fourth Black. Maybe it may be a little more than that. I'm not quite sure. I want to say maybe anywhere from a fourth through a half, or maybe a half White. I don't remember too many Latino people. We also had, give me a moment, let me actually think about this.

**Researcher** 12:03

It sounds like in some ways, it was similar to Georgia State, not quite. Maybe Georgia State doesn't have quite as many Whites but and I guess Georgia State has more Latinos. You said one in many Latinos, but it's good, you know, one for Black, half White and the other ethnic groups. Is that about right?

**Participant** 12:54

Not that I'm thinking about it, that might not be quite as good. It might have been more Black, but

**Researcher** 12:59

1/3 Black?

**Participant** 13:00

Yeah, maybe one thirds or more, but it's somewhere in that range and I think half White, if I'm not mistaken. Yeah. But yeah. I wouldn't take my word for that. My memory is...

**Researcher** 13:15

That quite different from the first one. The first one was about 95%, 96%, 99% Black. So, that's a big change. Okay, great. And then high school. Oh, I'm Middle School. You said this was 4th through 6th and then what was next?

**Participant** 13:30

Yes. Middle school. I went to Lanier Middle School and that makeup was, let's see, I'm not, it's hard to say with Lanier, because throughout all of my grade schooling, I was in kind of accelerated courses. And so, that's kind of my memory and knowledge of what the....

**Researcher** 14:15

So, by the time after third grade, you were tapped for a stem magnet school and after that, it sounds like you were in advanced accelerated courses all the way through.

**Participant** 14:31

That's right.

**Researcher** 14:32

And then those classes how would you describe the makeup of those accelerated classes?

**Participant** 14:36

Yeah, so the accelerated classes were, let's see. One of them may be, might have been another kind of a half way, you had Black people. You also had Asian, East Asian and Southeast Asian people. Not many on that front, just I think that just might a demographics and making type of thing. But that was sort of, yeah, that was kind of my kind of exposure in terms of one on one time with people who weren't Black or White. So, I do remember that kind of being part of middle school that was maybe high school was more when I have more foreign.

**Researcher** 14:49

What was your high school, like?

**Participant** 15:34

Yeah, the high school I went to was Central High School and I was part of the International Baccalaureate program there. So yeah, that my high school experience was quite diverse. And that's why I really have my biggest memories of hanging out with getting to know on a real personal kind of deep level, White people, East Asian, Southeast Asian you know, people from all different most of life.

**Researcher** 16:10

School, you would say, would correct me if I'm wrong, but you had friends from all different ethnic backgrounds, close friends, good friends.

**Participant** 16:19

Yeah. Yeah. From a lot of backgrounds, kind of that.

**Researcher** 16:22

Okay. And just very quickly, before we move on Central High, what would you just in a quick nutshell, summarize the diversity? How would you describe it percentage wise? Why? What percent Black approximately? I'm not put, this is just background for me.

**Participant** 16:39

Yeah, that's hard to say. I know, Central did have a high Black population. I think kind of most Macon schools that weren't magnet that were just like public schools were that way. But it doesn't have a hand. But I would say, ah, that's tough. I'm going to say maybe that one was 60% Black maybe.

**Researcher** 17:01

Okay. Alright. And then the other end in White would have been the next largest group and then just a small percentage of Asians. Is that correct?

**Participant** 17:12

Yeah. Why would be the next largest group? I think we have some Latino people, we had Asians, and we had any other big groups to the minimum. That's kind of what my memory is always was.

**Researcher** 17:31

Yeah. Right. And aside from school, where would you, how would you describe the diversity and where you were growing up? For instance, House of Worship, for instance, a part time job, just even in your city center shopping at the malls and all of that. How would you describe just your overall experience with diversity outside of school?

**Participant** 17:58

Yeah, so that community kind of at the edge of Bloomfield was that's the place I lived for majority of the time that I was in Macon and I think it's in all of my places of worship, where my grandfather was a pastor. He was a pastor in the CME Church, which historically skews very Black. And so, all of my experiences were in Black churches. He pastored in a lot of rural churches around Georgia, that didn't see me the pastor is getting moved to different churches every so often.

**Researcher** 18:39

Seek to live with your grandfather?

**Participant** 18:40

Yes, we live in our grandparent's house for a large part of the experience in Macon. And then we also lived in some apartments that would be my mother and my siblings. We lived in some apartments and I also had a brief period where I was living in some apartments that were owned by the college I went to in Macon.

**Researcher** 19:09

Okay. I got you. All right. Let's see.



**Participant** 19:14

The church experience was Black, socializing in places like, well, because I was socializing and kind of when I was older and they were able to socialize more on my own. As a kid it was in mostly, you know, the local mall is a lot of Black, mostly Black and in some Black owned businesses, but also interacting with other people who are just working jobs. White people and that kind of was, the local mall was kind of the big mall for a while, until another one was built sort of closer to the more affluent part of the city. And so, a lot of business kind of fled. Our local mall and went that way and when I was hanging out up there, that's a more diverse, more White people.

**Researcher** 19:57

What was that first mall, the local mall?

**Participant** 19:59

The local mall is now it's called the Macon Mall, I think or it used to be called the Macon Mall and they might have changed the name. It's hard to remember but Macon Mall is how we knew the local mall.

**Researcher** 20:14

It wasn't majority Black or about half and half or?

**Participant** 20:17

Yeah, I would say. Yeah, obviously the Macon Mall was majority Black, you had the occasional business in that mall that might have had staff that wasn't Black or might have been owned by people that weren't Black. So, we had the there was a pizza place in there. I think the owner was White and then there was like, a Japanese restaurant. A Japanese like Blue Stone Stand.

**Researcher** 20:46

But this is the clientele, the shoppers would you say are Asian, Black.

**Participant** 20:52

Yeah. Mostly Black. Yeah, mostly Black or the shoppers were there and you get some white people occasionally too, because there was, yeah, there was never white people that lived in surrounding areas as well. But yeah, that was kind of the clientele was largely Black and White.

**Researcher** 21:12

Gotcha. All right. Now, did you know in the community in your family, did you know anyone who had studied or traveled abroad? Do you have any family members who have done that? Not just an immediate family, but maybe cousins, uncle-aunt, anybody who had traveled or studied abroad.

**Participant** 21:38

I did. Yes, I did. I do. So, my uncle I knew had spent time, a little bit of time studying of traveling abroad and he's a doctor by profession.

**Researcher** 21:58

Medical?

**Participant** 22:00

Yes, medical doctor. That's right. My profession and I knew he had spent some time overseas.

**Researcher** 22:05

You know where he was?

**Participant** 22:08

Overseas where he was?

**Researcher** 22:09

Yeah. Do you know where he was overseas?

**Participant** 22:13

I know, he liked to spend time in Spain. I think it was mostly in Barcelona is where he was traveling. I'm pretty sure he'd spent some time with a couple of other places. It's hard to remember exactly what he would have said back then and that time, but as an adult, I know he's spent time in Spain.

**Researcher** 22:35

Was he studying, or he was just travel only, or what is that?

**Participant** 22:40

This was travel only, if I'm not mistaken. This is traveling.

**Researcher** 22:44

Now, was he abroad for a while or was it like a vacation, where you kind of tour for 10 days, two weeks or was this like, three months living abroad or something like that? Do you know? Do you recall?

**Participant** 22:57

Yeah. I think it was vacations and he had gone a few times. But I think it was like, a few weeks standard here or there I think.

**Researcher** 23:06

Any other countries besides, well, any other continents besides Europe? Because you mentioned not just Barcelona, but probably some other places. Do you know if you had ever gone to the continent of Africa or Asia, whatever you remember, I'm just asking you? That's alright.

**Participant** 23:08

That not that I can recall but I wouldn't say no.

**Researcher** 23:30

More than one trip, right?

**Participant** 23:32

Yes, more than one trip. That's right.

**Researcher** 23:34

Okay. Gotcha. All right. Now, in the community that you grew up in, did you know any people who had studied or traveled abroad?

**Participant** 23:43

Yes, not well, but there was the daughter of one of my mother's co-workers and I had heard that daughter had studied abroad. I can't remember. I can't recall where right now. But yes, I didn't know of them. And also, we had, let me get this right. I want to say that there was a White family that lived maybe a couple doors down from my grandparents place and I know that on occasion that neighbor, she had travel abroad but I don't remember exactly where. That's not coming back to me but I didn't know that she did travel on occasion.

**Researcher** 24:41

Was the daughter had traveled or the mother?

**Participant** 24:44

No, it would have been the, so the daughter of the co-worker is one then.

**Researcher** 24:50

Alright, this one but I got that. You were saying there was a White family in that neighborhood.

**Participant** 24:56

Oh, yes. The home owner was a woman, a slightly older White woman, and I can't think of her name right now. It's escaping me.

**Researcher** 25:07

But it's just her or did she have kids?

**Participant** 25:10

She had a kid. Yeah, she had a kid and many friends with the kid.

**Researcher** 25:14

So, she was a single woman who lived.

**Participant** 25:17

Yes, I believe she was a single.

**Researcher** 25:19

Okay. Okay.

**Participant** 25:20

Or at least living on her own. I can't say I was living, right with her kid. We didn't know that she traveled a bit after her kid and moved out but I couldn't tell you where.

**Researcher** 25:35

I got you. All right. And so then, thinking about this, how would you describe your overall knowledge and perception of international travel at this time before you left Macon?

**Participant** 25:48

So, my knowledge of it was, I definitely knew international travel was a thing and I've always been kind of interested in just my own interest in personality. I always been interested in how people lived in other countries. So, I always had an idea that those were places that it was possible to visit. And that's just, I was interested in travel, documentaries, and things like that. So I always kind of had a sense of those were places that existed and you could go. I would say that international travel was always attractive to me. So, it was always something that I thought. You know, one day I would try to maybe do. I don't think the idea of studying abroad was really, as crystal clear of an idea as much as visiting. And so, I think, yeah, my attitudes towards international travel growing up that was attractive and there was a thing that people did do. I might not have seen a ton of people that were exactly from my background doing it. But I understood that it was a thing that was possible.

**Researcher** 27:16

Did you see it as something that was open to you? Now, if you don't mind, I'm just speaking as another Black American, because I am interested in this too. Was there any level of feeling that it was open to you, available, or was it something maybe that more whites did, that Blacks kind of just didn't do?

**Participant 27:45**

Yeah, that's an interesting question and I've thought about it a bit, I'm just kind of looking back. Now, given kind of what my recent plans are, but recent life plans, I mean. But as a kid, the racial divide didn't really, wasn't really the one that stood out to me so much because one of my best friends have now going on 20 years is. He is a White guy who grew up in our neighborhood. Though he was a poor White guy and his access to certain things was maybe not exactly as limited as mine, but it was like, the class divide was more present in my mind like, just the money to do that or especially, like, I had feelings when I was very young guy. I had these dreams of wanting to visit Japan, or wanting to visit the Netherlands, or wanting to go these places but as a kid and even as an older kid and going into young adulthood, seeing where my family was financially. There was a feeling of, maybe this is not accessible to me right now or maybe it's not the responsible thing to do, given the financial landscape that was there in my family at the time. So, the class divide, the financial divide was more prevalent in my mind than any racial divide in terms of access to international travel. And then of course, there's the worry that just as I guess, just who I am and as a Black American, you always worry about. Well, how are non-white people perceived in different countries that was not as much information available on that, at least when I was growing up. A lot of the travel stuff that I was watching documentaries or reading the blogs on the internet were very much white people who were traveling. And so, that might that didn't always give me as much insight as I would have wanted to order attitudes towards Black people when they go traveling. So, that was kind of my...



**Researcher** 30:06

It's a songs and one other thing, I'm sorry?

**Participant** 30:09

Documentaries and the blog.

**Researcher** 30:11

Documentary.

**Participant** 30:12

Yes, in the blogs on the internet and people writing up their experiences of traveling it tended to be, there seems to be a lot more White writers in the internet space and then of course.

**Researcher** 30:24

You ever talked by chance seeing a Black person writing about their travel or documentary?

**Participant** 30:31

Not until a bit later. Not until a bit later and I remember the blog that it was. I was always interested in travel to Japan and there was there was one blogger, his name is Baye McNeil, if I remember correctly, and he ran a blog that was called Loco Yokohama.

**Researcher** 31:05

Loco Yokohama. I like that.

**Participant** 31:09

Yeah, Loco Yokohama and he was one, he was like the first kind of major Black travel writer blogger from Japan writing about his experience living in Japan, working in Japan and having a life there, that I can remember.

**Researcher** 31:24

How do you remember when you found him?

**Participant** 31:27

Oh, wow. That's a great question.

**Researcher** 31:29

High School. Were you in high school?

**Participant** 31:31

Yeah. I want to say it would have been high school. That seems right. Maybe 17/18.

**Researcher** 31:37

Later high school years?

**Participant** 31:39

Yeah, I want to say probably maybe 17. That seems right.

**Researcher** 31:41

Junior or senior maybe?

**Participant** 31:43

Yeah. Yeah, that seems right.

**Researcher** 31:47

Local Yokohama. Do you remember if his last name was McNeil, right?

**Participant** 31:52

Yes. McNeil I think.

**Researcher** 31:55

Not A O? But I am.

**Participant** 31:57

No, I think it was E I L.

**Researcher** 31:59

Yeah, gotcha. And what was the first name?

**Participant** 32:02

Baye. B A Y E.

**Researcher** 32:04

Great. That's a great little detail there. I really appreciate that. There was one more question I had. Before we move on to the last section. I'm just curious about how you contrast your narrative, your experience, your life, with maybe some counterparts in your community who maybe didn't go to the magnet schools and who weren't able to get into the accelerated programs. Do you think, again, there's not a right answer or a wrong answer, but is there any difference maybe in the role that race played for you? Do you think your experience was any different from black counterparts in the Bloomfield area?

**Participant** 33:30

Yeah, that's a good question. Let me take two seconds and say something that actually, let me take two seconds to think about that. It's a good question.

**Researcher** 33:43

Or, we can even come back to it, or you can even because at the end of this, I'm going to say that I will follow up with any questions. If you have anything you want to clarify. If at the end of this discussion, or even later by email or a colleague say, oh, yeah, Miss. Poe, I remember, I want to say this, I want to say that, you could do that if you want to just think on that.

**Participant** 34:04

Yeah, I guess I can say a little bit about because going through the schooling I did. A lot of my friends and peers, people I hung out with more, kind of more than anyone else work from those kind of accelerated programs, and it was more diversity and also the money, the financial, the brackets that their families were in a little bit higher.

**Researcher** 34:34

Higher, both of those is right.

**Participant** 34:36

I do know that travel in general, maybe not only international travel, but just traveling in general was more of a thing that was talked about then I can remember. Kind of when I was around people who were maybe not in those accelerated classes and were pulled more from the surrounding neighborhoods of some of the schools. I know as a topic of discussion, travel was much more talked about in these more diverse settings than people who are not in those classes. So, weren't being exposed maybe to that particular cohort of students. That does feel true and I would say, that felt pretty true, especially in high school and I would also say I would say, race racially. Yeah, I would say maybe it was, I shouldn't say more of a class than a race thing. But it felt more classmates because there were other black students in those accelerated programs with me and the financial kind of backgrounds that their parents had seemed to make more of a difference between, how travel was talked about and spoken about than any particular racial divide.

**Researcher 36:09**

Great. You're onto something and then let me ask you this. So, let's flip the race. Let's say, the lower income community, I'm going to change the context. There are areas here like in Hall County, where you have some trailer park, for instance, and predominantly White communities. In fact, there are some places some tracks where it's like 98%, 99%, non-Black. I mean, I found some tracks, where there are no Latinos, and no Blacks, and no Asians. So we have places like that where people have grown up that are lower income. So in those communities, are they having that same experience of not knowing anything about international travel? Or are there ways that they even get access to knowledge about international travel, maybe through extended family? Maybe somewhere else, or maybe the media that they have or, I don't know. If you flipped it, if you're, if there's a White neighbor almost just practically all White neighborhood, one or two Blacks in the neighborhood, but other than that, you know, what are your thoughts on that? Just your gut feeling, I guess, if you will.

**Participant 38:57**

Yeah, that's an interesting one. I am. Yeah, let me see if I can, if my gut is. Well, I guess that maybe I have a little, maybe I have some ideas about this. So, international travel it's, I guess, depending on what lens you look at, what motivates international travel can maybe color, the way you kind of what motivating factors you look at for why people would travel. So, for example, when I got to high school was really the first time that I came into contact with Latino students, who might have had family was undocumented, who are undocumented. And international travel like for them the way that they are in this particular case, I would let me not speak on their behalf but I had to get the idea in my head that like their parents had traveled internationally. I mean, they

traveled between nations. They came from one and ended up here and they're still on active connection between the America and the country that they came from. And so, the likelihood of them...

**Researcher** 40:25

Which was different than America is just not, we're so this country is so powerful and so egocentric, and they come from America to South America and Central America. Mexico is North America, but we always say America just for the United States.

**Participant** 40:42

Yeah, exactly.

**Researcher** 40:45

Everybody does. It's okay but I like to. I just try to point it out of respect to France, but some I have friends from Mexico. When I lived in Chicago, I lived in a Mexican American neighborhood for a while and they were very quick to always point that out in there, right. I mean, just a lot of things, we say, we call, we could talk about our football, but Soccer is the real football.

**Participant** 41:08

Soccer is the real for exactly, yeah.

**Researcher** 41:10

Thank you. That's the one where your foot is touching the ball, that's football, we throw balls. We should be call that.

**Participant** 41:16

Exactly.

**Researcher** 41:16

But we've taken over and we insist it's football and American culture. But anyway.

**Participant** 41:21

So yeah, let me refine that language a little.

**Researcher** 41:26

Oh. Yes.

**Participant** 41:26

Yes, you're the US. So, yes, people in the US and going between the US and then places in Central and South America, there's still an active connection there and travel may happen there. That's not recreational or purely business. But so the financial motivation is finances matter, but it might not be a primary motivator in terms of there might be just this unnecessary travel that has to happen or travel that they feel is necessary. So, that always struck me as kind of one element of the class.



**Researcher** 41:59

Truth. So, okay, so good point. Very good point. Well, let's move on is this is really good. Now, this is really kind of the last focus, and then we'll be wrapping up. Do you feel that your this exchange parents that you had, that were, in this in the spring of 2021? Do you feel that it influenced your interest in, I'm going to ask for (1) International travel, (2) Global careers working or volunteering abroad, (3) Generally learning about the global world and people from other cultures and anything else, starting with international travel, has it influenced your interest in any way in just traveling outside of the states?

**Participant** 43:10

Oh, yeah, that's a good question. I would say, not massively and that's because I've already pretty much kind of committed to trying to do some international not only travel, but if things go well, soon I'm applying to the NALCAP program in Spain, the foreign exchange where you get to go and teach English for a bit.

**Researcher** 43:45

You go where?

**Participant** 43:46

To Spain, hopefully. So, yeah, to teach in for development of English speakers to teach.

**Researcher** 43:55

I got you. Okay. All right.

**Participant** 43:57

Yeah. Maybe that four year.

**Researcher** 43:57

And let me know if you need any help with that, because I used to have quite a few. I spent a summer in Spain. I used to have quite a few contacts and in general teaching abroad and I will say this is just a not to get off topic, but I can be happy to help you. Because I would love to see you get out there.

**Participant** 49:15

Yeah, yeah. That's I've got a tiny bit of background and not in the French case, although that is fascinating. And also, let me say, just thank you for offering to help in that way and I appreciate that greatly. I may tap you for, I do if you feel comfortable doing this study.

**Researcher** 49:37

Yeah, you help me with my study. So, I'm more than happy that.

**Participant** 49:41

I appreciate it very greatly. There is a letter of recommendation component to this application. And so, I might just do a draft one and if everything is looks okay, if you don't mind.

**Researcher** 49:51

Absolutely. And we're getting near that the time for finishing. Let me just say this, what I can do because ate up some of the time. If this is okay with you and this is the first time I'm looking to do this. I would like to kind of follow up for just a few more questions at another time, would you be open to that? And I can double, I would double compensate you.

**Participant** 50:16

Yeah. Sure. Absolutely.

**Researcher** 50:16

Okay, so what we'll do, what I'll do now is, while I'm thinking about it, because I've got so many things I forgot to do here that I've promised my dad that I was going to handle. I'm going to just quickly switch and pull some leads for travel abroad programs. Are you set pretty much on NALCAP, is that like you've done your research and you're like, that's where you're going, is that where you are?

**Participant** 50:43

So far, I do have my heart set on Spain and that's for a number of reasons. The Now Cap one does seem to be the most hassle free, in terms of it's less of a crapshoot, in terms of kind of how the quality of the program and getting paid on time. In certain places, there's still some regional variation depending on where you get placed but it seems to be relatively stable. And then I've got some, a couple of friends that are in Spain. So, that kind of gives me [51:16 inaudible]

**Researcher** 51:16

Okay. You got that. But I will say with Spain, of them, but you have friends there. So, this is that's the place for you.

**Participant** 52:23

Oh, how wonderful.

**Participant** 57:04 And then my former partner, she's Venezuelan born and lives in Spain. And it's just there's some, yeah and we have talked about. These long talks and we get into stuff that you know about race and ethnicity and yeah, It's not right. Yes it is weird.

**Participant** 57:33

So yeah, yeah. Right. Yeah. Yeah. I

**Researcher** 57:34

Yeah. Yeah, it's very, all very interesting. All very interesting. Yeah.

**Participant** 57:39

All super interesting. I appreciate you sharing that with me. It's great. Fantastic to hear it from an experienced source. So, I'll definitely keep that in heart. Please do feel free to tap me for any other questions that will come up at a later time, I'm more than willing to help. This seems like an excellent research program and I'm just I'm glad to see that somebody is focused on on

experiences of especially Black people. You know, their ideas about traveling and what it means to be an international citizen and these kinds of things is fantastic. I'm very glad. I got to be a part of this research.

**Researcher** 58:19

Well, thank you so much. I want to know, do you know other anybody like yourself? Because I have talked to, and my study is not looking just at African Americans, although I initially I wanted to, for a certain reason. I wanted to focus on what you and I are just now talking about. But that was not just doable. So, I am talking to students from what I'm looking for our students who grew up in predominantly homogenous neighborhoods, at least a period of their time. So, if you happen to know any other Black students who have participated in an international Virtual Exchange, it would be so wonderful. If you would invite them to consider talking to me. I am offering the incentive the \$20, Amazon gift cards. I will try not to take up most of their time. They don't have to show me their face or whatever. So, people can keep doing what they're doing on Zoom and have a little space, a little boundaries there. So, if you know anybody, do you still have that QR code? I can resend it to you.

**Participant** 1:00:37

If you would resend it. I'm sure I probably do have it, but I might have to dig for it.

**Researcher** 1:00:41

I'll resend it.

**Participant** 1:00:43

Yeah.

**Researcher** 1:00:43

And I really appreciate it. So, I'm, like I said, I may follow up with about, try to grab you at a time later this month for some follow up questions if that's okay?

**Participant** 1:00:54

Sure.

**Researcher** 1:00:54

Now, let's finish. Let me finish the formal process of the interview just to hear anything you want to go back to or clarify or elaborate on before we finish today?

**Participant** 1:01:05

Let me see, are there any other things to clarify, or elaborate? Oh, maybe, I didn't think of one other person who I guess, I did see travel who was, I'm not from my neighborhood, but maybe a similar background. I did have a, when I was in fifth grade, I did have a teacher. Mrs. Thompson, who was a Black woman, she was our science teacher. And I didn't find out, later on after I was, this is years later, but I did find out that she eventually went on to go teach in South Korea.

**Researcher** 1:01:43

Wonderful.

**Participant** 1:01:44

I think so.

**Researcher** 1:01:45

But that was late at the time she had. Is that correct?

**Participant** 1:01:48

At the time she had, not I don't believe. When I was actually taking her class and 5th grade but I found out I think I was in maybe closer towards, entering high school maybe or maybe in the middle of high school and her that she had up and gone to travel to...

**Researcher** 1:02:07

That was still, and so while you were in, when you still were growing up in Macon, she did travel. Okay, that was fine. She, not like, just like, a few years ago, but you learned while you were growing up in Macon that she eventually went to teach in South Korea.

**Participant** 1:02:25

Yeah, that's right.

**Researcher** 1:02:26

That's great. That's great. Well, was she in your neighborhood?

**Participant** 1:02:29

She was not in my neighborhood. I don't believe. No. But she was in Macon.

**Researcher** 1:02:36

Was she your 5th grade science teacher?

**Participant** 1:02:39

Yes. If that seems right. Yeah. 5th grade science teacher. Yes. Ms. Fairfax was her name.

**Researcher** 1:02:49

That at the magnet school?

**Participant** 1:02:50

Yes. That was at the magnet school. That's right.

**Researcher** 1:02:53

It's a great example. Great. All right. Anything else? Anything, is there a question I didn't ask that you were looking for me, thinking may I ask if you want to address?

**Participant** 1:03:02

No, no. I think that covered a lot of ground that was really interesting. So, yeah, once again, thank you for one doing this research. I think it's going to be fascinating. I'm looking forward to seeing it completed and published.



**Researcher** 1:03:20

All right, well, thank you so much for your valuable time, I'm going to review your transcript and would like to know if I might contact you. If I have any questions, we've already talked about that. You said yes and I have your phone and your email. So, unless there's another phone number or something, I will use those and of course you also may contact me at any time. If you have any questions or concerns or questions you may contact me at any time. In a few weeks, actually, I need to change this to more like a month. It's going to be just got taking longer than I thought let me see. In March and early March, I will say, I expect to have a final transcript ready for you to review for accuracy, if you would like. So, that's it. Any is there a phone number or email that different from what you would have given me?

**Participant** 1:04:16

No, no. That phone number and email, those are the best ways to get in contact with me.

**Researcher** 1:04:21

Great. I sent the Amazon gift card. Can you check your email, so we can confirm receipt?

**Participant** 1:04:31

I can, give me one second, let me open.

**Researcher** 1:04:33

No rush.

**Participant** 1:04:53

Okay, I do see it.

**Researcher** 1:04:56

Looking great. Well, I'm going to turn off the recording now and thank you so much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]