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UNDERSTANDING WHY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT APPLICANTS CHOOSE A PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

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UNDERSTANDING WHY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT APPLICANTS
CHOOSE A PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

A Dissertation
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership

by
Mark Gene Darby
March 2015
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March 2015
Approved by:

Jay Fiene, Committee Chair, Education
Rueyling Chuang, Committee Member
Jenny Zorn, Committee Member
ABSTRACT

The purpose of Understanding Why International Student Applicants Choose a Public Four-Year Institution was to apply a mixed-methods research approach to California State University, San Bernardino’s (CSUSB) international student population to better understand the factors associated with an international student’s decision-making processing to study abroad.

Internationalization by institutions reflects the current two million international students studying around the world. In recent years internationalization has become more of an economic driving force, whereas in the past it was an opportunity for diversifying knowledge and research. Studies on push and pull factors reflect reasons why international students have decided to go abroad. Factors range from lack of access at home institutions for various programs to the desire to learn about Western culture. Seeing as the population of these studies is so diverse ethnically and culturally, it is important to be mindful of the various forms of capital students possess as an international student and the uniqueness this brings to each students experience.

A questionnaire was utilized to gather quantitative data to provide descriptive statistics of the population, and interviews were conducted with participants to acquire the rich stories. The questionnaire submissions resulted in 52 returned surveys for a response rate of five percent. Six interviews were conducted, which provided a diverse group of international student
representation for the analysis of the rich text allowing for a strong understanding of this specific case study.

Based on the interviews conducted, responses reflected many of those that previous studies found. All but one interviewee mentioned the costs of attending as a deciding factor. Reputation of the institution and prestige of a US degree were also factors mentioned by the majority of participants. Both participants from African countries mentioned a lack of program availability as a reason to go abroad, while both Indian participants mentioned the desire to work after graduating for experience before returning home. Interestingly, most participants mentioned a connected family member to either the institution itself or the state of California as a reason for choosing CSUSB.

The data that were collected for the purposes of this study did show some correlation to previous studies findings. The qualitative data proved useful in better understanding the needs of specific students, while also alluding to potential geographic considerations that need to be had when recruiting abroad and meeting the needs of international students around the world.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

Internationalization of higher education is being recognized as a necessity around the world, especially as globalization becomes more prominent in the daily lives of people (Ardakani et al., 2011; Rizvi, 2006; Stromquist, 2007). The need within higher education revolves around the idea that young adults should be able to learn about other cultures, histories, economies, languages, and people that are interconnected. Through this acquired knowledge, people are more prepared to take on careers that require understanding and awareness of global perspectives to better enable developed and developing countries to forge relationships with one another.

With the influx of internationalization, the market for higher education has become more competitive. Applicants to institutions of higher education have more options to choose from, increasing the need for institutions to do more to stand out and be able to “sell” their institution to prospective applicants. Internationalization efforts of countries, with respect to their higher education systems, are an important way to increase revenue for the country and maintain the longevity of the institution due to increased fees for international students.

While the United States (US) has held for many years, and continues to hold the top ranking of hosting the largest number of international students, other countries are beginning to close in on that gap. Even more specifically, the state
of California hosts the largest number (111,379 students in 2012/13) of international students within the US (Institute of International Education Open Doors “Fast Facts”, 2013). As more institutions within the US are competing for the international student population, increased recruitment efforts are becoming a greater necessity.

This research project aimed to use a four-year university in Southern California to exemplify the extent to which a higher education institution is maintaining a substantial international student population compared to its overall campus population. California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) was chosen because it is a four-year, comprehensive, public-institution that is part of the larger of two state university systems in California. The institution has a student population of nearly 18,000 students. The campus community is quite diverse in racial and ethnic make-up, age range, and is recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSU) due to its high enrollment numbers of Hispanic and Latino/Latina students. The institution, while being located in the largest county in physical size within the US, is not well-branded like other institutions in the US, and several cities within the county have experienced difficult economic times within the last ten years. The institution has been around for over forty-five years and is regionally accredited by the Western Association of Colleges and Universities. With this in mind, the institution has over 1,000 matriculated international students currently attending. This does not include those international students who are currently attending the institution to improve their
English skills through extended education. For the purpose of this study, international student participants were those students who are currently enrolled as a CSUSB student on a visa and are pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree. The purpose of this study was to ascertain data that will allow the institution to continue to grow its international student population, but also serve as a guide for other institutions that have connections to the demographics of the institution being researched.

**Research Questions**

Through this study, data was collected that will further the advancement of internationalization efforts of institutions of higher education. Institutions may utilize the findings in developing their own internationalization plans. The following research questions were meant to utilize the findings of previous macro-level research studies and learn how the findings apply to a mixed-methods case study on CSUSB.

**RQ1.** How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

**RQ2.** The extent to which financial considerations play a part in why an international student selected CSUSB?

**RQ3.** The extent to which family members, friends, or agents play a role in an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

**RQ4.** How does academic program availability play into an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?
RQ5. What was the experience of the application process and visa acquisition process in enrolling at CSUSB?

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions pertained to specific key terms related to this study, as well as synonyms being used interchangeably throughout the study, but referring to the same concept.

**International student:** For this study, the researcher utilized the definition provided by Verbik, Lasanowski, and Lasanowski (2007) to mean, “…students who are enrolled at institutions of higher education in the US who are not citizens of the US, immigrants or refugees. These may include holders of F (student) visas, H (temporary work/trainee) visas, J (temporary educational exchange/visitor) visas and M (vocational training) visas” (p. 7).

**Agents:** An agent is an individual who is paid for their services to assist a foreign student in navigating through the application process and being admitted into a higher education institution.

**Academic program:** An academic program is a specific course of study that a foreign student will undertake in order to earn a bachelors, masters, or doctoral degree. This term may be interchangeable with the term ‘program of study’.

**Mixed-methods research methodology:** A research methodology by which the researcher utilizes both qualitative and quantitative research methods to conduct the research study.
For the purposes of this study, university, institution, and campus all referred to an institution of higher education. The use of survey instrument and questionnaire instrument both referred to the quantitative research tool used to gather statistical data for analysis. Foreign student, international student, and foreign national were all used to reflect those students who are defined by Verbik, Lasanowski, and Lasanowski (2007) as previously mentioned.

Need for the Study

Many studies have provided valuable insight into the field of international student enrollment management. Many of these studies focused on the macro-scale by looking at entire countries higher education systems versus individual institutions, or a more micro-scale. When delving into the research further, one will find that many studies utilized either a qualitative or quantitative approach to obtaining meaningful results. The researcher felt it was necessary to utilize a mixed-methods approach to analyzing international student enrollment management. Mixed-methods approaches are seen to be a newer approach than strict quantitative or qualitative approaches. It is necessary to be able to utilize the hard statistical data of quantitative methods and combine them with the qualitative narratives of lived experiences and give voice to those statistical numbers.

The use of mixed-methods allows the findings to have deeper meaning. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), mixed-methods research helps in guiding data collection and analysis by mixing both qualitative and quantitative
methods throughout the research. It is not only important to utilize a methodology approach that will provide a more thorough analysis in the area of international enrollment management, but this study was also important due to its micro-level stance. It is necessary to look at specific cases and understand what makes them unique to the field and how other institutions and educational researchers may be able to take away invaluable resources from these findings. While there are limitations to this study due to the fact that it targets a public, four-year, comprehensive institution in California, other institutions with similar demographics may be able to pull from the study and apply certain findings to their own institutions.

**Research Design**

For the purposes of this study, and in order to gain a more developed understanding of why international students chose to study at CSUSB, the researcher utilized a mixed-methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) case study research design. The researcher felt that by capturing the statistical data through a questionnaire instrument and combining it with face-to-face interviews to gather narratives from research participants, their stories would provide a deeper understanding of the numerical computations.

The questionnaire instrument asked for descriptive data to better understand who the international student population at CSUSB was. In combination, attitudinal responses were gathered using a seven-point Likert Scale. Upon completion of the questionnaire data acquisition, the researcher
recruited participants for face-to-face interviews. The selection was purposive based on a stratification of the participants and the demographic data reported. The researcher felt this was necessary in order to provide a variation of genders, programs of study, and countries of citizenship.

Upon completion of data collection, tables and charts served to depict the demographic breakdown of the participants of the study. The researcher planned on triangulating the data sets with previous findings. Due to the low response rate for the survey of five percent, the validity and reliability of the data was not possible, therefore the researcher utilized only the descriptive statistics to understand the population being studied. Thematic analysis of the interview data was used to develop themes and categories of the narratives, which in turn provided rich text of the experiences of the students who participated and allowed for making connections to findings from previous studies.

Summary

International enrollment management is continuing to grow as the world becomes more globalized (Ardakani et al., 2011; Rizvi, 2006; Stromquist, 2007). Institutions of higher education are looking to internationalize their campuses for the benefit of their students, staff, faculty, and longevity. In order to stay cutting edge, institutions must continue to find ways to recruit international students to their campuses. Studies show on a macro-level why international students chose to study overseas, but there is limited research at the micro-level. This study aimed to look at an institution that maintains a large international student
population, despite being a medium-sized institution for the system it belongs to and with limited branding to its name.

The mixed-methods case study provides data that can be generalized to like-institutions, and can be utilized by others that are looking to build a strong international student program on their campus. This study, due to its limited accumulation of quantitative data, has become more of a qualitative case study. According to Stake (1995), in certain research studies,

…the case will be studied primarily for generalizing to other cases…single cases are not as strong a base for generalizing to a population of cases as other research designs. But people can learn much that is general from single cases. They do that partly because they are familiar with other cases and they add this one in, thus making a slightly new group from which to generalize, a new opportunity to modify old generalizations (p. 85).

Generalizing can be done to previous studies and the body of research as a whole depending on what an individual is trying to make sense of with his or her research. The use of qualitative methods for the purpose of this study was meant to provide the rich narratives of the participants, and allow the findings to provide a story of experiences of the interviewees.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Higher education has become an increasingly important avenue to develop and build a more academically and socially knowledgeable society. As the world becomes more technologically connected, attention has been placed on constructing institutions of higher learning that will foster a worldly viewpoint and understanding. To do that, many institutions have turned to international student programs to build bridges across continents. While colleges and universities seek to build a strong international student population, provide study abroad opportunities, and increase their faculty research and academic teaching opportunities, financial gain has become a largely influential reason institutions are seeking out ways to internationalize their campuses. The combined economic growth and international component may increase higher education institutions’ footings in the global market for sustainability purposes for years to come.

In order to stay cutting edge and marketable within the ever-increasing development of higher education institutions, internationalization has been the term used to encompass all aspects of international programs. Internationalization has become an avenue for an institution to foster
globalization. In the process, academics have learned to lean on business models and apply them to the academic realm of higher education. The push and pull model has been one of those models; and it looks at factors that push and pull international students to and from institutions of higher education to study. In taking into consideration factors that influence a student’s decision-making process, forms of capital are also influential in those outcomes. As academic professionals, economic, social, and cultural capital all need to be taken into consideration when developing strategic plans to attract international students to an institution.

Internationalization

Education continues to serve as a catalyst for globalization efforts around the world. In an attempt to build a more global economy, many countries are realizing the need for internationalization on the part of their education systems. There are currently two million international students studying around the world (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Rizvi, 2006). According to the American Council on Education, “Internationalization refers to the efforts of institutions to incorporate global perspectives into teaching, learning, and research; build international and intercultural competence among students, faculty, and staff; and establish relationships and collaborations with people and institutions abroad” (American Council on Education, 2014). People tend to use globalization and internationalization interchangeably due to their close connectedness with one another (Knight, 1994; Robson, 2011).
A clear distinction is made between globalization and internationalization. Internationalization is viewed as a response to globalization, which is the overarching social, economic, and political process of uniting the world (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Ardakani, Yarmohammadian, Abari, & Fathi, 2011; Cantwell & Maldonado, 2009). Gracel-Ávila (2005) and Haigh (2008) further state that internationalization efforts aim to build relationships between nations that recognize and respect the unique differences of each country, whereas globalization tends to try and create a homogenized world that does not seek to maintain variation among nations.

Many scholars see great significance in the cultural component that internationalizing higher education can do for the world economy. It provides an opportunity to diversify the student population at institutions, serve as a catalyst to rethink the curriculum, and it provides an opening for new innovation and reform efforts (Ardakani et al., 2011; Rizvi, 2006). Traditional internationalization efforts can be seen in the form of study abroad programs, curriculum inclusion of international studies programs, foreign-language programs, and providing funding for international students to study abroad. Where internationalization was once seen as an opportunity for developed countries to internationalize their institutions, in today’s highly technological world, developing countries are also joining in on increasing their own internationalization efforts (Stromquist, 2007).
internationalization cycle was developed to aide in the development of internationalization efforts on the part of institutions.

The internationalization cycle (Knight, 1994) was coined to reflect the processes that institutions of higher education go through to internationalize. It is important to note that there is not a prescribed timeline and pace that an institution should go through each stage; and the stages can produce a two-way flow back and forth. The six stages are: awareness, commitment, planning, operationalization, review, and reinforcement (Knight, 1994). Awareness refers to bringing about an understanding among students, staff, faculty, and administration of the significance and benefits of internationalization. Building a commitment that involves an integration of internationalization into teaching, research, and service follows awareness. Once a commitment has been established planning needs to take place to develop a well-rounded strategy to internationalize the institution. Operationalizing the plan revolves around the implementation of strategies that will foster a supportive community. After an institution has implemented the plans, a review must be made to assess the quality and impact of the strategies. While reflecting and adjusting the plans and implementation of internationalization of an institution, reinforcement is necessary to recognize the work that faculty and staff have done to develop and execute a purposeful internationalization plan.

Like any well-thought out strategic plan, the internationalization cycle allows an institution to consider all of the key components and players necessary
to implement and maintain a strong program. Institutions make every attempt to
grow and develop based on missions and goals of the institution and the
president’s or chancellor’s vision for the future. The academic and research
components are key to any college or university, but it is imperative to take into
consideration the financial sustainability as well.

While internationalization efforts have been seen originally to enhance
research and knowledge through cultural understanding, in more recent years
they have been viewed as an economic driving force (Altbach & Knight, 2007;
Haigh, 2008; Rizvi, 2006; Stromquist, 2007). The economic gain has become
especially important for public institutions in developed countries where funding
is being cut and the full-tuition costs that international students pay helps offset
these cuts. Countries like the United States of America (US), Canada, The
United Kingdom (UK), and Australia (AUS) have all increased their recruitment
efforts of international students for such reasons (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Rizvi,
2006). Many developed countries like the US and AUS have established branch
campuses in foreign countries that serve as offshoots of their main campuses in
their home country. Transnational education is the term used to include the
concept of branch campuses. These expansions have allowed institutions the
ability to reach a greater amount of prospective students who may live in
countries where the educational infrastructure cannot sustain its growing
population (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Paul, 2009). Developing countries are also
seeing the importance to host international students. It serves as a way to gain
prestige as an institution, bring in more money to the institution, and improve the
cultural composition of the student population.

Developing countries are continuously working to build their nation’s
economy and global network. With the advancements taking place in developing
countries, the need to send students away may not be as great because these
countries will have a greater capacity to educate their students at home versus
abroad. The educational infrastructure will continue to develop and more
institutions of higher education will open in order to support more students at
home as well as bring in students from abroad. Of course, despite all the
benefits of internationalization there are challenges as well.

Internationalization does not come without its potential limitations and
concerns. As more institutions seek out opportunities to develop memorandums
of understanding with foreign institutions or build branch campuses abroad,
questions surrounding quality assurance and recognition come to the table
(Altbach & Knight, 2007). For some countries, especially developing nations,
regulatory systems may be limited or not in place at all that can maintain high
levels of quality control. When considering accreditation, countries vary on the
policies and procedures taken to accredit institutions, therefore, it may prove
difficult to accredit institutions that are outside their country of origin. Thus, some
of the most prestigious institutions in the world who have campuses abroad may
lack the same rigor due to regulations being so different in the country hosting a
branch campus.
Not only does it raise concern for the accreditation of an institution, but it is also grounds for concern as it applies to the actual rigor and quality of coursework. Taking into consideration the notion that institutions pay large amounts of money to recruit and build institutions abroad, accrediting agencies are continuing to populate the world and there are concerns associated with them (Gül, Gül, Kaya, & Alican, 2010). Altbach & Knight (2007) suggest concern be applied to the development of “accreditation mills” that may provide accreditation to an institution without assessments taking place. It is similar in practice to “degree mills” that sell various degrees to individuals willing to pay the appropriate fees.

With the influx of institutions developing overseas programs and branch campuses, a greater degree of issues surrounding accreditation and knowledge rigor have become apparent. It has become increasingly difficult for employers to verify the accreditation of an institution. If employers are unable to verify specific accreditation and qualifications of an applicant, the degree earned may not be worth the time and effort put into it. Likewise, students who are seeking graduate degrees or other professional programs may find themselves having to repeat courses. Worse yet, an applicant’s undergraduate degree may not be recognized because of the accrediting agency and knowledge rigor, thus being denied admittance into graduate and professional programs.

As much as there are legitimate concerns surrounding the regulatory components of internationalization of institutions, there are other concerns that
surround globalization. Political realities and national security are always of high concern for a nation. Security concerns and tightened visa regulations have affected the US greatly after 9/11. For some countries, these regulations have significantly impacted their opportunity to send students abroad. As other countries go to war, issues of concern are brought up about the security of each nation, which in turn affects international students. The regulating of visas in the US has allowed other countries like AUS to grow exponentially in their international recruitment. With the demand of internationalization growing, more and more research is being done to show the importance and understanding of the need to internationalize an institution of higher education.

Studies have been conducted in all aspects of internationalization. Özturgut, Cantu, Pereira, and Ramón (2013) studied the ways in which internationalization is being built within US higher education institutions. It was found that institutions are holding international events for training and education on culture and diversity as well as including international components in their institutional infrastructure. The first finding relates to institutions hosting trainings, workshops, conferences, presentations, as well as festivals that promoted cultural diversity and awareness. The latter was in reference to the positionality of an institution on internationalization, global profiling (how countries profile other countries for the purpose of business exchange and globalization efforts), as well as recruitment and enrollment efforts. The positionality of an institution referred to how the institution as a whole viewed
internationalization efforts, whether they were positive or negative. Some respondents spoke of their web page development needed to be user friendly in various languages, networking on a global level, building campuses outside the US, as well as having international centers and counselors on campus. Taking a look at the macro level allows for a big picture view to be made. Further studies have been conducted to break down internationalization by institution type.

Development of internationalization plans according to Knight (1994) is necessary before an institution can begin to operationalize them. Findings by Childress (2009) indicate that higher education institutions have implemented internationalization strategies to varying degrees. It was found that the majority (71 percent) of the institutions that participated in the study had some sort of internationalization plan in place or in development. The institutions were broken down into three categories of internationalization development; institutional strategic plans (ISP), distinct documents (DD), and unit plans (UP). An ISP referred to an institution in which internationalization plans encompassed the entire institutions strategic plan. DDs were used to label institutions with general goals or mission statements that included internationalization. Lastly, UPs were those institutions that had specific units within the institution that are including internationalization into their program development; for example, offices of academic affairs and international education offices.

Breaking down the types of institutions was also factored into the internationalization of institutions. Childress (2009) found that the majority of
institutions that had ISPs were doctoral-granting institutions, then masters-
granting institutions, and lastly baccalaureate-granting. It was also noted that the
majority of ISPs were at public versus private institutions. It was found that there
were factors that enabled the development, implementation, and monitoring of
internationalization. Strong support networks by leaders (i.e. presidents,
chancellors, provosts) within the institutions, taskforces and engagement of
faculty and academic senates, external factors (i.e. approaching accreditation),
and monitoring by offices of institutional research served as factors that aided
institutions with ISPs, DDs, and UPs in developing internationalization plans.

Those institutions within the study (Childress, 2009) that did not have
internationalization plans in place saw decentralized organizational structures,
lack of time or the slowness of decision-makers, lack of support by important
players (i.e. presidents), financial constraints, and lack of positions that support
the development of internationalization plans as factors for the lack of
internationalization. Lack of financial resources and the lack of faculty interest
and involvement were seen as issues in internationalization within European
countries (Labi, 2009). One of the most interesting findings was that those
institutions with strong ISPs in place actually felt that internationalization plans
were no longer useful to them, which can be perceived as a hindrance to further
development of internationalization plans. These institutions saw
internationalization plans as a necessary component for institutions that are
beginning to internationalize or need buy-in from faculty. Those institutions with
engrained internationalization plans within the entire make-up of the institutions’ felt they were irrelevant. As much as it is necessary to look at the macro level (e.g. institutions) in internationalization, the micro level is also important; and the student voice carries a lot of weight on a university campus.

Looking at internationalization in both the macro and micro level is necessary in better understanding student perspective, while at the same time being able to make generalizations about institutions. Parsons (2010) aimed her study at the viewpoints of domestic students who are attending institutions that are internationalizing their campuses. Her findings showed that domestic students, as they progress through their academic careers, have greater experiences with internationalization efforts such as developing friendships with international students and working with international students on group work in courses. There was an interesting distinction made between domestic students who participated in study abroad through their institutions versus traveling abroad for personal reasons. Study abroad experiences tended to lend a hand in developing a student’s own international viewpoint. It found that they were better able to communicate with foreign students, build a greater cultural and national self-awareness, and had the ability to adjust one’s behaviors so as not to offend a foreign student. In contrast, traveling abroad enabled a student the opportunity to improve his or her foreign language skills and general knowledge of a country or region (Parson, 2010). Her study also found that a student traveling to a
developing country afforded a better learning experience than traveling to a developed country.

Globalization has lent a hand in the development of internationalization of higher education. With increased technology, institutions have been able to provide students from around the world access to higher education. Internationalization has enabled institutions to strategically plan to meet the needs of their students' with a worldview through; study abroad programs, cross borders faculty involved in research and academic development, as well as enrolling international students at their campuses. These opportunities have increased students’ cultural and social awareness as well as provided economic revenue for institutions seeking to offset budgetary cuts.

Internationalization has opened up the world of higher education. People from around the world can now gain first-hand experiences living and learning with students from all walks of life. With increased efforts to internationalize institutions around the globe, a better understanding of international student development is necessary in order for countries and institutions to be able to better serve students from abroad. With this in mind, many academics have looked at factors that push and pull students to and from various countries in pursuit of higher education. Taking what came out of the business world, the push and pull theory has been applied to international student recruitment, opening up the door to greater advancements in higher education.
Push-Pull Theory

As internationalization of higher education institutions becomes more competitive, leaders look to data to help make sense of what needs to be done to stay on top. To date the US remains the top country hosting international students (Lee, 2010). In 2012-13, incoming international students increased by 7.2 percent over the 2011-12 year (Institute of International Education Open Doors “Fast Facts”, 2013). The US’s population of international students hit an all-time high of 819,644 students in 2012-13. Relative to the state levels of participation within the US, California still remains the state hosting the highest number of international students as of 2012-13 data, with 111,379, showing an increase of 8.4 percent from 2011-12, which is greater than the national increase. It should be noted that California is the state with the greatest population in the US. The second leading state, New York, trails behind California by over 20,000 international students. Figure 1 shows the leading US states in international student enrollment for 2011-12 and 2012-13 retrieved from IIE Open Doors “Fast Facts” 2013.
Though the US is a leader in international students from abroad, in recent years there has been a decline; whereas, other countries like Canada and the UK have seen increases in their international student populations (She & Wotherspoon, 2013; Wit, Ferencz, & Rumbley, 2013). “Several other countries in the Asian Pacific region—Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, and Thailand—have stepped up their efforts to internationalize and to attract more international students” (Bhandari, p. 6-7). In the aftermath of 9/11, many restrictions made it much more difficult for international students to obtain visas to enter the US (Wit et al., 2013). The US is not the only country that expects to see a decline in international student population; places like AUS who have
changed their immigration rules and the UK who proposes to severely limit the number of student visas will also experience a decline in international student numbers. It is important to note that, “International students contribute $24.7 billion to the U.S. economy, through their expenditures on tuition and living expenses, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce” (Institute of International Education Open Doors Special Report: Economic Impact of International Students, 2014).

International student enrollment provides significant revenue and globalization opportunities for many countries around the world. Although direct studies have not been conducted that will allow those individuals’ interested in international education to say without hesitation where the future of international education stands, many studies and national education policies may help shed light on internationalization efforts. Macready and Tucker (2011), took a closer look is taken on the future growth patterns and trends of international education, as well as potential pattern changes in the supply and demand of international students. They reported that although there are many reasons to be optimistic about the future trends of international student mobility, there are also reasons to be cautious as well. One of the largest factors associated with optimism is that the world population growth is taking place predominantly in developing countries such as Indonesia. These increases in birth rates will increase the demand for education in the future. China, despite showing a slight dip in their child birth with the one-child policy in place, still has many displaced students looking to
pursue higher education. Fortunately, many of these students have the wealth and desire to study abroad. Secondly, a rise in certain economic powers in Asia, such as China and India, will reinforce the need for international education. While this is a benefit to the global internationalization efforts, it does place current major destination countries, like the US and UK, in a position of potential decline of international student attendance. Language is one factor that does benefit certain dominant nations.

Despite increases in population and the growth of economic power in Asian countries, the English language does continue to place certain countries in a beneficial position. English remains a “world language” along with Mandarin and Spanish, but around the world it is the “working language of the global economy” (Macready & Tucker, 2011, p. 4). Over twenty percent of international students study business and administration, which places a strong importance on being able to work in English (Macready & Tucker, 2011). Other countries where English is not the first language are increasing their English development programs as well. Places like China, Japan, South Korea, and parts of Europe are all increasing their English-language course offerings. This in part with the fact that places like China and India have the potential resources to construct world-class institutions gives reasons for dominant host countries to be slightly concerned with a decline in their international student numbers. Economically strong nations like China and India seek to deflate the “brain drain” that is taking place. By building up their educational facilities to become world-class
contenders for prospective students, these nations will be able to keep their students at home as well as become a stronger host country for students coming from abroad.

Not only are countries working to increase their presence in the educational market with their own institutions, transnational education has also allowed a student to stay in their home country but pursue a degree from an institution outside their home country. For example, “In 2008/9, there were 369,000 international students enrolled in UK higher education institutions, but a further 388,000 students were studying for a UK qualification outside the UK. In 2009, there were 162 UK higher education campuses operating globally in 51 countries, an increase of 43 percent over 2006” (Macready & Tucker, 2011, p. 5). Therefore, it is safe to say that internationalization is here to stay due to globalization, but there will be shifts in the future that reflect changes in policies and the continued development of developing countries.

Higher education world-wide has seen its share of a large population of international students looking to study abroad. With the increase in a globalized economy, students are able to seek out resources beyond just their home countries. There are numerous reasons for international students to travel abroad in search of a higher education. Many factors can be associated with the push and pull factors of business as applied to education. The “push” factors relate to a students’ decisions to leave their home country. The “pull” factors on
the other hand relate to factors that help pull a student to study in a particular host country (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

Summarizations of studies on how the push-pull theory accounted for students leaving various countries to study in places like the US, AUS, and Europe follow. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) looked at four different country studies (Indonesia, Taiwan, India, and China) carried out between the years 1996 and 2000 by the Australian Education International (AEI), which is part of the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA). The data was collected via a questionnaire and group discussions provided in depth narratives. According to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), there are a series of steps an international student must undergo in the process of deciding to study abroad. First, they must decide that they want to study abroad. Second, they select a host country based on the push-pull factors. Lastly, they will decide on a particular institution within the host country. Bohman (2009) also came up with a similar model, with the exception of adding one step. Since he was looking at community colleges, he added a different third step, a prospective international student determining which type of institution to attend (community college versus university) before making a final decision on where to study.

Mazzarol and Soutar’s (2002) study and others found that there are several influential push factors associated with the desire to study abroad. It was found that certain programs (i.e., medicine and veterinary sciences) in the home country that were too difficult to get into, due to limited seats available, that in
turns inflates the admission criteria, may be easier to get into abroad (Findlay, King, Smith, Geddes, & Skeldon, 2011; Healey, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Also, some programs do not exist in the home country, leaving students to look elsewhere to study. This consideration happens in all countries, developed and developing, because competition for specific higher education programs varies from location to location, university to university, as do their costs of attendance. According to Bohman (2009), “their test scores or grades may prevent them from continuing with higher education in their home country” (p. 69). Roberts (2012) also notes that in a place like India, there are not enough institutions of higher education to accommodate the increase in population, thus pushing students to seek higher education elsewhere. While push factors are influenced greatly by the lack of resources in a home country, pull factors are usually associated with access to resources in a host country.

Pull factors can be influenced by an international student’s desire to go abroad for personal reasons or because the host country provides better access to higher education. By studying abroad, a student may gain a better understanding of “Western” culture (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Those looking to perhaps expand their employment opportunities to locations outside their home country will also get first-hand knowledge of other countries by studying in them. Mobility within the globalized job market is also considered important by students (Findlay et al., 2011; Mazzarol, Soutar, & Thein, 2000; Roberts, 2012). Importance is placed on the idea that there might be a job prospect in the host
country after graduating with a degree; as was seen by postgraduate students from India who felt it was extremely important that they find part-time work (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Lee (2008) also found financial assistance and work opportunities to be important in her study. Therefore, it is important to international students to keep in mind the economy of the host country, the labor market, and policies on immigration, as well as citizenship possibilities. For example, AUS uses a ‘point’ system when handling issues pertaining to immigration policies and some majors create an easier path for an international student to gain permanent residency (Rizvi, 2011). This is, as much, an important factor for students in developed countries as for developing countries. The potential to study abroad and future opportunities for one-self could influence many students to seek opportunities outside of a home country. International students must also take into consideration whether the country is a developed or developing country, and what sorts of implications that may pose on studying abroad. These considerations are important, but it is also necessary to take into consideration the differences experienced by students coming from developed versus developing countries.

Wei (2013) conducted research on international student institution choice factors related to developed versus developing countries. Wei noted that, “In this fast-changing climate, a growing rate of international-student source countries are rapidly transforming into destination countries” (p. 106). Wei’s study found that students coming from developing countries were more inclined to choose an
institution based on economic pull factors such as: how developed the education system is, research development, public welfare, and the per capita gross domestic product (GDP) gap between the home and host country. Students coming from developed countries are more likely to choose an institution based on educational pull factors such as: student-teacher ratio and enrollment rate of the host country.

Despite the fact that many students looking to study abroad are coming from countries with developing education systems, there are those who choose to study abroad coming from countries with well-developed education systems that are world-renowned. According to Findlay et al. (2011), some students set out to leave the UK in hopes of increasing their capital and gain a market advantage over others who have decided to stay within the country for higher education. They see this as an opportunity to be different than their friends. Bohman (2009) also found that participants in his study concluded that a degree from the US higher education system would open doors for careers. Besides career advancement potential, knowledge of the host country is important to an international student.

Students’ placed an importance on having a knowledge and awareness of the hosting country. There were four items in this area of Mazzarol and Soutars’ (2002) studies that were rated with high importance in all four countries. Those were: the ease of finding information about the host country, the student’s knowledge of the host country, the quality of education in the host country, and
that the qualifications earned in the host country would be recognized in a student’s home country. Students want to know that their money is being spent on something that will carry a significant meaning upon returning home when seeking employment or beginning a career. These factors make it easier not only for the applicant, but also for employers hiring newly graduated applicants out of a competitive market. Considering a competitive edge, students’ also sought out institutions that ranked well amongst other colleges and universities.

According to Findlay et al. (2011), Lee (2008) and Roberts (2012), the institution’s reputation and prestige was seen to be highly important in deciding on which university to attend. Many students look to rankings by *U.S. News and World Report* to help with the decision-making process, especially when an applicant has never been to or heard of the state or institution. Students’ decisions are based off a perceived notion that these rankings are methodologically sound and accurate. It is implied that applicants may use ranking tools as a way to help sort through all of the potential schools. The task can be quite overwhelming, especially when there may be limited knowledge of a particular region of the US. Rankings are utilized as a means to select an institution, but students also look to important individuals in their lives for suggestions and feedback on which institution to attend.

Studies also found that the recommendations of parents, relatives, and friends were also important in the decision making process. Agents, or those individuals who are paid for their services to help students process through the
application process, were also seen as important, but not nearly as much as friends and family (Bohman, 2009; Lee, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Reputable institutions are likely to acquire more students from the recommendations of agents, family, and friends because individuals are more likely to recommend an institution if they had a positive experience while attending the university, thus helping build the institution’s reputation. This factor plays out for domestic students applying to higher education institutions as well; and similarly, cost concerns were also addressed and received mixed reviews depending on the country of origin for international students just as they do for domestic students.

Just as domestic and international students’ share certain attributes when considering where to study for higher education; location is also one of those factors. Country attraction (Wilkins, Balakrishnan, & Huisman, 2012) includes considering specific attributes such as familiarity of culture and lifestyles, safety concerns, and the ability to maintain close contact with friends and family. In keeping with the globalization concept, implementation of international branch campuses has become a viable option for students looking to gain an education from a foreign institution. Many campuses across the world are continuing to expand their networks and educational programs to select countries like India, China, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to Wilkins et al. (2012), factors related to convenience, country attractions, and quality and
employment are all found to show some importance in the push-pull model for applicants with a desire to study at a branch campus within one’s home country.

Wilkins et al. (2012) findings shed light onto the fact that the UAE branch campuses may be chosen for reasons surrounding the fact that the UAE is a Muslim country, and staying in a place where there is a strong connection to that familiarity is important. Roughly thirty percent of participants in each category claimed each of the above mentioned reasons to be important, with the highest of 31.9 percent seeing the UAE as a safer country to live in than others (Wilkins et al., 2012). In a similar study (Wilkins & Huisman, 2013), the researchers found that branch campus attraction is also associated with the opinions of people they knew having a 51.1 percent influence on decision-making; and that the “institution’s image related to prestige” (p. 10) was the second highest reason according to the study.

Financial expenses are taken into consideration wherever a student chooses to study, but the opportunity to study at a branch campus in a student’s home country does cut out some of the financial burden placed on a student relocating to a host country. By staying in the home country, a student also may not have to deal with all the processes involved with studying abroad like visas, housing, and acclimating to a new place. Also, for those students who already hold jobs in their home country, they will not have to quit their jobs and leave their families behind (Wilkins et al., 2012).
With the consideration of location as a factor for where to study, environmental factors were also considered into Wilkins et al. (2012) study, and it was found that the climate and learning environment were viewed as important factors. Having other friends or relatives who live or study in the host country was important, whereas the actual geographic proximity to the home country was not viewed as important. Location and environment assist an international student in choosing where to study, but the actual process of applying and getting accepted are seen as important factors as well.

Another study done by Mazzarol et al. (2000) brought to light new considerations by students. The ease of entrance into a university and the advertising done by the university were important in deciding which institution to attend. Just like many domestic students in a country, international students looking to study abroad want to find the process of applying and being accepted as straight-forward and user-friendly as possible. Things like creating applications in an applicant’s native language would allow the applicant to comprehend what is being asked and fill out the application more completely. Universities need to market themselves to appeal to applicants, especially those who are not branded and known around the world.

Push and pull factors play a strong role in the higher education realm. International student applicants rely on many factors associated with the push and pull model. Students are pushed out of their home country for reasons like: lack of educational institutions, limited space that makes it more difficult to get
accepted, not having the undergraduate program of choice to study in, and the lack of graduate programs for students. On the contrary, students are pulled to host countries for the following: well-developed educational systems, job opportunities, re-location opportunities, easier admission requirements, degree recognition, building capital, and prestige of an institution. In the unique case of branch campuses, students are in a sense “pulled” to stay in their home country, but pushed to study at a foreign institution because: familiarity with the home country, safety concerns, acclimatizing concerns, staying in a job, being close to family and friends, and not having to deal with the logistics of relocating to a foreign country. In the bigger scheme of things, all of the push and pull factors mentioned can be associated with various forms of capital an international student possesses.

Forms of Capital
Taking into consideration the fact that there were over 800,000 international students studying in the US in 2012-13 (Institute of International Education Open Doors “Fast Facts”, 2013), it is important to look at all aspects of the international student when trying to understand their decision-making processes. Students come from all over the world to study in the US. Leading the places of origin were: China (28.7 percent of total), India (11.8 percent of total), South Korea (8.6 percent of total), and Saudi Arabia (SAU) (5.4 percent of total). These four countries alone make up over half (54.5 percent of total) of international students studying in the US.
It is not only important to look at the flow of international students from the perspective of the push and pull model, but also to take into consideration the capital that students bring with them; especially when considering the diversity that international students represent. Maintaining an individualistic mindset will allow institutions to better serve the international student population. Bourdieu (1986) explains,

capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations (“connections”), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility. (p. 243)

All forms of capital can have varying degrees of effect on an international student’s educational attainment. It is important to examine varying degrees of human, economic, social, and cultural capital that encompass the decision-making process of higher education institution selection, and more initially the decision to study abroad. Barone (2006) looked at the Project for International Student Assessment (PISA) data to try and better understand Bourdieu’s cultural capital theory in students from multiple countries. His study did show that occupational status, parental level of education, and cultural capital all show a
positive correlation to a student’s achievement in reading and mathematics. He further purports that occupational ambitions and economic resources have a direct influence on social origins.

In a study conducted by Gripsrud, Hovden, and Moe (2011) on Norwegian students, it was found that the advanced educational attainment by parents increased over a ten year period, and with it came a positive correlation in their children attending higher education as well. The research showed that cultural capital provided by parents, in the form of music, literature, and television, had an impact on the variations in what their children were found to listen to, watch, and read. Whereas the more elite families still found their children looking at more classical and traditional Norwegian cultural components, those from lower SES were seen to be more in line with mainstream Norwegian culture. It was also noted that overall, there was a decrease in classical traditional Norwegian cultural ties over the period of the study. These tangible forms of cultural capital would fall into the objectified state according to Bourdieu (1986) because they are the tangible objects that can be converted into economic capital and symbolize the cultural capital a family has as well.

There have been noted differences between parental involvement by mothers and fathers. Similarly, parental educational experience has also factored into the cultural capital a student experiences. In a study by Sheng (2012), middle-class Chinese mothers showed a greater involvement in their child’s education than fathers did. Fathers were usually busy working to support
the family, thus putting more of the responsibility on the mother to assist children with schooling.

Middle class mothers maintained higher educational expectations of their children. The expectation was usually to attend graduate school. Likewise, working class mothers found an importance in higher education for their children, but there was a lack of knowledge that impeded their strong involvement due to their limited educational attainment. Due to a lack of knowledge, working class mothers were less able to assist their children, relying on the school to help them. In a statement by one of the interviewees from a working class background, she states:

I cannot do much about my son’s study…I did not study for a long time myself…What I am suffering now, such as having no job, no skills…This is because I have no bachelor degree…I want my son to be good at his studies and enter a good university…I can only depend on his teachers at school…My son never talked with me about what has happened during his day time study at school…I really have no idea about how to do it…what I can do is just to provide him with daily care, such as preparing three meals for him, washing clothes. (Dong Wen, as cited in Sheng, 2012, p.138)

This example shows how a limited cultural capital of education has made it difficult for this mother to be as engaged in her son’s education compared with middle class mothers. Although she is unable to support her child in educational
attainment, she still sees the importance of an education and wishes for her child to do well and attend a university in order to have greater opportunities in life. This example is what Bourdieu (1986) would call the embodied state of cultural capital. The embodied state deals with the conscious and unconscious inherited attributes a child gains from their parents’ own capital.

The majority of fathers in this study coming from middle-class backgrounds provided input when it came to the design and planning of the child’s educational path. Due to being busy with work duties and social activities, many of the educational endeavors were left to the mother to handle (Sheng, 2012). This may allude to the father’s building of economic capital being utilized for their child’s higher education.

In a study conducted by Waters & Brooks (2010), an interesting spin was placed on the cultural capital of international students. Many studies on international students tend to look at students coming from countries where English is not the primary language to countries where it is, or usually from developing countries to developed countries. This study was unique, in that, it was conducted on UK students specifically, which is a country that has a highly desirable higher education system; therefore, the study aims to understand why a UK student would seek higher education elsewhere, when the system in place is well-developed compared to many country’s higher educational systems.

The study’s interviewees highlighted a highly privileged group of students with respect to the amount of cultural, social, and economic capital each student
experienced. There was a great amount of support and involvement by parents. Parents also had a certain level of expectation with regard to the educational achievement their child obtained. The most interesting finding in the study was the “ostensible absence of any explicit strategy underpinning many UK students’ decision around international education” (Waters & Brooks, 2010, p. 221).

Whereas, many studies on international student higher education show that many students seek higher education because of the economic advantages, prestige of studying in the US or other well-developed higher education systems, familial recommendations, and better employment opportunities (Bohman, 2009; Findlay et al., 2011; Lee, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Mazzarol, Soutar, & Thein, 2000; Roberts, 2012; Wei, 2013); the UK students saw it as an opportunity for adventure and something exciting to do. This study highlights the greater amounts of capital the UK students had, and how it did not translate into a necessity to study abroad for the economic gain that many other international students seek to gain. It can almost be seen as a holiday in the eyes of some of the respondents. For example, one interviewee stated,

I don’t think I had a future plan, to be honest. My future plan was to avoid working and sleep late! And that fitted in well because of course it meant a guaranteed four year pass out of employment. At the time that was a massive motivation. I just didn’t want to work and I wanted to find any way possible to avoid doing anything I didn’t want to do. (Waters & Brooks, 2010, p. 223)
With how ingrained cultural capital is to a person’s individuality (Bourdieu, 1986) it makes sense that this form of capital is an important factor in the international student’s identity. The familial views on education will strongly determine the support of an international student having the opportunity to study abroad, or even within their home country. At the macro level, countries also play a role in the cultural capital an international student possesses through governmental support of higher education as a means of building economic and social capital.

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247)

Wu (2008) examined educational access to evaluate how influential parental cultural and social capital was in a child’s ability to access higher education. The study looked at China over several decades when the educational system went through various political climates, and how cultural capital effected access to the educational system for students coming from professional families, political elites, the working class, and peasants. Between 1949-76, the government opened up greater access to children of the working
class and peasants, and during this time occupation did not influence the access a child had to education. From 1977-96, however, the policies changed and access to working class and peasant families became more limited. During this time a father’s educational background became important in the access provided to his child. It was also found that a father’s political party involvement was a factor in the movement of a student through the educational system. This study showed how a family’s social and cultural capital can directly influence the opportunities of a child being able to attend higher education.

Consideration needs to be taken in relation to the social capital one is afforded, especially when thinking about educational systems around the globe. “HE (higher education) institutions are commonly stratified by status and, as a result, are not equally accessible to all social groups” (Brooks, 2008, p. 1360). The social, cultural, and economic capital afforded to students varies depending on the countries they are coming from. Host countries must be mindful of the home countries that students are coming from and how that may play a role in the ability to study abroad.

For example, unlike France, Japan, the USA and the UK, Germany currently has no elite HE institutions to which students may apply. Instead, status is attached to the level of qualification, rather than the awarding body; thus, the doctorate has come to be seen as the equivalent of the degrees offered by the elite institutions in other countries. (Hartmann, 2007 as cited in Brooks, 2008, p. 1360)
Educational qualifications or credentials would be considered part of the institutionalized state of cultural capital that an individual possesses (Bourdieu, 1986). This could potentially help explain to some degree why certain studies on international education show strong correlations between a student deciding to study abroad and the lack of access in their home country (Findlay et al., 2011; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Roberts, 2012).

More countries are seeing the importance of sending their students abroad to pursue higher education in hopes of increasing their place in the globalized economy and internationalization. Places like SAU and the UAE provide fully funded education abroad to students who are successfully accepted into an institution of higher education. Brazil is following suit for students looking to study in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). According to IIE Open Doors 2013, governmental and foreign university support accounts for 7.1 percent of the various forms of funding students are receiving to study abroad. Figure 1.2 shows a breakdown of the funding sources for international students retrieved from IIE Open Doors “Fast Facts” 2013.
Many researchers have shown the effects of economic capital on students’ educational successes. The data shows that the more economic capital a family has the better educational access a student will have afforded to him or her. Familial and personal contributions account for the most financial support an international student uses when studying abroad. As we can see from the data from IIE Open Doors 2013, of the over 800,000 students studying abroad in 2013, over 520,000 of them rely on personal and family financial support, which accounts for 63.6 percent of the total population of international students studying in the US. This increased by 7.1 percent over the previous
academic year in personal and family support. This is still a hugely disproportionate number when considering the second major source (e.g., scholarships, grants, and research positions) of funding comes from the US colleges or universities that are accepting international students, at 20.7 percent of the total population. Consideration needs to be had of the type of student studying abroad in the US, especially knowing that many of them come from a strong economic capital background, which could very-well translate into higher degrees of cultural and social capital. The data depicts that there is still a large gap between those students who have greater amounts of economic, social, and cultural capital versus those who come from lower socio-economic status and bring with them different forms of social and cultural capital.

Limited studies have been conducted on international students and their capital and perceptions while studying abroad. Kim (2012) conducted a study on Korean international students studying abroad in the US at a top ranking institution. This qualitative study found that the experiences of Korean students coming from the Korean educational system provided the following reasons for studying abroad: the Korean system has been largely influenced by the US higher education system so it made sense to study in the US, there is a strong sense of authoritarian relationships between students and faculty in Korean universities, and there is a strong sense of what the author calls a “degree-caste system” (p. 460). This degree-caste system dictates how much an individual can potentially earn in a career and what their future status will be in society. By
attending a US institution, a student could potentially rise from the lower rankings of the degree caste system to the higher because they studied in the US. In a similar article by Kim (2011), there is a link made between earning a US degree and higher earning potentials back in Korea. Students also expressed that Korean universities tend to be sexist and cater to male students more with respect to academic capital. Thus, the lack of economic, cultural, and social capital attainment opportunities at home led these students to seek higher education abroad.

Another finding from the study (Kim, 2011) was that these Korean students’, who were top-ranking students’ in Korea, now felt “inferior” to their American counterparts. “Korean students perceive themselves as inferior not because of their abilities, but because of their transnational positioning” (p. 461). This was felt during lectures heavily in part because of the language barriers, readings, and writing assignments. Despite having a large amount of cultural and economic capital in Korea, these elite students were finding that they were no longer at the top of the class.

The relationships built with American students and professors were important to the development and progress of many Korean students in the study. Many felt that their American professors and academic advisors were more compassionate than their professors in Korea. The relationships built with classmates were important in better understanding and meeting the demands of courses.
On the contrary, some Korean students did make mention that not all their experiences with American professors, advisors, and students were positive. Some became impatient with their slower pace and lack of understanding. The study found that the most important relationships for Korean students were with other Korean students in the same major and further along in their studies. These students were more knowledgeable about the American standards and expectations.

Cultural, economic, and social capitals are all factors that affect the decision to become an international student, and it is a lot more complex than simple black and white answers. Taking into consideration the concepts coined by Bourdieu one can better understand the development of the international student mindset. Just as it is important to understand one’s own capital gains, it is gravely important to understand others in the educational context.

One can see that capital in the sense of promoting access and privilege is strongly seen in the international student population. It is very apparent when looking at the data by IIE Open Doors 2013 and the financial assistance students’ gain from their families to support them abroad. My study looks to better understand how students with large amounts of various forms of capital come to choose an institution in the US with limited branding in the domestic sphere and abroad. Whether it is simply a perpetuation of word of mouth from families and friends that have gone before them at the particular institution, or the sheer fact that the geographic location of the institution being studied is well-
known; it is known that international students look to someone or something to assist in the decision-making process of studying abroad. The current research shows how prestige of an institution helps attract international students. But, further studies need to be done on what the driving forces are for less prestigious institutions.

Summary

While there have been numerous studies conducted at the macro-level on factors (i.e., cost, location, familial references, prestige, etc.) that push and pull students to study abroad, little has been done on the micro-level to look at certain institutional demographics that may affect the factors at play. More so, the capital component needs to be taken into consideration when conducting these studies to gain a well-developed understanding of international student populations.

This study aimed at furthering the work of previous bodies of research within international student higher education. It took all of the findings that have been found at the macro-level and applied them as appropriate to the micro-level. By conducting a mixed-methods approach, quantitative statistical data were combined with the rich stories that international students had to share through qualitative inquiry. Many of the studies mentioned utilized one method or the other, with very few combining the numerical findings with the narrative. This enabled the study to pull all of the pieces together and form a more comprehensive finding of the data relative to one institution. In the following
chapter, the mixed-method research methodology that was employed for this study is discussed in further detail.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The internationalization of more higher education institutions in the US has led to an influx of international students seeking higher education in the US. The US remains the number one country in hosting international students (Lee, 2010). Figure 3 shows the top host countries of globally mobile students, with a comparison between 2001 and 2012 retrieved from the Institute of International Education 2013 “Project Atlas: Trends and Global Data 2013.

Figure 3. Global Trends of International Student Populations
In recent years more countries (such as the UK) are closing the gap the US has built in international education (She & Wotherspoon, 2013; Wit, Ferencz, & Rumbley, 2013). The pie charts show that within ten years of international student mobility, the US has dropped almost ten percent in the amount of international students it hosts. Much of the research on factors influencing an international student’s choice in higher education has been on a more macro-level, with very few studies looking at specific institutions more closely at the micro-level to better understand the reasons international students choose such places for studying abroad. This study aimed to place an individual institution, CSUSB, under the lens to better understand the reasons why international students’ chose to attend a public, four-year, comprehensive institution, with limited branding.

Research Questions

Numerous studies have been conducted to look at various factors that influence an international student’s choice to study abroad. Mazzarol & Soutar (2002) look at push and pull factors that serve as reasons for students being “pushed” out of their home country and “pulled” to host countries for higher education. Some of those reasons being: availability of academic programs at home versus abroad, difficulty of gaining acceptance into an institution at home, opportunity to learn about “Western” culture, employment opportunities abroad, and the potential for relocation to the host country after graduation (Findlay et al.,
The following research questions were meant to utilize the findings of previous macro-level research studies and learn how the findings applied to a case study on CSUSB.

RQ1.  How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

RQ2.  How do financial considerations play a part in why an international student selected CSUSB?

RQ3.  How do family members, friends, or agents play a role in an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

RQ4.  How does academic program availability play into an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

RQ5.  What was the experience of the application process and visa acquisition process in enrolling at CSUSB?

Research Design

Based on the literature in existence pertaining to the research being conducted, the researcher found that one could use qualitative or quantitative method designs to obtain results. For the purposes of this study, the method being utilized was that of a mixed-methods approach. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), mixed-methods research methodology includes philosophical assumptions that assist in directing data collection and analysis by mixing both
qualitative and quantitative methods throughout the research process. They further purport that the use of mixed-methods is utilized to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods to better understand the research problem(s) versus using an individual approach entirely. The researcher implemented quantitative methods by use of a questionnaire method that utilized closed-ended questioning, while also looking at qualitative methods and the use of a case study by interviewing participants, with the use of open-ended questioning, for the narratives that assisted in making sense of the data sets. It was important to keep in mind that the sources of information (e.g., interviews and questionnaires) no longer cleanly fall into one method, qualitative versus quantitative, as used to be the case (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Deductive reasoning was seen as necessary in this study to discover whether the findings could be generalized to the specific population that was being studied at one particular institution against the data that exists on country-wide data or combined data from several institution populations in previous research studies. Inductive reasoning was sought through the qualitative component and narratives. The narratives served to provide convergence of the generalized data in the surveys with the stories and rich text provided through the interviews.

Sample Selection

California State University, San Bernardino enrolled more than 1,000 international students in 2013 (Office of Institutional Research, 2014). The
institution has a student body of over 18,000. CSUSB is located in the Southwestern part of the United States of America, and is labeled as a four-year, public, comprehensive university. CSUSB is part of a statewide university system composed of 23 campuses and is considered to be a medium-sized institution within the system. While the institution alone has limited branding to its name, the CSU system as a whole is known in many parts of the world.

The Center for International Studies and Programs (CISP) is one of CSUSB’s Academic Affairs Offices on campus. It houses all programs pertaining to students attending the institution on visas (e.g., F, J, H, etc.), as well as study abroad programs, faculty and visiting scholars programs, and partnerships with foreign institutions. CISP has access to all international students attending CSUSB, which was utilized as the source used to contact prospective research participants via electronic mailing services (see Appendix A for recruitment email).

For the purposes of this study, the sampling was conducted as a single study because the investigator collected both qualitative and quantitative data for the individual study (Creswell, 1994; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Due to the nature of the study and the size of the intended population being studied, the researcher sent out a participatory email to all students on CISP’s list-serve. This ensured that every individual had an equal chance of participation in the study. Reminder emails were sent out on a weekly basis to those potential participants that had not already completed the questionnaire.
Despite utilizing the entire international student population as potential participants in the questionnaire portion of the research, stratification was only used in the interview component of the data collection. The nature of this study did not require that several specific characteristics of the population be met, only that the participants be international students attending CSUSB. The characteristics that were collected are: age, country of citizenship, gender, academic level, and program of study.

Once the questionnaire sampling was complete and the final number of participants was tallied, a purposive sampling was done to obtain participants for face-to-face interviews. The sampling was purposive because of convenience and time constraints. The researcher wanted a spread of participants based on gender, country of citizenship, academic level, and program of study. It was more convenient to contact participants based on stratified sampling as opposed to a random sampling based on the amount of questionnaire responses received in order to meet the goal of a varied population being interviewed. The researcher interviewed six participants.

Due to time constraints of the study, the limited international student population at CSUSB’s Palm Desert campus was not considered for face-to-face interviews. Also, translations were not made into international students’ native languages due to lack of resources and time constraints. Both of these served as limitations to the study.
Data Collection

The questionnaire instrument (see Appendix B for questionnaire instrument) used in the research study was a modified instrument based on Mazzarol’s (1996) questionnaire “International Education Research Program: Student Questionnaire” (see Appendix C for permission email). Mazzarol’s instrument was selected due to his expertise in the field and the aim of his tool with relation to this study. Mazzarol’s questionnaire has been utilized by others in the field and has allowed for results that are similar to his initial findings. The questionnaire includes demographic information and attitudinal items. There were seven demographic information questions. There were thirty attitudinal items on the questionnaire. The scale used for the attitudinal items was a Likert scale utilizing a seven point scale with the following options for importance: 1-not at all important, 2-low importance, 3-slightly important, 4-neutral, 5-moderately important, 6-very important, and 7-extremely important. A seven-point Likert Scale was also used to address the agreement to certain attitudinal items, and the scale was reflected as follows: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-somewhat disagree, 4-neither agree or disagree, 5-somewhat agree, 6-agree, and 7-strongly agree. The questionnaire was an electronic version format, in which participants were able to respond to questions online and submit all responses via online submission.

The interview questions (see Appendix D for list of interview questions) consisted of five open-ended questions used to obtain more depth and rich
stories that could be triangulated with the questionnaire data and previous study’s findings. The interview questions were constructed based off of the questionnaire questions, allowing for open-ended responses, furthering the data analysis based on the participants for this particular study. The interviews were voice recorded using a recording device that used tapes to record. The tapes were removed after each interview was complete and stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home. Within seven years of the inception of the research, all recordings and questionnaire data will be destroyed. Questionnaire information will be deleted and recorded tapes will be broken within the seven year period.

Participants

The initial consent form (see Appendix E for consent form to participate in questionnaire) that was sent out to potential participants discussed the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of the study, the confidentiality of each participant, the amount of time necessary to complete the survey, the potential risks and benefits of the study, the approval of the institutional review board at CSUSB and the professor supervising the researcher’s study, as well as the potential for a follow-up communication to participate in a face-to-face interview. For those participants who were willing to participate in a face-to-face interview, a second consent form (see Appendix F for consent form to participate in interview) was signed before the interview began.

The consent form contained personal identifiers (i.e., name, e-mail address, phone number) in order for the researcher to contact the participant for
a potential follow-up interview. Personal identifiers were placed onto a spreadsheet for reference by the researcher and each participant was then given an identifying number to provide anonymity of persons participating in the study. All questionnaire data analysis reflected only the identifying number given to each participant so as to protect the identities of participants of the study. All personal data of participants were placed in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home. Only the researcher had access to the locked cabinet. Once all data has been collected, analyzed, and written up in the dissertation, the researcher will shred and destroy all personal information of participants within seven years.

Data Analysis

Once all of the online questionnaire data was collected, the data was to be entered into SPSS to run mean, median, and mode of each question. A regression analysis was also to be conducted to look for correlation between variables. These were not completed due to limited response rates (five percent of the total potential participant population), yielding too low a return to make the data valid and reliable. Descriptive statistics were made of the quantitative data. The interview data was transcribed by the researcher. Once the interview data was transcribed, the researcher began coding the data for themes. Once common themes were found, the data was then to be reviewed for triangulation between the questionnaire data, previous study’s findings, and the interview data. Data that represented outliers in the findings were noted and included as considerations for further study and inquiry.
Validity and Reliability

Mazzarol (2001) provided the Cronbach’s Alphas for his questionnaire instrument. The majority of his factors yielded between a .72 and .88 Cronbach’s Alpha, reflecting a good internal consistency and reliability of responses. For the purposes of this study, the researcher maintained almost the exact verbiage and Likert Scale to maintain reliability of factors. Slight modifications were made to reflect the name of the institution being researched versus the more generic wording by Mazzarol.

The validity of the instrument was reviewed upon modifications of the questionnaire. Mazzarol informed the researcher that the instrument was okay to use based on the modifications made (see Appendix C for permission email) and the validity of the instrument remained intact. The researcher considered in the early stages of modifying the questionnaire to change it to a five-point Likert Scale, but Mazzarol suggested changing it back to a seven-point scale to increase the sensitivity of the data.

Ethical Considerations

The research study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at California State University, San Bernardino. Considerations were made and accounted for with respect to protecting the mental and physical health of all participants of the study in order to minimize any and all possible discomforting experiences one may have had while participating.
An informed consent form was provided to each participant at the inception of the online survey and the interview. The informed consent explicitly informed each participant that participation was completely voluntary and that he or she could opt out of answering any question or stop at any time. It also stated that a participant could withdraw their statements up to a two weeks after completing the survey and two weeks after completing the interview.

Summary

While many studies exist on the personal reasons and factors associated with international students seeking higher education abroad, they are limited to a macro-lens perspective. This study aimed at studying, on a micro-lens, an individual institution to see whether or not similar factors and personal reasons existed for international students’ choices in studying abroad at CSUSB. California State University, San Bernardino is a unique university due to its large international student population compared to its entire campus population, especially considering the limited branding it has outside its geographic region.

In an attempt to build a more descriptive analysis, the researcher used a mixed-methods approach to bring together components of questionnaire data and narrative data. Through this method, results were better able to provide a more descriptive understanding of the unique and personal stories international students had in the desire to study overseas.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter serves to address the findings of this research study aimed at understanding the international student perspective in his or her decision-making processes to study abroad at California State University, San Bernardino. The case study yielded qualitative data from six participants, which allowed for rich narratives to be acquired through face-to-face interviews. The data also provided descriptive statistics of the participants of this study with the use of an electronic questionnaire. Further quantitative methods were not employed in this study due to the low response rate of five percent of the total international student population, yielding a low reliability and validity of the data collected. The data collection began in mid-November and concluded in early January 2015. The information that follows provides a breakdown of the results of each component of the study (quantitative and qualitative).

Descriptive Statistical Results

The questionnaire was electronically sent out to 1,030 potential participants. In total, 82 individuals opened the survey, four did not agree to participate, and 26 individuals opted out of too many questions to even be considered. These data were utilized for the descriptive statistical analyses.
Of the potential participant pool, 52 questionnaires were returned, for a response rate of five percent. A decision was made to focus on the qualitative potential that remained since some participants were willing to be interviewed. Descriptive statistics were analyzed based on the quantitative data acquired due to the compromise to validity and reliability from minimal data collected and an inability to run regression analyses.

Of the participants, 42 percent were male participants and roughly 58 percent were female participants. No participants selected any other gender options. The table below reflects the gender data.

Table 1. Comparison of Genders

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Of the 52 questionnaire participants, 32 selected they were undergraduate students, 18 selected they were graduate students, and two selected the option
“other” and denoted they were exchange students. Of those that selected undergraduate; four were freshmen, seven were sophomores, 13 were juniors, and eight were seniors. Figure 4 represents the academic standings of each group based on percentages.

![Academic Standing](image)

**Figure 4. Academic Standing**

The age ranges were represented by the following percentages: ages 18-21 represented 40 percent of the participants, ages 22-25 represented roughly 44 percent of the participants, ages 26-29 represented roughly eight percent of the participants, ages 30-33 represented roughly two percent of the population, ages 34-37 represented roughly four percent of the population, and 50-53 about two percent as well. Table 2 reflects the numbers of participants within each age range.
The home countries of the 52 participants were quite varied. The majority of participants were from China and South Korea. Both countries each made up roughly 24 percent of the participants. Following them was Saudi Arabia with roughly 18 percent of the participant make-up. Japan made up approximately six percent and Taiwan and India both had around four percent participation. The remainder of the represented countries had one participant each, representing roughly two percent of the participants: Canada, Croatia, France, Germany, Ghana, Macau, Nigeria, Norway, the UAE, the UK, and Zimbabwe. Figure 5 represents the breakdown of countries represented.
With respect to the majors reflected by participants of the questionnaire, the following percentages reflect represented courses of study. For the purposes of these percentages, only 48 participants were counted because two were omitted and two are on exchange. Almost 31 percent of participants were seeking undergraduate degrees in business, while over 14 percent of participants were seeking graduate degrees in business. This percentage is interesting because it aligns with a study conducted by Macready and Tucker (2011) that shows business programs being the course of study by many international
students. One participant was seeking a Master’s degree in Accountancy and another one was seeking a Master’s degree in Public Administration. Psychology held more than eight percent of the participants’ majors. The remaining majors represented between two and four percent each of the entire make-up of the majors being studied by participants of the research. Table 3 provides a breakdown of the data representing majors.
It can be seen that the descriptive statistical data gathered was quite varied in participant make-up. The representation of countries, genders, academic standing, and courses of study allowed for a diverse pool of participation. From this data collection, participants were acquired for face-to-face interviews, providing the qualitative data collection and rich narratives that follows.
Case Study Results

The case study consisted of six participant interviewees willing to participate after completing the initial questionnaire; four males and two females. The background of these participants was as follows: participant one: Norwegian male teaching credential graduate student; participant two: Nigerian female undergraduate junior majoring in biochemistry; participant three: South Korean female undergraduate sophomore majoring in sociology; participant four: Zimbabwean male undergraduate freshman majoring in biology; participant five: Indian male business administration graduate student; participant six: Indian male business administration graduate student. Of the six participants, one was admitted through a special program between CSUSB and her home institution in South Korea. The remaining five applied individually.

Interviews were set up with each participant individually based on their scheduling preferences to be mindful of their time. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length. All data was voice recorded and transcribed for data analysis. According to Merriam (1988), “all the data that have been gathered together and organized topically or chronologically (the case data base or the case record) should be read through several times from beginning to end” (p. 131). The voice recordings were reviewed three times to check for accuracy of transcriptions, which were completed by the researcher. In a few instances, there were inaudible moments, which were noted in the
transcription with “(inaudible)”. Member checking was not completed due to a concern of compromising the raw narratives upon review by participants, and also a concern for various levels of reading comprehension levels of the participants. The researcher found that during interviews, some questions had to be reworded due to a misunderstanding of the initial question. For example, the researcher asked participants about their experiences working with the staff at CSUSB. Two of the participants understood this to mean actual work, like a job, and their experiences “working” with staff, which of course they replied something along the lines of; I have not worked with the staff. Therefore, the researcher had to further explain what was meant by the question.

Merriam (1988) noted that a researcher, while reading should begin to code the data and begin making sense of the narratives. She continues with stating that “…in addition to coding units of data by obvious factors such as who, what, when, and where, analysis involves the development of conceptual categories, typologies, or theories that interpret the data for the reader” (p. 132). The researcher began with the coding of units from each interview based on the overarching purpose of the study, which was to understand why these students in particular chose to study at CSUSB. This coding of various units produced over forty-five units of data that would then be grouped into themes based on similar traits. The researcher began to cross check with what previous researchers found to potentially find common themes that were salient throughout his study and previous studies findings. With this process, several
themes were found to exist throughout the six participants. The researcher found the following themes to be present: financial/cost, other individuals’ influence on the process, program availability, prestige and ranking of the institution, cultural influence, and the desire to study in California, which align with findings from various studies (Bohman, 2009; Findlay, King, Smith, Geddes, & Skeldon, 2011; Healey, 2008; Lee, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Mazzarol, Soutar, & Thein, 2000; Roberts, 2012). The use of thematic analysis was utilized in this particular study in order to make sense of a large body of interview data collected. It was necessary to sift through every comment that was made in order to prioritize the importance of each comment, and whether or not each comment shed light in answering the research questions of this study.

Once the themes were formulated from the units of data, the researcher developed three major categories for the themes which answered the research questions being asked and tied back into the literature reviewed. Those categories were: economic factors, social factors, and cultural factors. These categories were chosen due to the high propensity of units of data that were interwoven throughout the interviewees’ responses, which in turn assisted in developing overarching themes, and eventually lead to the major categories. It is important to remember that qualitative research is interpretive and subjective on the part of the researcher and that “experiential understanding” and “multiple realities” are to be expected when analyzing the data (Stake, 1995, p. 43). While there were several ways in which the researcher could break down the data
collected, he felt that due to the fact that most of the factors were interwoven within all of the categories, it would detract from the results of the study by breaking them down further. Thus, three major categories arose and they served to answer more than one research question at a time. The following were the narratives by participants that made-up the units of data and themes, and in turn each of the three major categories.

**Economic Factors**

The first major category: economic factors, included responses surrounding finances and career opportunities. Once again, one will find that although the categories are separate, many of the units of data and themes fit into more than one category depending on how the units/themes were analyzed. Responses by interviewees helped to answer the following research questions under the economic factors category:

**RQ1.** How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

**RQ2.** The extent to which financial considerations play a part in why an international student selected CSUSB?

Many of the participants touched on finances and the importance of cost when deciding on CSUSB as their choice institution. Participant one (male graduate student from Norway) mentioned the cost of attendance a few times throughout his interview stating that, “Where I was up in Sioux Falls was a private college, very expensive, so I couldn’t afford that, so I had to find something else,
and, umh, I had been previously several times to California, so I thought I would like to come here” (Participant 1, personal communication, December 2014).

This interviewee was previously studying English at a private institution in Sioux Falls, and when he decided to continue his degree he realized it was too costly to stay there, which is when he looked elsewhere. He also mentioned that, “That was the main reason that, uh, it was cheaper, it was, umh, yeah, I wanted to be in California” (Participant 1, personal communication, December 2014). Again, he mentions that cost factoring was a major consideration in deciding on where to study. In both instances though he does allude to the fact that he did want to study in California specifically, which aligns with previous studies findings (Wilkins et al., 2012) in that location is a factor that some prospective students take into consideration when choosing an institution. So, although cost was a major factor, units of data are not separate of one another and usually affect each other.

Participant two (female undergraduate student from Nigeria) also mentioned that cost was a factor for her when deciding on which university to attend. She stated that, “So, they had people that would come and talk about it, and one of the women there, she had said that this was the cheapest. And I was looking at cost at the time cuz my dad was going to be paying” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). For this student, an embassy representative mentioned CSUSB to her and the costs of attending, which assisted her in choosing to pick CSUSB. Like participant one, participant two
also had to factor in costs of attendance due to her family paying for it. Similarly, it can be seen that there was another unit of data that was present in this statement, not just finances, but also word of mouth. Both of these experiences align with the Institute for International Educations Open Doors “Fast Facts” (2013) report on funding sources for international students (see Figure 2), and the fact that personal finances or family members cover most of the costs to study abroad. This was no different for participant three, participant five, and to a lesser extent participant six. Participant three (female undergraduate student from South Korea), when asked about factors that she considered when deciding on where to study abroad, she mentioned “tuition fee” as a factor among other things. There was no delineation as to who would fund her education though. Participant five (male graduate student from India) stated that, “And looking for me, which will fit into my budget…” and “Because I know it’s about finances” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). He was going to be paying for his tuition on his own, and he wanted to find an institution that he could afford because of practicality. Participant six (male graduate student from India), while still paying for the costs on his own, he also wanted to make sure he got the best education for the tuition he was paying. He stated that, “So, I felt it was, for the fee that was being charged over here, I think you get the best bang for the buck” (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2014), and also explained that in dealing with the interviewing officer at the embassy that, “So, I just told him straight up front that, you know, the fee structure over there fit my
budget” (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2104). We can read that for five out of the six participants, financial considerations were of priority when selecting an institution, and to some degree enrolling at CSUSB.

Financial considerations were a substantial deciding factor for the majority of participants, but career opportunities were also important for students. While financial factors were easier to identify throughout the interviews, career opportunities when related to economics were not quite as seamless due to the interconnectedness to the social factors category.

Participant five (male graduate student from India) stated the following as it relates to career advancement, “The only thing I know, the US degree have a great value in India” and “Yeah. Having a master’s degree and work for a couple of years here, and kind of go back, and you will be in a good management positions”, and “…if I go back I’m sure if I go back I’ll have a position somewhere in senior management or something” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). Lastly he states, “If I come here and see all this and get into the market and I’ve been three or four years, I go there and be like hot cake” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). This Indian student was very positive and optimistic about his career opportunities upon return home to India due to his degree and experiences while in the US.

It was interesting to hear from participant six, another male Indian student working towards his Master’s in Business Administration. He commented about
career advancement back home in India upon completion of his degree and some experiential years in the US. He stated,

    So, then I decided, I’m twenty-eight right now in which if I go and study and if I start working there for a while in the corporate sector, or maybe even in the public sector, I would be able to do better. But otherwise, if I would have stayed back, I would have stagnated (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2014).

    There is something to be said about understanding where students are coming from abroad and the economic dynamics of that particular country because correlations can be seen with the expectations of international students. Similarly, both interviewees from African countries discussed a similar experience, despite one being from Nigeria and the other from Zimbabwe. Their career opportunities would have been limited due to access in their home countries. Both students came to CSUSB to prepare for medical school in the US.

    Participant two, the female student from Nigeria mentioned that, “I want to do all my medical schooling here and then go back to Nigeria to practice” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). Participant four, the male student from Zimbabwe stated, “So, then from that point, that’s when I decided I would want to pursue a career in medicine” (Participant 4, personal communication, December 2014). One would like to remain in the US to practice and the other would like to go home and practice. Without applying outside their
home countries, they would not have been able to pursue the medical career path. So, while the responses were not explicitly stated with the economic gain it would derive, it could implicitly be stated that by becoming a doctor, their economic wealth would increase.

Also, both Indian students were older and had established a career in India before coming to the US to study, so they already had some experience with their own economic wealth. Both African students were undergraduate students and younger in age. They may not have been at quite the same mindset as the older students when thinking about economic wealth at this point in their academic careers.

The economic gain that may be afforded to international students seeking degrees abroad can be seen through the experiences of several participants in this study. While there is an economic gain to some of these experiences, there is also a social component that can be teased out of some of the responses of participants.

Social Factors

The second major category: social factors, includes responses having to do with lack of program availability in a students' home country, limited access due to structural concerns, possible relocation to pursue a career, and having family living in California. The social factors category provided responses that answer research questions one, three and four.
RQ1. How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

RQ3. The extent to which family members, friends, or agents play a role in an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

RQ4. How does academic program availability play into an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

While some participants made mention of better career opportunities from earning a degree abroad, some alluded to the fact that what they wanted to study was not available to them in their home country, which aligns with findings in previous studies (Findlay et al., 2011; Healey, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Participant two (female undergraduate student from Nigeria) and participant four (male undergraduate student from Zimbabwe) both made mention of the difficulty to enter into medical school programs in their home countries.

Participant two mentions, “Initially, it was because it was harder to get into school in Nigeria” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). She went on to say “…a degree from abroad was valued better than the home degree…” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). For her, a push factor was the fact that she would not be able to enter into medical school in Nigeria and needed to look elsewhere. With her statement, it can be seen how a degree abroad is held at a higher regard than a degree within ones’ own home country based on her response. So, although she was unable to get into medicine due to accessibility, it was also going to help her earn a degree that
was valued at a higher level. Participant four had a similar response, “…in my home country the, it’s very competitive” and “It’s difficult to get a spot to study in medicine. And then the neighboring country they don’t take foreign students” (Participant 4, personal communication, December 2014). For him, although he did not mention directly that a degree abroad was held in higher regard, he did mention that “…America had more advancements in the medical field compared to Zimbabwe…” (Participant 4, personal communication, December 2014). This participant was also pushed out of his home country due to limited access, and also saw it as an opportunity to take part in more advanced medical practices in the US. One can see that this social factor had an impact on students in African countries looking to enter the field of medicine due to their competitive nature.

For participant five (male graduate student from India), the experience was slightly different due to the cultural and academic experiences allotted to students in India. He mentioned that “…I was looking at programs in India, and you know in India we work from morning to evening. We don’t get part time works to do jobs to study and work together” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). He further stated that “It’s not possible in India” and “So, we have to do some correspondence courses. I did that, but it didn’t worked out well for me” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). Thus, with the way the workforce and education systems are structured, it was too difficult to carry out both opportunities at the same time for Indian students, which is one of the reasons this participant had to look elsewhere to
complete his studies. The access was not there to work and attend school the way in which he would have liked for it to be.

With access issues being a legitimate factor in deciding to study abroad, some students considered the possibility of relocating to a foreign country upon graduating with their degree. Participants one and four both talked about potentially staying in the US. Participant one from Norway had recently become a US citizen, but originally had not planned on staying in the US. He noted, “No, I did not plan to stay, uh, this was a one year exchange program” (Participant 1, personal communication, December 2014). He was referencing when he initially came to the US to study English. He then further discussed being in the Norwegian military and the financial benefits afforded to him if he continued his studies, which is another reason he pursued graduate school. It then led to him staying in the US.

Participant four on the other hand was talking about the fact that his brother and sister both studied at CSUSB. His brother became a US citizen and his sister planned on staying to pursue medical school. So, when asked if he planned on staying as well, he answered, “yes”. You can see that for this interviewee, the familial connection has helped him establish a desire to remain in the US, and his career path in medicine initially brought him here to study due to a lack of access in Zimbabwe.

The male Zimbabwean student’s experience is similar to other participants in that he knew someone that either went to school at CSUSB or currently
resides in California. Participants one, two, five and six also had friends or family that lived in California to connect with. Participant one from Norway had friends living in the state that were part of the folk music he was part of, and he specifically mentioned that, “I had some relations built up, both in Southern California some in Northern California. With my folk music that I am involved with, so that was the main reason I ended up here” (Participant 1, personal communication, December 2014). Participant two from Nigeria had an uncle living local to CSUSB, so that assisted in her decision to study at CSUSB. She said, “…I had an uncle here. That’s it, but (inaudible) I could say I know someone from there, and that’s another factor” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). Seeing as she was coming to a foreign country, it made her feel better knowing that she would have family close by. Participant five is married and his wife’s aunt lives in California, so that was a connection they had to the state. Participant six specifically stated, “When I wrote my GMAT, I only applied for one school and that was CSUSB. And the primary reason was because my brother, he studied here and he lives in San Bernardino, so…” (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2014). Again, here’s another example of a human connection to the state of California and more specifically to the institution itself that saw these students deciding on CSUSB as their choice institution.

While economics and social considerations were highly visible through the narratives of the six participants, cultural factors were also closely connected to
the decision-making processes that participants experienced. Again, these units and themes do not fit precisely into boxes, but transcend all areas depending on the interpretations made by the researcher.

Cultural Factors

The third major category: cultural factors, included responses revolving around prestige of a degree from abroad, reputation of an institution, word of mouth by others, and diversity. This category assisted in understanding research questions one and three.

RQ1. How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

RQ3. The extent to which family members, friends, or agents play a role in an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

Although career opportunities for some directly correlated to higher positions, some career related responses could also be considered a cultural factor as well. For example, participant five (male graduate student from India) stated the following as it relates to career advancement, “The only thing I know, the US degree have a great value in India” and “…if I go back I’m sure if I go back I’ll have a position somewhere in senior management or something” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). He also stated, “If I come here and see all this and get into the market and I’ve been three or four years, I go there and be like hot cake” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). He was referring to completing his studies in the US and trying
to work in the US for several years before returning to India, at which point he would be a highly desired individual to employ due to his experiences abroad, which would move him to the top of the hierarchy of management positions. This aligned with previous studies that show importance being placed on reputation and prestige (Bohman, 2009; Findlay et al., 2011; Lee, 2008; and Roberts, 2012). Interestingly, on the contrary participant one from Norway felt that reputation was not a consideration for him by stating, “I didn’t check out anything, reputation, that didn’t mean anything to me cuz I’m actually so old that, if you want a good education you can go actually anywhere. It depends on what you put into it” (Participant 1, personal communication, December 2014). The response by this participant is quite interesting because he was the eldest of all six participants. His response alludes to potential generational differentiations of individuals.

Not only did participant five touch on the positive correlations that prestige and reputation have on potential career opportunities back home, participants two and three also had responses regarding the importance of rankings and prestige. Participant two said, “And, umh, then, a degree from abroad was valued better than the home degree, so that’s just why I chose to study” and “So, then I thought if I come here, cuz basically, a degree from anywhere abroad actually, is valued better than actually if you get it in your home country” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). Participant three (female undergraduate student from South Korea) claimed that “reputation” was
a deciding factor among others for studying abroad because the 1+3 program is “very famous in Korea” (Participant 3, personal communication, December 2014). She made mention that a famous singer in Korea studied in the 1+3 program. Korean culture has apparently grown to value the 1+3 program and students partaking in the program seem to see a value-added by graduating from such a program. Similarly, the Nigerian student saw a degree from abroad as holding a higher value than earning a degree at home, something that the cultural context has somehow enforced in her mind.

While the cultural awareness of US degrees and degrees from abroad in general can sometimes benefit a person when returning home to start a career, word of mouth also assisted students in determining where to study abroad. As mentioned within the social category, the idea that knowing someone who went to school at CSUSB or lives in California helped in the decision-making process, this factor also fell into the cultural context as well.

While students are sometimes pushed out of their home countries due to lack of program availability or structural systems that are in place; sometimes students are pulled towards various institutions because of a family member or educational advisor assisting him or her in the selection process as well (Bohman, 2009; Lee, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). We see this to be a factor that was a reality for some of the research participants.

Participant two received some advice from an educational advisor on where to study, stating, “So, they had people that would come and talk about it,
and one of the women there, she had said this was the cheapest” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). She had attended a schooling program through the American Embassy in Nigeria.

Participant three is participating in a special program “that is very famous in Korea” (Participant 3, personal communication, December 2014) when speaking about the 1+3 program between certain CSU campuses and institutions in Korea. She applied through a cohort type system and there were individuals making sure that she turned all of her paperwork in on time. Participant four (male undergraduate student from Zimbabwe) had two siblings who had previously studied or are currently studying at CSUSB. He noted that, “Interesting enough, my brother, he studied here” and “And, my oldest sister is also here” (Participant 4, personal communication, December 2014). His brother became a US citizen and his sister planned on staying to study medicine after graduation, which is exactly what he hopes to do as well upon completion of his bachelor’s degree.

Participant five (male graduate student from India) mentioned that “Uh, well, I was attending an educational fair in Hyderabad, India” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). From this opportunity, he spoke with a representative from CSUSB. He made a connection that was able to inform him of the program and provided a direct contact with the University.

Participant six (male graduate student from India) had a brother who studied at CSUSB, stating, “And the primary reason was because my brother, he
studied over here and he lives in San Bernardino, so....” (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2014). All of the above mentioned experiences reflected how important word of mouth played in the selection process of many of the participant interviewees when deciding on CSUSB.

Whether it was having a family member that had already graduated from CSUSB or having a current family member attending, direct contacts with those who have gone before them was taken into consideration. On the same token, having a family member or friend that lives in the state of California has influenced some of the participants in selecting CSUSB. Despite having a familiar face or contact to lean to, participants also sought the opportunities to experience a diverse background of individuals.

Experiencing diverse backgrounds and having an opportunity to learn about Western culture as a factor for studying abroad has been seen in previous research (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Some participants in this study discussed this factor as one that was important to him or her. Participant three from South Korea stated that, “Umh, the US, there is many, various race...race...Asian, African...” (Participant 3, personal communication, December 2014) when talking about her experiences in being an international student. She wanted to meet people from diverse backgrounds because she said, “Yeah, in Korea we only have one races” (Participant 3, personal communication, December 2014) when referring to the idea that there are only Koreans in Korea. She went further to say that there were too many Koreans at CSUSB and that her neighbors were all
Korean, and that she would like to meet more foreigners and make friends with them.

Participant two discussed how the international environment was not as friendly as she would have liked. Her comment was, “They need to make a more internationally friendly environment” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). She was dialoguing about the fact that there were no clubs or opportunities to meet other international students. So, she sought out opportunities to connect with other African people and students from other countries, not necessarily just American students. She informed the researcher that she would even go to other colleges to try and meet people. Participant four was a freshman, so he had just finished his first quarter on campus. He said, “In terms of being a freshman, there’s not a lot of people that I know, so mostly all I do is work on my assignments. Study a bit, go for classes, go home, that’s it” (Participant 4, personal communication, December 2014). He further reported that he planned on joining clubs in the winter quarter because he was commuting back and forth to campus.

As can be seen throughout the narratives within each of the three categories, interpretation of the data dictates how the results are reported. Responses were seen in more than one category, making these responses quite synergistic of one another.
Summary

Although the quantitative component of the research was limited, the qualitative portion yielded a sufficient set of participant narratives from which to report the results. While the numbers were somewhat low, the spread of participants across various demographic factors was well received. There was a good divide between genders as well as undergraduate versus graduate participants.

The majors of participants within the descriptive statistics were varied, yet reflected that the majority coming to study were in the field of business at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The home countries represented also reflected a diverse group of participants.

The interviewee participants yielded a strong variation based on demographic backgrounds. There were two female participants and four male participants. Half of the participants were graduate students and the other half were undergraduate students. Also, participants represented countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe. This allowed for a more widespread analysis of the thick description provided by international students coming from various countries and studying in various fields.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

Although the study was meant to utilize a mixed-methods research approach, the quantitative data was too limited to report a regression analyses that would reflect valid and reliable findings. Therefore, the descriptive statistics were reported for the quantitative data and the interviews were analyzed to provide units of data, themes, and categories of the narratives. The uniqueness of the population may require a more direct approach in the future to gathering a large enough sample of participants to provide significant statistical analyses. The five percent yielded in this study did not allow for such an occurrence. It would be highly beneficial to conduct further studies at CSUSB that would ensure a much larger participation in the questionnaire component of the research. It would benefit CISP to enforce incoming international students to complete the survey upon entering the institution and completing a post survey when beginning their fourth year of studies.

The qualitative data’s use of thematic analysis provided insight that correlated to findings of previous studies. Thematic analysis was utilized specifically for this study due to the high convergence of units of data and themes. Due to the researcher’s interpretation of the narrative data, it was also important to utilize thematic analysis to assist in the development of themes and categories that answered the research questions in a succinct manner.
Importance was placed on financial considerations when choosing CSUSB. Word of mouth was also important as well as knowing someone that either lived in California or went to school at CSUSB previously. It was also found that prestige and reputation were also considerations when participants were selecting an institution to attend. For students coming from African countries, the lack of access to medical school programs was a reason for studying abroad. The Indian participants both mentioned the necessity of working in the US after graduation for experience.

Analysis of Interview Data

The interview data were broken down into three major categories; economic factors, social factors, and cultural factors. The factors that fall into each major category did not stand alone, but could be seen woven back and forth between the major categories, thus they were not independent of each other.

Economic Factors

The first major category: economic factors, included responses surrounding finances and career opportunities. It was found that although the categories are separate, many of the units of data and themes fit into more than one category depending on the analysis of data collected. For example, the career advancement will ideally provide an opportunity to gain a higher position, which in turn increases one salary, while at the same time career advancement will potentially provide social movement as well as affect the cultural component
Responses by interviewees helped to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

RQ2. The extent to which financial considerations play a part in why an international student selected CSUSB?

With respect to RQ1, the units of data that answered this question were specific to the economic factors of costs and finances, as well as career development. The costs and finances component answered RQ2. Based on the interview data, financial considerations play a significant role in the selection process of choosing CSUSB as an institution of choice. Affordability resonated throughout the narratives with responses such as, “That was the main reason that, uh, it was cheaper…” and “she had said that this was the cheapest. And I was looking at cost at the time cuz my dad was going to be paying” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). A couple other related responses were, “And looking for me, which will fit into my budget…” and “Because I know it’s about finances” and “So, I just told him straight up front that, you know, the fee structure over there fit my budget” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014).

Of the six participants, five of them discussed the cost factor as something that was important in deciding to study at CSUSB. There were other institutions that individuals considered, but CSUSB was seen as more affordable than the
rest. Not only did students feel that they were paying an affordable cost to attend CSUSB, they also felt that they would have better opportunities for career advancements. For example, one student said, “Having a master’s degree and work for a couple of years here, and kind of go back, and you will be in a good management positions”, and “…if I go back I’m sure if I go back I’ll have a position somewhere in senior management or something” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). Another student stated, “So, then I decided, I’m twenty-eight right now in which if I go and study and if I start working there for a while in the corporate sector, or maybe even in the public sector, I would be able to do better. But otherwise, if I would have stayed back, I would have stagnated” (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2014).

The responses related to economic factors that influenced an international students’ decision to study abroad at CSUSB do align with findings from other studies (Bohman, 2009; Findlay et al., 2011; Lee, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Mazzarol, Soutar, & Thein, 2000; Roberts, 2012; Wei, 2013). What are notable about the findings from this study are the responses specifically from the two Indian students. Both had very similar opinions on the potential career opportunities upon return home. This is important to be mindful of when working with international students. International students coming from different countries, while sharing some similarities in the decision-making process (i.e. financial), reflect that there are some factors that affect students based on where they are coming from, as seen in this example of a strong belief that job
opportunities will be significantly higher having earned a US degree and gaining experience in the workforce within the US.

Figure 2 reflected the IIE Open Doors “Fast Facts” 2013 of primary sources of funding correlating with the experiences of the research participants. The majority of them were funding their education with personal funds or family funds. With this in mind, institutions that host international students must continue to appeal to students coming from abroad, and potentially find new and innovative ways to appeal to this body of students, whether it be more university granted scholarships or more job opportunities upon graduation to gain hands-on experience before returning home.

Social Factors

The major category of social factors included responses having to do with lack of program availability in a students’ home country, limited access due to structural concerns, knowing someone that lives in California, and possible relocation to pursue a career. This categories factors helped to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?

RQ3. The extent to which family members, friends, or agents play a role in an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

RQ4. How does academic program availability play into an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?
The responses by a majority of participants reflected a positive correlation between selecting CSUSB as the choice institution and knowing someone who already attended CSUSB or knowing someone that lived in California, which answered RQ3 and assisted in answering RQ1. The following responses directly showed the influence of others in the decision-making process: “I had some relations built up, both in Southern California some in Northern California. With my folk music that I am involved with, so that was the main reason I ended up here” (Participant 1, personal communication, December 2014), “…I had an uncle here. That’s it, but (inaudible) I could say I know someone from there, and that’s another factor” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014), “When I wrote my GMAT, I only applied for one school and that was CSUSB. And the primary reason was because my brother, he studied here and he lives in San Bernardino, so…” (Participant 6, personal communication, December 2014). These responses all reflected the impact of knowing someone and the direct connection it had on deciding to study at CSUSB.

Having a direct connection to a family member that already attended CSUSB or lived in close proximity assisted some students in deciding on CSUSB as the destination campus for them. It provided some insight into the application process for some, and for others provided some peace of mind having someone to go to, especially with moving so far away from home.

It was seen by some respondents that RQ4 could be answered with the lack of access back home, forcing interviewees to seek higher education abroad.
Both participants from African countries mentioned the difficulty of getting into a medical program in their home countries, one stating, “Initially, it was because it was harder to get into school in Nigeria” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014) and the other mentioning, “It’s difficult to get a spot to study in medicine. And then the neighboring country they don’t take foreign students” (Participant 4, personal communication, December 2014).

Not only was program availability a concern, but also the structural forces of the country. For example, one student from India mentioned that “…I was looking at programs in India, and you know in India we work from morning to evening. We don’t get part time works to do jobs to study and work together” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). Similar to being mindful of economic forces that could potentially restrict international students, understanding the educational systems in other countries and the way the country functions will better assist institutions in servicing their international populations.

Cultural Factors

Lastly, the major category of cultural factors included responses revolving around prestige of a degree from abroad, reputation of an institution, diversity and word of mouth by others. These responses helped in addressing the following research questions:

RQ1. How do international student applicants describe and explain why they selected CSUSB?
RQ3. The extent to which family members, friends, or agents play a role in an international student’s decision to study at CSUSB?

As previously addressed under the category of social factors, RQ3 was partially answered by participants who had someone residing in California or graduating from CSUSB. This question can be answered further by looking at responses by participants who also had contact with a representative from the institution or through a college fair. There were two respondents who made mention of a contact person who assisted them in the process. One stated, “So, they had people that would come and talk about it, and one of the women there, she had said this was the cheapest” (Participant 2, personal communication, December 2014). Another mentioned, “Uh, well, I was attending an educational fair in Hyderabad, India” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014) where he had the opportunity to meet with a college representative from CSUSB. These responses are consistent with others that report a connection of some sort with another person that assisted in the decision-making process. These individuals were not blindly applying for admission to CSUSB.

In further answering RQ1, prestige and reputation of a degree and institution abroad are held in high regard as a reason for choosing to study abroad. One participant mentioned “that is very famous in Korea” (Participant 3, personal communication, December 2014) when referring to the 1+3 Program that she is participating in with her institution back in South Korea. A participant from India stated, “The only thing I know, the US degree have a great value in
India” (Participant 5, personal communication, December 2014). Not only do students want to find the most affordable institutions to study at abroad, but they also want to make sure there is a value added by earning their degree abroad and returning home to pursue a career.

All of the factors mentioned previously dealt specifically with reasons for choosing to study abroad, and more specifically at CSUSB. Research question five deals more with factors less related to being pushed or pulled to and from various countries to study, and more with the processes involved with studying abroad.

RQ5. What was the experience of the application process and visa acquisition process in enrolling at CSUSB?

After gathering the responses provided by interviewees, it was found that this question no longer aides in the answering of the over-arching research of why students’ choose to study at CSUSB, but would best serve a study looking at possible reasons for retention of students once they have enrolled.

Limitations

There are several limitations that must be considered with the study that was conducted. The population of students being studied was a very limited group of the overall population of the institution. The institution being studied was a public institution, and private institutions were not considered in this study. It is also located in Southern California, potentially providing it some advantage in the international student market because of geographic location within the US,
along with the fact that it is part of a well-known system of institutions within California, that being the CSU system.

The participant pool was a very select group of students coming from other countries where English is not the primary language. The level of English proficiency was not taken into consideration when recruiting participants for the study, therefore some students may have had more difficulty than others understanding what the questions were asking. Some students may have come from a country where English is taught in school, while others were not. Also, some students may be freshmen, while others may be in their third or fourth year at CSUSB, increasing their English proficiency. All questionnaire information and interviews were conducted in English, again limiting the understanding of participants and potentially skewing the data due to a limited proficiency.

Time constraints were also a limitation to this study. Due to the three year timeframe for the program, it was necessary to narrowly focus this study in order to make it feasible to complete the entire process on time. The time constraints also limited potential interview participants to the San Bernardino campus solely, versus opening it up to the Palm Desert campus as well. The researcher felt there was not enough time to be traveling to Palm Desert to potentially conduct interviews with participants.

Recommendations

The researcher would like to make the following recommendations for each of the three major categories that were reported in the results, combined
with the knowledge of previous research and what the researcher knows about
CSUSB. Due to the low response rate to the quantitative component of this
study, it would be highly beneficial to conduct a more rigorous quantitative study,
that was structured in a manner providing a yield rate that is significantly higher
than this study. It is recommended that the CISP office implement the
questionnaire modified for this study when students attend orientation upon
arrival at CSUSB. This would allow for initial reasoning to be understood as to
why international students selected CSUSB. A follow-up questionnaire should be
required of students as they enter their fourth year of studies to gauge issues
surrounding retention and assisting in the answering of RQ5 in this study.

Economic Factors

Taking into consideration the majority of interviewees are utilizing their
own funds or the assistance of family to attend CSUSB, combined with the data
that most international students fund their education abroad with their own funds
or family funds, it would benefit the institution to strategically plan on
implementing opportunities for international students to subsidize their tuition
costs by interning with offices on campus, or developing agreements with outside
companies that would provide a stipend to help offset costs to students. These
opportunities would benefit all parties involved because it would provide offices
on campus varying cultural views and fresh ideas; businesses off campus would
have the chance to utilize the knowledge that our international students are
gaining through their education and new perspectives as well, while at the same
time providing the hands-on opportunities in students’ career fields. This would also get CSUSB’s name out into the community, showing prospective future employers what CSUSB has to offer them by way of well qualified graduates.

This could also be taken a step further within specific departments. For example, the College of Business and Public Administration could work closely with companies in the US and abroad to provide internship opportunities as well during the summer. Many international students return home during the summer, but this would provide them an additional opportunity to work and apply their knowledge to the field. This would take CSUSB’s name beyond the confines of Southern California, California, and the US.

With the exponential increasing of technological access and advancements, CSUSB needs to consider ways in which it can utilize these advancements to its advantage when recruiting students; bearing in mind the accreditation concerns that come with certain types of technological access (i.e., online programs, hybrid programs, etc.). CSUSB must build partnerships with government officials in foreign countries to develop MOUs that can provide access to international students that in turn can decrease that economic concern that prospective international students are confronted with, yet provide a valued degree that carries a strong backing with name, prestige, ranking, and academic rigor. With the advancements of technology, costs of resources would decrease, allowing for the opportunity to decrease tuition costs, which in turn would drive enrollment up in the supply and demand market of international education.
Social Factors

Realizing some of the realities international students face at CSUSB, especially as it relates to access at home versus abroad, CSUSB should monopolize on this knowledge and recruit more strategically in places where access is limited. It does not stop there though, CSUSB needs to be even more tactful when traveling abroad and really connecting with students based on what is most important to their education. For example, both African students that were interviewed discussed the lack of access in the field of medicine. It would be hugely beneficial to consider this concept when recruiting in African countries. Having a strong knowledge of the programs offered at CSUSB that could lead to medical school, and being able to statistically show where CSUSB students are going for medical school would be a huge selling factor for students trying to decide on where to study abroad.

It would also be a selling factor for students looking to gain potential work experience while abroad, similar to both Indian students in this study. While recruiting abroad, recruiters from CSUSB need to be aware of the opportunities afforded to students in terms of interning and job placement, especially for international students because this may be a huge deciding factor to study at CSUSB or somewhere else that provides better opportunities to its students.

With this strategic recruitment planning, the international offices should gather data on what is most important to students at CSUSB by actually interviewing all of them. This could be set up as an entry and exit interview. It
will allow the key players to take that knowledge and apply it to their recruitment efforts, versus a generic recruitment plan. This will continue to build the name of the institution all over the world, and make CSUSB a destination campus for many more students looking to study abroad.

Cultural Factors

Part of this category dealt with the view individuals had regarding the prestige and rankings of CSUSB and institutions abroad. Through recruitment efforts, being mindful of this important factor when traveling abroad and being able to talk about the various accreditations, rankings, and prestigious accomplishments that CSUSB has acquired will help secure more students in wanting to be part of that legacy.

Once here, the international office needs to continuously work on the retention efforts of international students, from admittance to graduation, and beyond. It was found that students go abroad to learn about other cultures and meet new people. So, as much as importance is placed on knowing they are getting a great education at an affordable cost, prospective students need to know they are going to be engaged and immersed in US culture and customs. The international offices need to develop the student affairs side of the international experience better, and not just rely on the academic affairs side to maintain a strong and vibrant international community. Organizing trips through the recreation center would allow students the opportunity to engage with other CSUSB students. Developing meaningful programs with various offices on
campus would provide venues where international students could interact with domestic students. Also, developing a homestay program would provide community members an opportunity to learn about other cultures, while providing opportunities for international students to gain full immersion into the US lifestyle on a daily basis.

Keeping in mind the importance that students place on gaining a cultural experience, and know how technological advancements are creating more options for students to attend school virtually, CSUSB must continue to develop strategies that can still provide students opportunities for cultural diversity experiences with US students, even if attending a program online. That may come in the form of a required study abroad component, in which an international student must come to the main campus of the institution for a quarter or year for the purposes of immersion and the face-to-face experiences with other classmates and the opportunity to learn with US students and learn about US culture. There is importance placed on diversity and learning about other cultures based on international students’ desires, especially as it related to this study and previous studies. The whole idea of internationalization is to diversify institutions, and by moving things too far along with technological advancements, we are moving further away from this goal.

The recommendations mentioned above are meant to serve as a guide for CSUSB to consider when further developing the strategic plan of the institution, but also for the development of the Center for International Studies and
Programs. If the institution plans on continuing to build its international population and its presence in the international realm, it must continue to grow and develop its programs based on the needs of its current and prospective students, as well as the internationalization and globalization needs of the world.

Directions for Future Research

With the initial findings of this study, future research is quite endless. It would benefit the institution to institutionalize something into their internationalization plan that will provide assessment of the international program further. The questionnaire should be made mandatory for all incoming international students and an exit interview/questionnaire could be conducted with students who are graduating or exiting the institution. The data gathered will allow CISP to continue building and increasing its recruitment efforts aboard more systematically and strategically.

Studies need to be conducted on the impact of technological advancements as applied to higher education. Data needs to be generated that assists in institutions utilizing advanced technology in the recruitment of international students, but also in educating them as well. With these increased technological advancements, studies also need to be conducted that look at the accreditation and rigor of institutions utilizing various forms of technology to educate its student population. Finding ways to provide a valued education abroad while trying to decrease costs of tuition will provide numerous research opportunities in various forms. The research should also factor in how to
continue building the branding and rankings within the global context of an institution.

Other institutions of similar structure could mirror this study for their own institution to find out what will assist in their development. Perhaps the findings will be similar, but there may also be some unique findings to that particular institution. Institutions find the opportunity to internationalize their campuses important for the cultural, social, educational, and economic gain that it provides. While that is all true, it is necessary for institutions to be mindful of their true reasons for building an internationalization plan. Institutions need to conduct studies on the optimization point of an international population on campus against the overall population. A determination needs to be made as to whether there is a point at which too many international students on a campus no longer positively assists in the strategic planning and internationalization of an institution.

While the quantitative component does assist greatly in understanding studies on international student populations, it comes with great risks by generalizing this highly unique population of students. The qualitative methods implemented would provide a deeper understanding of each student and assist in knowing the needs of students coming from different geographic locations.

Conclusions

The internationalization of higher education institutions is not going anywhere. It will continue to grow and develop as globalization efforts continue.
More and more countries will build educational facilities to house domestic and foreign students. In order to continue being competitive in the international student market, institutions must continue to develop and modify their programs to meet the needs of the market and the needs of those looking to study.

This study is just a starting point for various studies that can be conducted on individual institutions or systems of institutions. The findings provide an opportunity to further delve into researching international student populations at varying capacities: recruitment of students, retention of students, and potentially job placement of students.
APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT EMAIL
Dear CSUSB Student,

My name is Mark Darby, and I am a doctoral student at CSUSB. I am looking for international students who are willing to participate in a research study on the reasons and factors that helped you in deciding to study at CSUSB. If you would like to participate in the study, you can complete the consent form by clicking on this link that will give you a more in-depth understanding of the research project. Once you complete the consent form, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which should take you between 20-30 minutes.

All of your responses to the questionnaire will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone besides the researcher. I will be contacting students based on the emails and phone numbers provided on the consent form seeking international students who are interested in participating in an interview with the researcher. The interview should last between 45-60 minutes and will be voice recorded.

Thank you for your time and consideration in assisting in this research project.

Thank You,
Mark Darby
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT
International Education Research Program

Student Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is NOT a test.

Most questions can be answered by marking the box next to the answer that applies to you.

For example, in the question below, if you are a female student you would answer by clicking on the box next to female:

Q. What is your gender?

Female ☐

Male ☑

In some questions you will be asked to TYPE IN your answer.

Once completed please press the SUBMIT button at the bottom of the questionnaire.

1. What is your age? _______

2. What is your country of citizenship? ____________________________
3. What is your gender? ______________

4. What is your current academic level? (Please mark just one box)
   - Freshman ✓
   - Sophomore ✓
   - Junior ✓
   - Senior ✓
   - Graduate Student ✓

5. How is your overseas study to be financed? (Please mark just one box)
   - Parents/family ✓
   - Self-funded ✓
   - Scholarship from host campus ✓
   - Government funds ✓
   - Other: ___________________ ✓

6. What type of education qualification are you studying for at CSUSB? (Please mark just one box)
   - University degree-undergraduate ✓
   - University degree-graduate ✓
   - Other: ___________________ ✓
7. What specific course are you studying at CSUSB? For example: business, engineering, chemistry, etc.

____________________________

8. Which of the following reasons were important in your decision to study at CSUSB? Please mark either YES or NO.

If you mark YES, please indicate how important that reason is by marking either: 1- strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-somewhat disagree, 4-neither agree or disagree, 5-somewhat agree, 6-agree, and 7-strongly agree.

An overseas course is better than a domestic one     YES       1     2     3     4     5     6     7
NO

Difficult to gain entry at a domestic institution     YES       1     2     3     4     5     6     7
NO

Course was not available in home country               YES       1     2     3     4     5     6     7
NO

Better understanding of Western culture                  YES       1     2     3     4     5     6     7
NO

Intend to immigrate to this country in the future      YES       1     2     3     4     5     6     7
NO

Other: ____________________________               YES       1     2     3     4     5     6     7
NO
9. Which of the following countries did you seriously consider as a possible study destination? (Please mark ALL that apply)

Australia [✓]  Canada [✓]  New Zealand [✓]  United States [✓]

United Kingdom [ ]  Other: _____________________ [✓]

10. For the countries you selected in Q. 9, rank them in order of preference as a study destination. Mark your first preference [1], your second preference [2], your third preference [3], and so on.

Australia [✓]  Canada [✓]  New Zealand [✓]  United States [✓]

United Kingdom [ ]  Other: _____________________ [✓]

11. Which of the following reasons were important in the decision to study at CSUSB? Please mark either YES or NO for each reason.

If you mark YES, please indicate how important that reason is by marking either: 1- strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-somewhat disagree, 4-neither agree or disagree, 5-somewhat agree, 6-agree, and 7-strongly agree.

Easy to obtain information about education programs  YES  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

NO

Knowledge and awareness of country  YES  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

NO

Parents/relatives recommendation  YES  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

NO
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<tr>
<td>Friends/relatives living there</td>
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<td>Geographically close</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe (low crime) environment</td>
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<td>Comfortable climate</td>
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<td>Exciting place to live</td>
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<td>Quite and studious environment</td>
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<td>Lower fees for education course</td>
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<td>Lower travel costs (airfares) to country</td>
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<td>Lower cost of living (accommodations, food, etc.)</td>
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<td>Little racial discrimination</td>
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<td>Established population of overseas students</td>
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<td>Entry qualifications were accepted by the institution</td>
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<td>Reputation of institution</td>
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<td>High quality/good reputation of education</td>
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<td>Most institutions are government administered</td>
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<td>Qualification of recognized in home country</td>
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</table>
12. Which of the following information sources did you use in helping you to select your overseas country? Please mark YES or NO for each source.

If you mark YES, please indicate how important that reason is by marking either: 1-not at all important, 2-low importance, 3-slightly important, 4-neutral, 5-moderately important, 6-very important, and 7-extremely important.

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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

We know this survey has taken a lot of time and effort to complete.

We thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX C

PERMISSION EMAIL
From: Tim Mazzarol
To: Mark Derby
Subject: Re: Questionnaire Instrument

Dear Mark,

Thank you for this request. I am more than happy for you to use the questionnaire. However, you say you will have a 7-point scale but the one in the questionnaire attachment has a 5-point scale. So you might need to adjust it.

I wish you the very best on this.

Kind regards

Professor Tim Mazzarol
Windop Professor
UNWA Business School
University of Western Australia &
Affiliate Professor Burgundy Business School
Groupe ESC Dijon, Bourgogne, France.
M263, 35 Stirling Highway
Crawley, WA 6012, Australia
Tel: +618 6488 3931
Fax: +618 6488 1072
CRICOS Provider No. 00112G
Also Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurial Management and Innovation (CEMI)
www.cemi.com.au and President of the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand (SEAANZ) www.seaanz.org

From: Mark Derby
To: Tim Mazzarol
Subject: Questionnaire Instrument

Dear Dr. Mazzarol,

Thank you for all of your feedback. I am requesting permission from you to utilize your questionnaire “International Education Research Programs Student Questionnaire” with adaptations for my dissertation research at CSU. The only adaptations that were made to your original instrument were the descriptive data questions due to minor differences in our participant pools. I maintained all of your attitudinal likert scale questions along with the 7-point scale that you used on your instrument. Please inform me if permission is granted to move forward with the adapted instrument.

thank you for all of your time,

Best Regards,

Mark Derby
Doctoral Student
APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
1. Tell me about some of the reasons you chose to study abroad?
2. Tell me about some of the reasons you chose to study at CSUSB?
3. Tell me about your experiences in the application process to study abroad?
4. Tell me about your experiences with the application process to CSUSB?
5. How was your experience with working with staff at CSUSB in your transition? If a simple good or not good response is provided, a follow-up question of, Can you provide examples of why it was or was not a good experience?
6. Had you ever heard of CSUSB before beginning your application process to study abroad? If yes, how did you hear about CSUSB? If no, at what point did you find out about CSUSB as an option?
APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN QUESTIONNAIRE
Dear CSUSB Student,

The study in which you are participating is designed to investigate the reasons and factors associated with your choice to study at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB).

This study is being conducted by Mark Darby under the guidance of Dr. Jay Fiene, Dean of the College of Education. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at California State University, San Bernardino.

**What I am asking from you**

As a participant, you will be asked to respond to a set of questions via an electronic survey form. The survey will ask you to provide general background information about yourself, as well as to respond to a series of questions pertaining to your experiences in becoming an international student at CSUSB. The questionnaire should take you roughly 20-30 minutes to complete.

A follow-up phone call will be made to participants who complete the survey asking for participation in an interview with the researcher. The interview serves to build a narrative about individual experiences in the processes involved in becoming an international student at CSUSB. The interview should take roughly 45-60 minutes.

**Confidentiality**
All of your responses will be held in the highest degree of confidence by the researcher. The consent form with your contact information will be placed in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher’s home for protection. All voice recorded interviews will be placed in the filing cabinet as well.

Your name will be omitted from all data analysis. All of the data collected from the survey will be used to generate descriptive statistics about the international student population at CSUSB. The only information used will be country of citizenship, gender, academic level, attitudinal data, and program of study as well as quotes from the interviews themselves.

You may receive the results of this study upon completion on June 30, 2015 by contacting the researcher at darby@csusb.edu. After the study has been completed (including the completion of the written dissertation) all questionnaire forms will be shredded and the voice recordings will be destroyed within seven years.

**Voluntary participation**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free not to answer all of the questions. As a participant, you have up to two weeks after completing the survey to request that your responses be withdrawn from the study.

**Risks & benefits**

Possible benefits would be your ability to provide valuable feedback and data that will help international student programs better assist prospective international students in the future. Risks include feelings of discomfort or uneasiness at the end of the questionnaire or interview due to information being shared.
Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Mark Darby at darby@csusb.edu or Dr. Jay Fiene at jfiene@csusb.edu.

Researcher: Mark Darby

Agreement to participate

By entering your information below and completing the survey, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age at the time of this study.

Name: ______________________________       Today’s Date: _____________

Contact Email: ______________________     Contact Phone Number: __________________
APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW
Dear CSUSB Student,

Thank you for participating in the survey portion of this study. As a reminder, the study in which you are participating is designed to investigate the reasons and factors associated with your choice to study at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB).

This study is being conducted by Mark Darby under the guidance of Dr. Jay Fiene, Dean of the College of Education. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at California State University of San Bernardino.

**What I am asking from you**

You stated that you were interested in participating in an interview with the researcher based on the researcher’s follow-up phone call after your completion of the electronic survey. The interview serves to build a narrative about individual experiences in the processes involved in becoming an international student at CSUSB. The interview should take roughly 45-60 minutes.

**Confidentiality**

All of your responses will be held in the highest degree of confidence by the researcher. The consent form with your contact information will be placed in a locked filing cabinet.
at the researcher’s home for protection. All voice recorded interviews will be placed in
the filing cabinet as well.

Your name will be omitted from all data analysis. All of the data collected from the
survey will be used to generate descriptive statistics about the international student
population at CSUSB. Your personal contact information will not be used in any part of
the data analysis, but serves as a means for the researcher to contact you for participation
in the interview.

You may receive the results of this study upon completion on June 30, 2015 by
contacting the researcher at darby@csusb.edu. After the study has been completed
(including the completion of the written dissertation) all questionnaire forms and voice-
recorded tapes will be shredded and destroyed within seven years.

**Voluntary participation**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free not to answer any
questions or to withdraw your responses up to two weeks after completing the interview.

**Risks & benefits**

Possible benefits would be your ability to provide valuable feedback and data that will
help international student programs better assist prospective international students in the
future.

Risks include feelings of discomfort or uneasiness during the interview due to
information being shared.

**Questions**
If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Mark Darby at darby@csusb.edu or Dr. Jay Fiene at jfiene@csusb.edu.

Researcher: Mark Darby

Agreement to participate

By entering my information below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age at the time of this study.

Name: ______________________________       Today’s Date: _____________
Contact Email: ______________________     Contact Phone Number:

____________________________
APPENDIX G

TABLE OF HOME COUNTRY BREAKDOWN
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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</table>
Interview Transcriptions

(M: researcher/P: participant)

**Participant #1: Norwegian male. Graduate student (credentials).**

M: So, yeah, it will be pretty open forum, so let’s just start with number one. Tell me some of the reasons why you chose to study abroad?

P: Well, I was actually several reasons…

M: Okay.

P: I had uh, I was supposed to retire from the Norwegian army, and I, I umh, I wanted to come to the United States sort of following the footsteps to a lot of the Norwegian immigrants that immigrated to the Midwest. Even-though I knew I was a couple generations late to find, sort of the recent stories so to speak, I umh, I wanted to go to the Midwest and find uh, some roots.

M: Like ancestry?

P: Right. So I went there to umh, as an exchange student to umh, to Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

M: Okay.

P: Umh, and umh, the other reason why was, I’ve always been very political. I was politically active in Norway, even as a military cuz that’s so perfectly fine there. And I’ve always wondering about the two-party system how that could work. Which is doesn’t, right?

M: Laughter.
P: And uh, I just wanted to figure out more, so I’ve been actually talking with people politically, what they think, the system. Someone doesn’t like it at all. That was one of the main reasons I wanted to study abroad, was sort of, while I was sort of following people, the Norwegians as they immigrated. I wanted to follow their footstep; I had a political interest and I also wanted to, umh, to become more proficient in English.

M: Okay, alright. So, I’m guessing you didn’t plan on staying necessarily in the beginning?

P: No. I did not plan to stay, uh, this was a one year exchange program. But since I had, when I retired from the military it’s very different from here, but they, umh, I brought with me a sort of a student package. I kept my income if I kept studying, so, umh, I decided to at least finish up the, umh, the undergrad in computer science. Uh, and that leads me into, uh, into uh, point two here because...

M: Okay.

P: Where I were up in Sioux Falls was a private college, very expensive, so I couldn’t afford that, so I had to find something else, and, umh, I had been previously several times to California, so I thought I would like to come here. Umh, I did some research, and umh, I found, umh, UC, Riverside.

M: Okay.

P: So, I got in touch with them and they didn’t take any new students that year, and especially applying as late as I did.
M: Okay.

P: So, they suggested me to, umh, CSUSB. So, that’s why I ended up here.

M: Okay, so, kind of just because that didn’t work out.

P: They suggested.

M: Right.

P: Well, also when I saw the pricing schemes at UCR it was way out of what I could afford.

M: Right.

P: What I wanted to spend on an education.

M: Okay, fair enough. Alright, so where there any other reasons, or just, that was probably the biggest?

P: That was the main reason that, uh, it was cheaper, it was, umh, yeah, I wanted to be in California.

M: Okay.

P: I had some relations built up, both in southern California some in Northern California. With my folk music that I am involved with, so that was the main reason I ended up here.

M: Okay, well that all makes sense and it worked out it sounds like. So, number three, tell me about your experiences in the application process.

P: Well, I, I remember that very well because it was actually very easy. I think I did most of it online, and I sent in just all the paperwork that I had and I was
checking online that everything went through actually. And, umh, they, uh, well they required the TOEFL test.

M: Okay.

P: I had actually taken that before I came to the United States, even-though I didn’t need it up in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Uh, in fact, any students from Norway based on the English program that they have there. Umh, they normally scored very high, so, it’s sort of okay to take the test, so I had to take that, so that was the only problem I had, actually to find the results. I think I had to order a new set of results being sent here actually through directly…

M: Oh, probably through College Board or something like that?

P: Right. Because I think it’s a requirement of all international students you have the TOEFL test, but other than that it was very straight-forward. Yeah, I had all my, uh, transcripts from (indecipherable) Norway translated into English by certified people. What I didn’t like though is how they look up on education because comparing general ed here to what I did in Norway, all this stuff is done in high school. High school is very loaded in Norway, but I didn’t get any of that accepted and that was a disappointment because I was taking tons of classes that I would not relate to my background to a college level class actually. Reading, sitting and reading about, umh, geography for instance, about where things are spread around. It was sort of something we did in high school. But other than that it was very smooth.

M: You transferred stuff from Norway as well as…
P: Yeah, from Augustana College.
M: So, you probably came in as like a junior or something?
P: Yeah, well, they uh, I think it was a sophomore or…
M: Okay.
P: What I did was, I progressed pretty fast. I was having up to 25 units.
M: Okay.
P: Just to sort of get this general ed done.
M: Got it.
P: Get it over with.
M: I understand, I did that too. Laughing.
P: laughing.
M: Alright, uh, number four, tell me about your experiences…oh, sorry, number five. Actually, you kind of covered number four cuz that was specifically to us, whereas the other one may have been more generic like going to South Dakota.
P: Right. That was, actually what happened there was strange because, umh, I never filled out an application. What happened was that I had been to an orientation and showed interest and the college, as I was finishing up my military career. I showed interest to come over there and they didn’t have any exchange students at that time and they really wanted one. They were calling me almost every other week.
M: Wow!
P: And a couple of days before the deadline the, uh, person dealing with the admissions, he said he could fill out an application for me if I just said yes. So I did, so he filled out. Then I just sat.

M: Wow, so you were the very first.

P: No, they’ve had before, but the two last years they didn’t have any either way actually, so they really wanted just to keep the relations, so.

M: Wow.

P: So, I just came in really easy. Yeah, there was no problem at all.

M: Very nice. So, number five…talk about your experiences working with the staff at CSUSB as you transitioned over.

P: Uh, they were very nice. I have worked quite a bit with, one I have been working with in the international office is (specific person). She’s been very positive, very helpful. Yeah, when I started the OPT she helped me a lot with that. It was sort of, umh, they’ve been very helpful. She has been doing quite a bit for me. If you’re thinking in general at the university, it’s been at the computer science department it was actually very nice, a very nice…I mean they have a lot of international students there, but the professors have been very nice, very easy to deal with.

M: Great, great. So the only issues you really had were having to take the TOEFL or getting the score?

P: Right, right. That was just to be accepted at the university.

M: And just the courses transitioning over here.
P: There was another issue where (specific person) helped me. I think within the last six months my undergrad, they were supposed to have a meeting with me explaining options because when I was done my visa would expire, but they didn’t have that, so all of a sudden just three weeks before everything was to expire I just showed up here and she said, wow, your visas about to expire three months after you graduated. So I said, oh shit. And I couldn’t take the master’s program in computer science. So, she fixed everything so I could, she said that because they hadn’t had the meeting they were supposed to she was sort of willing to help me. It was actually amazing.

M: Wow, great, so it all just kind of…

P: Yeah. That was just a month (indecipherable). So, I just had to go back to Norway to renew my visa. So, that was very nice, she was very helpful in that process actually.

M: Well, that’s good to hear. And, umh, I guess that brings us to number six, had you heard of CSUSB before your application?

P: No, that was…

M: UCR.

P: UCR forward me here. Then of course I read something about it, then I, it was, I just want to get a degree here. It could have been anything, but the pricing here was actually…

M: A big selling factor.
P: Yeah, at that time it was. As an international student it was sort of cheap. That’s different right now cuz it increased quite a bit. I’m probably paying 100% more now, or more than 100% than what I did when I came. Because this quarter I paid six and half thousand dollars per quarter. I think because there was a rule when I was taking all this twenty-five hours, there was a rule if you went beyond 36 units they would pay you money back. So, I got quite a bit of money back.

M: Oh, wow.

P: Yeah, cuz it’s a rule, if you, I think it was 36 units.

M: For the year?

P: For the year. They would pay back. So, umh, yeah, for a year I was paying around 12,000 dollars. That’s just...

M: Oh, wow, that is ...

P: I mean this was in 2004, 5, 6. So, what I found out was through the website what program they had and where it was located. I didn’t check out anything, reputation, that didn’t mean anything to me cuz I’m actually so old that, if you want to get a good education you can go actually anywhere. It depends on what you put into it. They are all using the same books. UCR uses exactly the same books we do if you’re in math or computer science. They are sort of standards if you want to study that’s fine, it’s all up to you.

M: So, coming from South Dakota, what drew you to UC, Riverside initially?
P: Well, that, cuz I was just searching for colleges and universities in southern California, they popped up first. So, I just checked that and I, yeah, sort of tried them first. I sent them an email. They responded within an hour. They said that they're not accepting any new applicants that summer, actually the whole year because they were overloaded.

M: Oh, wow.

P: They had waiting lists of people wanting to get in, so that was the reason.

M: Okay. Alright, I went to UCR for a while to.

P: Did you?

M: I started out my college career at UC, Riverside and didn't finish.

P: Are you an American? Or?

M: Born and raised locally.

P: And you work locally?

M: Yeah, I actually work here.

P: As a teacher?

M: I work in admissions. Actually, I used to work in international admissions.

P: Okay.

Participant #2: Nigerian female. Junior biochemistry major.

M: Umh, just kind of as a background, so what year are you, and major? Where are you coming from? Things like that just as a background.

P: Okay, so I’m in my third year.
M: Okay.

P: And I’m from Nigeria. And I’m doing biochemistry. I was doing bioinformatics, but I switched to biochemistry.

M: Okay, and you started here as a freshman?

P: Yes.

M: Alright. So, then let’s just kind of go down the list. Uhm, so tell me about some of the reasons you chose to study abroad initially?

P: Initially, it was because it was harder to get into school in Nigeria.

M: Okay.

P: And, umh, then, a degree from abroad was valued better than the home degree, so that’s just why I chose to study.

M: Now, you were still a bio…?

P: Informatics. Yeah…

M: Out in…

P: No, no, no, in Nigeria I was going to go into medical school. So, when I came here it was bioinformatics.

M: Okay, so it was more difficult back home.

P: To get into medical school, yeah, it was very difficult. Yeah. (laughing).

M: Because there is very limited spots? Everybody wants to do it?

P: Yeah, because I wrote the exam and everything, but on the day of the exam, I’m exaggerating, but like, they were like we be a million people, it was a lot.

M: Wow.
P: Yeah, and you had to wait like a year to know if you actually got in.
M: Okay.

P: So, then I thought if I come here, cuz basically, a degree from anywhere abroad actually, is valued better than actually if you get it in your home country.
M: Really?
P: Yeah.
M: So, once you get a degree here, will you go back for medical school?
P: Oh no.
M: Or will you do all your medical schooling here as well?
P: Yeah. I want to do all my medical schooling here and then go back to Nigeria to practice.
M: Wow.
P: Yeah. (laughing).
M: Very, wow, that’s interesting, okay, so umh, tell me about some of the reasons you chose to study specifically at CSUSB?
P: Okay, umh, cuz I went through a ESC’s embassy, American embassy in Nigeria.
M: Okay.
P: Had a schooling program. So, they had people that would come and talk about it, and one of the women there, she had said that this was the cheapest. And I was looking at cost at that time cuz my dad was going to be paying.
M: Okay.
P: Yeah, and umh, she had said this was the cheapest, and that’s what kind of
catched my attention honestly.

M: Now, and that’s totally fine. Cheapest because, now umh, was California
where you wanted to come, or, so was it the cheapest in the state of California,
or in the United States?

P: I think, I can’t remember what she said, but the price, and umh, I had an uncle
here.

M: Okay.

P: That’s why, but umh, he stays at…I can’t remember, cuz I only see him like
once a year. (laughing).

M: Okay.

P: That’s it, but (undecipherable) I could say I know someone from there, and
that’s another factor.

M: Okay, so that kind of helped?

P: Yeah.

M: Okay, great. So, umh, tell me about some of your experiences in the
application process to study abroad?

P: To study abroad or to study here?

M: Both. However you want to decipher that. You can do both if you want.

P: Okay. Cuz, before I applied to this school, I had applied to like, actually I was
going to go school in Canada. But, umh, I think this one was easier.

M: Okay.
P: Yeah, because, umh, I just applied online, paid the fee, and then...

M: And waited...

P: Yeah, and waited…(laughing)

M: (Laughing)

P: This one was actually easier because other ones were asking for things I couldn’t need, but applying online for this school was pretty straightforward.

M: Okay.

P: Yeah, it just asked for like normal things, like my high school transcript and stuff.

M: Right.

P: Yeah, so I think it was easier.

M: Okay, so the other schools they weren’t online, or they were asking for other things?

P: The web, I couldn’t follow it. Like, I applied to a bunch actually, but yeah, but the only ones I into admission was one in Canada and this one. But the other ones, I can’t, like cuz in Nigeria internet is different, we don’t see the same way you see here.

M: Okay.

P: So, it’s like when I click on something, it’s like, uh…

M: Okay.

P: Like, where do I go from here?

M: Ah, okay.
P: Things like that. But, this was the most straightforward.

M: Okay. Umh, let’s see, number five, umh, how was your experience with working with staff at CSUSB in your transition?

P: Here?

M: Yeah, here specifically.

P: I didn’t work with staff…?

M: Well, like not necessarily work, but like dialoguing and their assistance to you, like in the process of getting in, and like orientations…

P: Oh.

M: Like, was it pretty seamless, did you struggle, was it hard to find help? Things like that.

P: It wasn’t hard to find help, but the orientation itself, I don’t know, I don’t think I liked the orientation so much. (laughing).

M: How come?

P: I don’t know (laughing). I felt like it wasn’t enough information.

M: Okay, so it was too general?

P: Yeah.

M: Not specific…

P: Cuz like I was coming here along by myself, and it was like, it was too much.

M: Okay, so it was overwhelming?
P: Yeah. Like, most of the things I learned, I don’t think a lot of the information at orientation, but like most of the things I learned is probably from friends I meet now. That have been here.

M: Okay.

P: Like, the orientation at that time was a bit scary to be honest. But, like talking with staff and coming here to meet them, they’re telling you, oh you need to send your SEVIS form or you need to get your I-20. They sent it through email, so that was okay.

M: So that was pretty easy?

P: Yeah.

M: Okay, great. Umh, well, we’re at the last one. Had you ever hear of Cal State San Bernardino before beginning your application processes to study abroad?

P: No.

M: So, it wasn’t until that lady specifically said, our school, or the Cal State system?

P: Yeah.

M: Do you remember?

P: (Laughing). I don’t remember.

M: That’s okay, that’s okay.

P: I had never ever (inaudible).

M: Okay, and so after she talked about it, did you look it up and kind of…
P: Yeah, cuz I was working with an educational advisor, that’s what they do there. Then she had helped me go through it, and then we did some numbers crunching. (laughing).

M: Okay, well that’s important. Obviously, financials, your dad was paying for it, so…hey if you gotta pay for it…

P: (Laughing).

M: Gotta, deal with that as well, so that’s completely understandable. Umh, well, that does sum up the questions. Is there anything else you’d like to share about any of your experiences in the process or being an international student here specifically? Or, in general as an international student?

P: In general?

M: That’s fine.

P: They need to make a more internationally friendly environment. There’s no clubs…I mean there is one, the I…the I…I can’t remember. IFC?

M: Okay…

P: Is it IFC?

M: I have heard…

P: I think it’s IFC (laughing).

M: Okay.

P: Yeah, there is one, the international connector…IC1.

M: Okay.

P: but, there’s like nothing apart from that (laughing).
M: Okay.

P: Like, there’s no, it’s hard really. It took me my second year to meet other people, to meet other Nigerians really. Like, to see other people. But, I don’t think it’s very international friendly.

M: Did you live on campus? And, do you still live on campus?

P: I live right across campus. The (omit apartment name).

M: Oh, okay.

P: Yeah.

M: And is that from the beginning that you lived in (omit apartment name)? Or did you live on campus your first year?

P: Oh no, I stayed with my uncle in Victorville.

M: Oh.

P: Yeah.

M: So, your uncle’s in Victorville?

P: Yeah. I was in Victorville, but he would always drive me here.

M: Right.

P: but, I never see him til then. We got an apartment at (omit apartment name) with a roommate. So, I met other Nigerian students. But that’s the thing, cuz like for a year I was always coming from Victorville down here.

M: Right, so you were commuting.

P: Yeah, so, but then I met her at a class. An Anthropology class. That’s where I met here, but then she was renting a room. Her roommate was moving out.
M: Perfect.

P: That’s when, I had never seen like other people, any other community or anything.

M: Okay, now did, umh, do you feel having lived up there and commuting down every day had an impact on the fact that you didn’t really have an opportunity to meet people because you would go home at the end of the day and not stay on campus?

P: Yeah, but even now I’m across the street (laughing).

M: It’s still hard…

P: Yeah. It was fine actually, I got, I wasn’t complaining, it’s just I didn’t know any other person.

M: Of course. For any student, especially for an international student, coming from somewhere else to a foreign country…and here ya go…

P: Yeah. (laughing). But, now it’s fine. I know more people now. Like, I know like, the orientation they hard right now, they just had, I know a Zimbabwe guy and he was totally lost at the orientation.

M: Okay.

P: And like I had to go talk to him and let him know, if you need anyone to talk to…cuz he is doing biology too…

M: Okay, the same major.

P: He is going to medical school.

M: You’re more seasoned.
P: Yeah.
M: You’ve been here for a while, so any questions…
P: Yeah, but that’s it, like, I don’t feel like they do much to be honest.
M: Now, when you say, you talked about like being more international friendly, is that more specific to people, like from, Africa, other African countries, or is it just in general, like you would like to see more people from Nigeria or China…?
P: In general. Cuz like, I think maybe the Asian community they have more people here, so they’re more groups; but like I think that the rest of the people (Laughing) are like, they’re just left out. We tried to start an international club actually about like, remember my friend I used to, she graduated, then the club just died. (laughing).
M: Oh, (laughing).
P: With us, it was international night. And that was it…
M: That was it, huh? So, you didn’t keep it going?
P: (laughing).
M: You were too busy with other stuff, huh?
P: (Laughing). I was, but I can’t find it. Cuz I wanted to start the dance, it was an African group, and we just danced. I’d like to start it over again, but like, I really can’t find them.
M: Did…how did you look? I mean did you go to Center for International Studies and Programs and talk to them?
P: Here?
M: Yeah.

P: Oh no. (laughing).

M: Okay, I was just wondering.

P: No, but like, but in the first place, we’d always stand at like the student union. Like when classes are over, and they would like talk to people about it. That’s how people joined.

M: Okay.

P: Then, after we had dance and she graduated, everyone just disappeared. (laughing). That happened.

M: It’s busy. Definitely, I would urge you to talk to them because obviously they know all the international students and that could probably help because they, you might be able to talk to them and maybe say, hey we really want to get something started again, but we don’t know how to do the outreach, you know? Pretty much, I’m standing here hoping to talk to a student, and assume they’re from…but…they know all the students that come into their office, so they could even potentially send out something to all of them and see.

P: Oh, okay.

M: They’re trying to get this started. Here’s an information session. And then that might be a little easier, potentially.

P: Yeah, the office is right there. The international office...

M: Yeah, what floor are we on...the second...uh, yeah, the third floor.

P: It’s the third floor, yeah.
M: Right where we’re at, right in the center. I mean if you really wanted to start it.
P: Yeah.
M: Okay… (inaudible)

Participant #3: South Korean female. Sophomore sociology major.
M: So, what I’m going to actually do, umh, before getting into these, if you can just kind of recapture where you’re from, what year you are here at Cal State San Bernardino, so if you’re like a freshman, sophomore, and what your major is?
P: umh, I’m from South Korea, and I came here this January. My major is sociology.
M: Oh, me too, that’s what mine was. I’ll ask you more about that later (laughing).
P: (laughing).
M: But, umh, okay, so, let’s just go ahead and get started with the questions. So, number one, tell me some of the reasons that you chose to study abroad in the first place?
P: I knew one program in the South Korea. It is the 1+3.
M: Oh, okay.
P: Yeah, so then I knew.
M: Okay, is that what you’re in?
P: Yeah.
M: Oh, okay. What university is that with? That’s Chung-Ang?
P: Chung-Ang University, yeah.

M: I went there to recruit a couple years ago.

P: (laughing).

M: I used to help run that program. Uh, so that was the reason, cuz your familiar with that program.

P: Yeah.

M: Okay, did you, besides that program, were you looking at other countries at the time, or just the United States?

P: Uh, just the United States, yeah.

M: Okay. So, I would assume that number two is the same answer as number one specifically because of the 1+3 program. Is that or no?

P: Uh, I considered several things, like the weather. (laughing).

M: Oh, the weather, okay.

P: Tuition fee.

M: Tuition fee, uh huh.

P: And reputation.

M: Reputation.

P: Yeah.

M: Okay. So, you wanted a warmer climate than South Korea?

P: Yeah (laughing).

M: (laughing). Okay, so did you look at other schools?

P: Umh, one thing was, uh, Utah.
M: Utah, okay.

P: Yeah. But there is too cold (laughing).

M: It is very cold, yes.

P: Umh, yeah, so then I give up. (laughing).

M: (laughing). Okay, so then did you look at any other schools in California? Or just San Bernardino?

P: In California, that's it.

M: That's it.

P: Yeah (laughing).

M: Okay, okay. So, is the weather good?

P: Yeah (laughing).

M: For right now. I went out to recruit in South Korea, when did I go, I don't even remember...but it was really cold.

P: Umh, yeah (laughing).

M: Very, very cold. I had to buy a new jacket. (laughing).

P: (laughing). Did you come in winter?

M: Yeah, it was cold.

P: Oh, yeah.

M: Cuz, I think that's when the school comes to recruit, right?

P: Yeah.

M: That's in the winter time. It was very, very cold, but it was really fun.

P: (laughing).
M: Uh, okay, so number three, uh, tell me about some of your experiences in the application process to study abroad?

P: Umh, to apply this program I prepared annual resume and I took the TOEFL.

M: The TOEFL exam.

P: Yeah, in the college.

M: Here when you got here?

P: No, in the Chung-Ang University.

M: Okay, that makes sense. Okay, and then you just filled out a general application?

P: Yeah.

M: Okay. Now did you, when you were looking at Utah, did you also apply to a school out there?

P: Uh, yeah. I applied other school possible. Some are closed.

M: Uh huh.

P: But I chose CSUSB.

M: This one. Very good. Well, we’re glad to have you here.

P: (laughing).

M: Umh, so, I know you talked about having to take the TOEFL and, umh, your resume. Can you speak more about the application process?

P: Umh, I took an interview with a foreign (inaudible)...it is hard to remember. (laughing).
M: (laughing). It was so long ago, but it was pretty easy you would say? It was pretty straight-forward, or did you have any difficulties?

P: Some things is easy and some things is difficult too.

M: What are some of the difficult things you remember?

P: The most difficult thing is talking with foreigner.

M: Oh.

P: Yeah, I was really nervous.

M: Okay, and how are you now? You’ve been here for a while now, for about a year.

P: Better than the past.

M: Very good. Alright, let’s see, number five, umh, how were your experiences working with the staff…like whether it be the staff at the Center for International Studies and Programs, financial aid; how was it working with them in terms of transitioning over here? Or coming over here?

P: Oh, that’s okay, but the one thing is that the US is a little bit slow than...

M: Slower.

P: (laughing).

M: How so?

P: For example, I asked one a paper to check packet. In Korea it’s, uh, it will be finished in one day or two day; but these guys, next day, next day, and next day. (laughing).

M: (laughing).
P: Not yet, not yet. (laughing).
M: Oh, okay, so it’s just slower.
P: Yeah, sometimes…
M: It’s frustrating?
P: Yeah. (laughing).
M: I’m sure. But otherwise, it was okay, so just a little slower?
P: Yeah, but it’s okay. (laughing).
M: But it was okay. Umh, so the last question pertains to, obviously you were, you heard about the 1+3 program, you went to the orientation session or information session at Chung-Ang. So, before that, had you ever heard of our school?
P: Uh, I heard about CSU, but the CSUSB was the first time.
M: Oh, so you heard of the system…the 23 campuses.
P: Yeah, I just heard CSU and other campus.
M: Okay.
P: But, that is very famous in Korea.
M: Really?
P: Yeah, CSU school is famous, but CSUSB was the first time.
M: okay, so what, did you know of any CSUs, like, umh, CSULA?
P: Yeah, LA and, I know, I forgot now because a very famous singer was graduated from.
M: Oh, okay.
M: So that helps you become more familiar. So, did you already have any friends that were studying in the system? Or family maybe?
P: No.
M: No. Okay, alright, well is there anything else you want to share about your experiences in being an international student?
P: Umh, the US, there is many, various race…race…Asian, African…
M: Oh, races, okay.
P: Yeah.
M: Okay.
P: But then I discriminated the first time in the school. Sometime it was really shy.
M: Okay, so it was a new experience to see so many different races.
P: Yeah, because in Korea we only have one races.
M: South Korean.
P: (laughing). Yeah.
M: Wow, so how was that experience for you? Was it, umh, exciting? Was it scary?
P: Umh, at first time I was really scary, yeah, but now, it’s okay. (laughing).

M: Very good.

P: Because

M: I’m sure that is a great experience for you to come out here and experience that. So, anything else?

P: umh…

M: You don’t have to, but I am just asking.

P: (laughing). The good experience, umh…there is too many Koreans.

M: Here?

P: Yeah.

M: There’s too many?

P: Yeah. Too many (laughing).

M: Why do you think that is?

P: Umh, for example, now I am living in the dorm; my front door, my next door neighbor is Korean. (laughing)

M: They’re all Korean. (laughing).

P: Yes (laughing).

M: Did they all come as part of the 1+3 program?

P: Yeah.

M: So, they’re all 1+3 students.

P: Yeah, so I wanted to make many more foreigner…

M: Friends.
P: Yeah.

M: Have you made many friends with US students?

P: Yeah!

M: Students here in California? And then you wanted to make more friends with people from other countries as well?

P: (Laughing) yeah.

M: Now, the students that live next door to you, are they the same, did they come in January as well or are they like a year ahead in the program?

P: Uhm, some of is come together, but some of is senior.

M: Okay, so they’re further along. So, you’re like a sophomore?

P: Uh, yeah.

M: Cuz you did a year over there and you’re in your first year here, so two years.

P: Yeah, two years.

M: Okay, wow, very nice, I’m going to turn this off.

Participant #4: Male from Zimbabwe. Freshman biology major.

M: So, I guess before we get into those, for background information what year you are, so freshman/sophomore, what country you’re coming from, and what your major is?

P: Okay, my name is (omitted), or (omitted) for short. Uhm, I’m a freshman. This is actually my first quarter.

M: Oh wow, okay.
P: I started the fall quarter, and I’m from Zimbabwe. Umh, I’m majoring in biology.

M: Okay, what do you want to do with that?

P: That, I then hope to go to medical school.

M: Medicine. Okay, perfect. Alright. Thank you very much. So, let’s go head and get into the questions, so number one, talk about some of the reasons you chose to study abroad initially.

P: Well, in my earlier years of high school and I didn’t discover that I wasn’t too fond of subjects such as accounting, and…

M: Okay.

P: And humanitarian subjects such as history because I wasn’t too much of a fan of writing.

M: Okay.

P: I then identified myself with the science group.

M: Okay.

P: So, then from that point, that’s when I decided I would want to pursue a career in medicine.

M: Okay.

P: But, then umh, in my home country the, it’s very competitive.

M: Okay.

P: It’s difficult to get a spot to study in medicine. And then in the neighboring country they don’t take foreign students.

M: Really?
P: First of all, for what I want to study, the closest I could get was perhaps pharmacy.

M: Okay.

P: So, and because I have a brother here who lives in the United States, my next option was then to come here.

M: So the United States was the next plan? Now, with respect to your brother, I assume he lives here in California?

P: Yes.

M: So, that was probably the next step in getting to the United States, and then more specifically California because of family?

P: Because of family because in general, America had more advancements in the medical field compared to Zimbabwe, so…

M: Okay, understandable. Alright, that makes sense. Umh, and then number two is more specifically reasons why you chose to study here at Cal State San Bernardino.

P: Interesting enough, my brother, he studied here.

M: Oh, okay.

P: And, my oldest sister is also here.

M: Oh, okay.

P: She’s graduating this quarter.

M: That’s fun, the progression. So, your brother, what did he study here?

P: He was a finance major.
M: Oh, okay. And then your sister?
P: She’s a biochemistry major.
M: Does she want to go into medicine as well?
P: Yes she does.
M: Okay, then that just kind of made sense cuz you were familiar with it then because of your siblings. Okay, and were there any other reasons, or that was the biggest reason?
P: That was the biggest reason.
M: Okay, okay, number three, tell me about your experiences in the application process to study abroad.
P: Application to study abroad, they’re quite rigorous actually.
M: Okay.
P: There’s all this essays which they want you to write. All this information, not only about yourself, but your parents, your family members, your siblings. They want to know everything about your life and it was quite tiresome, as well as the visa applications.
M: Okay.
P: Which was also a bit of a pain as well.
M: (laughing). So, in terms of the applications, did you apply to more than one school, cuz this will kind of lead into number four because that’s talking about the application process specifically to our institution. But, did you apply to other schools when you were going through the application process?
P: Well, I had applied to some schools in South Africa.

M: Okay.

P: Just to see where that would land me and, well, umh, in the United States there’s over 1,600 universities and colleges in the country and there’s so many options to choose from and my brother just suggested and because it’s close to where I am I can keep an eye on you and…

M: (laughing). Alright.

P: Yes.

M: So, then with respect to our application process, how did you find that? Was that rigorous as well?

P: Not really. Cuz, my brother have been through the system you know, he was able to assist me largely with it. Applying here.

M: But the visa process was a little more rigorous?

P: The visa process was.

M: So, in terms of you mentioned you writing essays and things, was that more for the applications for South Africa or did you find that in our applications as well?

P: I would have to say that I found it in both, but then mostly in the ones for South Africa.

M: Okay. So, ours was a little bit easier and streamlined because your brother having gone through the process already?

P: Yes.
M: Okay, umh, number five, just talking about your experiences working with the staff members here at Cal State San Bernardino.

P: My experiences, well, unfortunately, being an international student I was informed of such things as the four-year pledge. By the time I found out about it, it was too late. Now, I have to join the masses and every quarter I get the leftover classes.

M: Oh, okay, cuz you’re a freshman and your priorities…okay.

P: But then my experiences working with staff, I found most of all the professors that teach you, umh, they’re actually quite friendly, and they are always helpful or welcoming to questions. They go out of their way to give any assistance as possible.

M: Okay.

P: And as well as other faculty members on campus.

M: Okay, so that’s the faculty and professors. How about the staff, whether it be in CISP, Center for International Studies and Programs, or financial aid, or those other types of offices as well?

P: I’ve been to the international affairs office here. They’re also very helpful.

M: Umh huh.

P: Umh, I haven't been to the financial aid offices yet, but even the bursars when I’m having to pay for fees, they’re friendly people, as well as the health care center staff. They’re very helpful and informative.
M: Okay, well that’s good to hear. That’s very good to hear. Umh, well I think you already touched on number six because it just asks if you had ever heard about us, which you mentioned your siblings went here, so that would be a yes. Umh, so is there, you’re in a unique situation because some of the other individuals I interviewed are a little bit further along or graduate students, that you want to share because you’re somewhat new it’s a bit more fresh having just started. Umh, cuz the purpose of this study is to be able to help the program. Obviously you mentioned difficulties like the visa process and how we can move that forward, but anything else you want to share about your experiences thus far as an international student?

P: Coming straight from high school, it's very different because first off, the size of the campus. The population of my high school, we had only about 600 students, and my graduating year we had about 100…105.

M: Wow.

P: That's about half of my biology class.

M: (laughing). Okay.

P: So, it's very different than, it's bigger, it's more fast paced.

M: Umh humh.

P: I understand it's ten weeks of learning and then…

M: Right.

P: Then holiday. Then another ten weeks. So, back home we would learn for about twelve weeks.
M: Okay, so semesters. Schools here are on the semester system here except for us.

P: Yes. In terms of being a freshman, there’s not a lot of people that I know, so mostly all I do is work on my assignments. Study a bit, relax, go for classes, go home, that’s it.

M: Have you tried to get involved with some of the clubs and organizations on campus or not?

P: Well, for this quarter not really, but then in winter quarter, I plan on joining the AMSA program as well as the biology club.

M: Okay, so get involved.

P: Because one of the main reasons, besides being new, that I didn’t join any clubs is that, I’m commuting from school to (omitted city name), especially by bus. It’s quite time consuming.

M: Oh, so you do take the bus back and forth.

P: Yes.

M: Oh, wow. Yeah, that can be rough, especially in this weather right now. No, but I think that makes sense considering it’s new and trying to get situated and figure out how the system works. So, how are your classes going?

P: My classes are going pretty well, actually. I’m doing really well in all my classes.

M: Good. What are you taking?

P: Umh, this quarter, well English was mandatory.
M: Right.

P: Umh, I was lucky enough to get into the biology 200 class.

M: Okay.

P: And, uh, I'm doing a bio research class as well.

M: Okay.

P: This quarter they introduced a biology supplemental class, which assists bio 200 students in that course because they’ve seen in previous years that students do not do so well.

M: So, almost like, umh, study hours or something?

P: Yes.

M: Okay. How about math? No math?

P: No, well I wasn’t able to get a math class because we had a SOAR hold for international students when I came, so…

M: Right.

P: By the time I could register for the class it was full.

M: What math class are you starting in?

P: 211. Calculus.

M: Oh, okay, very good.

P: But I think I’ll take that in the summer.

M: Okay. That works.

P: It’s available, so.

M: So, is your brother now, umh, a permanent resident, or?
P: He’s now a US citizen.

M: Okay, great! Is your sister planning on staying as well?

P: Yes, she is.

M: And are you planning

P: Yes.

M: Great! No, that’s great. It’s interesting actually, I interviewed a young lady from Nigeria, and she gave me a very similar experience as yours. She’s going for medicine, so you may run into her at some point. Uhm, she said that it was very difficult to get in back home, so she considered out here. She has family out here, so it all makes it very similar to your story. She thinks she wants to stay if everything works out appropriately. But, yeah, she mentioned the same thing, that is was just too difficult at home, so she came here, so that’s interesting to hear. Uhm, well, I do thank you for your time, and I know it was a bit of a hike to get over here on the bus and stuff, so I do appreciate you with the weather. And I do hope your responses are valuable and they will help in developing the international program here at Cal State San Bernardino and other Cal States or other institutions that are looking to start international programs and may not have them, especially when working with students coming out of Africa.

P: Thank you.

M: Thank you.
Participant #5: Male from India. Graduate student majoring in business administration (MBA).

M: Let's go head and start, umh, just to kind of recap, what year you are here, so, undergrad, grad, and so forth. Your major and your home country.

P: Sure.

M: Okay. So go head. So, just, go ahead and answer those three. So, where are you from?

P: Okay, I'm from India.

M: Okay.

P: City of Hyderabad. And I'm doing my master's in business administration, MBA.

M: Okay.

P: In information systems and technology.

M: Okay, great. Alright, so let's just jump into the questions. So, number one, umh, talk about some of the reasons you chose to study abroad, like in the broader sense.

P: Sure. I did my engineering and construction. It was like eight years back.

M: Okay.

P: And after that because of few reasons from construction I jumped into banking. And when I was in banking, most of the people would ask me, what did you do your engineering and then banking? Why that? I was telling them it happened like that, the life made me to come like that. Then I thought I should
do something which is relevant to banking or the management industry, so I could tell them you know, I'm not from construction, I'm from management.

M: Okay.

P: So, I was looking at programs in India, and you know in India we work from morning to evening. We don’t get part time works to do jobs to study and work together.

M: Oh, okay, gotcha.

P: It’s not possible in India.

M: Oh wow.

P: So, we have to take some correspondence courses. I did that, but it didn’t worked out well for me.

M: Okay.

P: So, then I’m married, so, along with my wife, we thought we should look for other opportunities. I just attended some educational fairs from all the other universities around the world from Australia, England, Canada, and US. And, looking for me, which will fit into my budget, so that I can go and study that...

M: Right.

P: Because I know that it’s about finances. Matter of (inaudible).

M: Right.

P: And the course that I’m going to study. That’s the reason because I jumped into banking and management, so I decide, I worked as an assistant manager in
a bank. I completed an all India banking exam, cleared it, (inaudible), but I always thought I did my engineering and came into this.

M: Okay.

P: So, let's put my academic as well as to my works together.

M: That makes sense.

P: That's why I thought of doing my master's in management.

M: Okay, great. So then, umh, talk about some of the reasons your chose to study specifically here at San Bernardino.

P: San Bernardino, yeah. Uh, well, I was attending an educational fair in Hyderabad, India.

M: Okay.

P: Then, I'm going through different countries and different programs and all of their tuition fee and everything. About the faculty and how they do it. And what is the prospects, the future prospects and all that, you know. Then I went with (name omitted), the (omitted title). I met with him, and I, right next to him there is another university, like, same, Cal State University. But, it's Riverside.

M: Oh, okay.

P: And his is Cal State University, San Bernardino, and they, when I spoke to them, they said its cost something like 70,000 dollars.

M: Oh, okay. So, you might be referring to UC, Riverside?

P: Uh huh.

M: Oh, okay, so the UC system.
P: Okay.
M: So.
P: So, oh, it's University of California a UC.
M: Yeah, that's a UC.
P: So, I don't know all that because you know, we don't have all that many universities in India.
M: Okay, of course.
P: I don't have any idea of that. So, then I went, the first question I asked (name omitted), what's the difference between you both? You know, they say 70,000, and they're from California. And you say 34,000 and you're from California. And he said they are a private and we are public one.
M: Okay.
P: The program. So, then he said, would you like to know? I said, go head and tell me about that and then he went through the program and I told him about my life and everything. And he said fine, this, I think this suits for you. You don't have to spend much, and more over, he said Cal State University, San Bernardino got a good name in management, business side. Okay, I took them home, I filled out some form there, and I thought, I'll go home and do my research back.
M: Right.
P: Then he gave me his card so I can mail him and do all the stuff. Then once I went and found all the differences between all these universities, and then about
Cal State University, San Bernardino. I read some reviews and its ranking and how is it good in management side and all that. I read all that and said fine. So, I decided to put in my application. So, I decided to come to csub (CSUSB).

M: Okay. Umh, talk about some of the experiences in the application processes to study abroad.

P: Application process…I think the education system is quite new for me and learning everything about it. In India, if you finish an application in three or four days.

M: Oh, okay.

P: So, here it took for me like somewhere around six months. Six months, and I even applied for other universities, a university in San Diego and another university in San Jose, Weber University in Utah, and there’s a Brigham Young University in Utah.

M: Okay.

P: And I got four admissions and I got them in a couple of months.

M: From the other ones?

P: From other ones. But, my first preference is to Cal State University, San Bernardino.

M: Okay.

P: Just waiting for it.

M: Right.
P: Because of the rankings or the name that it got. I was really impressed with csubs (CSUSB). And so, I’m waiting for that and what they all did, I sent in application, I did all the process, and they sent me the I-20 and the admission and all that. Here it’s not like that. I sent my application to, they did some scrutinizing my application, and again they sent it to CISP, C-I-S-P.

M: Umh humh.

P: And they took somewhere around one and a half months. And there are some document they asked from me and they are not possible to get in India. Then I mailed (name omitted) about that, you know about Indian education, and they’re asking me so many things. I did all I can. Then he said he will look into it. He is the one who helped me out. Finally, he gave me an email, he assured me, don’t worry about it, I’ll work on it. The process went but it took a long...

M: So it’s just long.

P: Yeah. I thought of coming for maybe summer.

M: But it was to...

P: Yeah, I came in fall.

M: Cuz it just took too long.

P: Yeah, that’s what my plans were, but I missed summer, so I started in fall. So, I missed one term.

M: Okay, so what was the document, if you remember? The document they wanted that you didn’t have?
P: Yeah, like I did my online correspondence. We call it online correspondence online course. In India, you might have heard about it.

M: Oh, okay.

P: So, I started my MBA for three years but I didn’t finish that, I discontinued it in the first year. But, I finished some courses, which make them to give me a diploma in that.

M: Okay.

P: Okay. So, what all they sent was my diploma certificate saying that your, you cleared so many subjects, you’re qualified for a diploma in business management.

M: Right.

P: So, we’ll give you this, and if anything you have to check it online. For all my exams, they sent me, I have to go in online and check my results. It’s a A, B, or C, or whatever it is.

M: Right.

P: But here they ask me…

M: Transcripts…

P: Transcripts. How did I get them? I told them they didn’t give any transcripts. And I went and asked them, they said, sorry we don’t give any transcripts for online ones or the correspondence. Then, they sent a mail saying we don’t provide anything. We can (inaudible) a documents saying that this many he finished.
M: Right.

P: And the other one he discontinued with it and he is not responsible with anything to our university because he discontinued it.

M: Right.

P: So, then they sent the mail, but still they insisted. I just downloaded all my transcripts from the online. I sent them, this is what all I have.

M: Right.

P: And, I had a problem with that at another university also because they sent like three or four mails and they’re not patient to answer those things. Then I go and meet with them every week and they said, we already sent it, what else you want? That’s all we can do it.

M: Right, right, okay.

P: Then, I sent the same documents to (omitted name) saying that...

M: The situation.

P: This is my diploma. This is when I discontinued it, and this is when I cleared it. And not myself, the university registrar officer or personal officer sent it from mail, not from me.

M: Right.

P: You got a mail from the university directly. And these are my markings I downloaded from online. That’s all I can do. You help me out, what I can do. Then he said, I’m going to talk to them. Then he went the next day, I got a mail saying you got through.
M: Okay.

P: So, finally got through it and came here in the fall.

M: (laughing). Well, I’m glad it all worked out.

P: (laughing). Yeah.

M: So, that kind of goes along the lines with number five, so, how was your experience with working with the staff at CSUSB in transitioning over here?

P: Yeah. It was fine. The staff are good, really good. Sometimes it’s hard to get an appointment, but they’re okay. They’re pretty busy people what I see here. With (omitted name), we can go and meet whenever. He helped.

M: He has a way…

P: Mostly met with all the faculties. I thought of doing my…when I came here, I came with a different prospect. I thought of doing my MBA in finance or something.

M: Oh, okay.

P: But, once I came here, I met with the professors, and able to know about the market and the jobs and everything. Then I shifted myself to IST, information systems technology. And, as I’m go along speaking with other people, I’m also looking for a dual concentration in cyber security also.

M: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

P: So, that’s, so maybe when I was back in India, we don’t have clear picture of US, so…

M: Right.
P: The only thing I know, the US degree have a great value in India. That’s all I know.

M: Oh, okay.

P: Yeah. Having a master’s and work for a couple of years here, and kind of go back, and you will be in good management positions.

M: Okay.

P: That’s what I I was in banking for five years. I thought of coming here doing my master’s in two years and maybe work for two-two and half years…

M: So, OPT?

P: Yeah, OPT. Maximum a total of five years in the US. And if I go back I’m sure if I go back I’ll have a position somewhere in senior management or something.

M: Oh wow, great.

P: I worked as a manager. At least a senior manager of a branch.

M: Right.

P: So, that’s what I thought. And when come here and knowing about the market and everything, I thought I should do IST and cyber security because now the trend is growing in the US, the cyber security. And down the line, whatever happens in the US and then maybe ten years after the same thing happens in India.

M: So, you'll be ahead of the game.

P: So, that’s what I thought. If I come here and see all this and get into the market and I’ve been three or four years, I go there and be like hot cake.
M: Aah, okay.

P: That’s what I thought. So, people won’t be there with the cyber security experience.

M: Right.

P: And right now, maybe thirty percent of the population uses computers there in India, but ten years after, what US is facing now, the same thing in India will face it. That’s what I’m looking for.

M: Thinking ahead…

P: Yeah, thinking ahead. Getting ready for that.

M: Great! Wow, that makes complete sense actually. Umh, so prior to applying had you ever heard of CSUSB?

P: No. Prior to that it was at the educational fair and I read about CSUSB. And moreover, people living in L.A., they don’t know about San Bernardino.

M: This is true.

P: My wife’s aunt stays in L.A.

M: Oh, okay.

P: And I told her I got my admission to San Bernardino. Cal State University, where’s that? Nobody knows it, and I don’t know. I recently had a discussion with the professors and the library department person. I said, the San Bernardino got a great history and people don’t know about it.

M: Right.
P: I really surprised. But, once I came here, once she came along with me and she seen the campus it was pretty well. It’s a pretty nice campus. It’s not as big as other universities.

M: Right.

P: But, reasonably big, and it looks like nice. And I think maybe it got a history thirty or forty years back, so doing very good in undergraduate and masters.

M: So, this is your first quarter here?

P: Yeah, I just finished my first quarter.

M: Oh, okay, okay. So, is there anything else you’d like to share in terms of your experience thus far being as this is your first quarter, but as an international student to help with the advancements of the program?

P: Uhm, one thing I felt like, we came here and I was out of work for the first quarter. We, we can work for twenty hours. So, not because to own, but to get experience, to get along with the people. The one thing I felt when I came here, I’ve been with Americans back at home with a few of my friends I didn’t feel that much of a cultural difference.

M: Oh, okay.

P: But, I don’t know why, but I felt like a language difference coming to the US.

M: Okay.

P: But I still felt the difference.

M: Dialectical differences?
P: Yeah, exactly. When I was with American friends in India, they know the Indian culture and all that, so they speak the slow English and the English which we can understand. I’m pretty good with that. And when I came here, I was speaking with, it was really hard maybe two months back it was hard for me to understand the English, even-though I’m good at writing and reading.

M: Right.

P: I did my ELs and I got a 7, is very good user of English, but still the dialect, slang, idioms.

M: The slang.

P: The humor. You know when something happens in the class. When a professor crack a joke or a peer cracks a joke, I don’t know it.

M: Right.

P: I was somewhere, not in the sky, somewhere in the middle.

M: (laughing).

P: And that’s what I felt. As soon as I come here and get something into it, get a job, I am going to get along with the people. I first had a problem with my social security number and all that. Right now I got something, I can work for the next, but altogether, overview, I can say it’s a nice place. I really feel good to come here.

M: So, it was a good decision.

P: A good decision. I feel it has a good reputation, especially in the MBA, management program. It got a really good name. And one thing, as I spoke with
many people from internationals, one lack, what CSUSB got is placements. Placements for the students. It’s very less.

M: Into classes?

P: No, into the market.

M: Oh, so into the job market. So, after you graduate.

P: Exactly. That’s really less because there are other universities to consider a lot to for career placements, but CSUB (CSUSB) is not that much into it.

M: Okay, so they get you your degree and then you’re kind of on your own.

P: On your own. So, when I spoke with other people, they said that you know they should try to bring companies to the campus.

M: Oh, okay.

P: And that brings a lot to the campus. That’s what most of the students’ looks for, you know.

M: You come here with the anticipation of working.

P: Even the locals, everyone. You know the companies are coming. And you will go out and you will see people (inaudible) see many companies.

M: Right.

P: So, that’s what one of the lack I see in CSUB (CSUSB). If they want to get nicely with that, I’m sure it’s a great thing. I met with (omitted name) a month ago telling him, you know when you go to India, there’s a lot you can project about Cal State University, San Bernardino. You go there and you do very less, but if you really go there and advertise it very well, you will have somewhere around
3,400 master’s students. I’m sure you can increase that. Prominently you can increase that so that’s why I had a hour discussion with (omitted name) also.

M: Okay.

P: So, the university got a great future and can do very well, the only thing it has to do...

M: Okay, well, great to know. Alrighty…

**Participant #6: Male from India. Graduate student majoring in business administration (MBA).**

M: So, actually, as a precursor to this, if you can just kind of go over, umh, whether or not you are an undergraduate or graduate student, what year, what country you’re coming from, as well as what your major is?

P: I am a graduate student. I am in the MBA program. I’m from India.

M: Okay.

P: I be done with MBA coming spring.

M: Oh, wow. Congratulations.

P: So, I would have actually got done this quarter, but I've added another concentration in IT.

M: Well, what's your initial concentration?

P: It’s marketing. So, my area of interest is marketing research, but now with big data and all these things coming, I think it’s better to augment the degree with the IST degree as well, so…
M: Okay.

P: So, that’s that…what was the last one?

M: Umh, that’s pretty much it. You’re a graduate student. So, let’s get right into the questions, so talk about some of the reasons you chose to study abroad in the first place.

P: Umh, one of the primary reasons why I chose to study abroad was, especially in the US, the education over is not only theoretical, but there is a lot of importance that is given to the practical aspect as well.

M: Okay.

P: So, for example, if I did my MBA in India, aside from a select few institutions, which are the top institutions, their MBA curriculum is really good, but the bulk of the colleges is more theory.

M: Okay.

P: Not too many, you know, like we do so many case analyses over here, and we have practical projects. For example, I just did an integrated marketing communication in which we had a project for brand identity for CSUSB.

M: Oh, okay.

P: So, and that stuff will be used by the university, so when we were giving the final presentation the president was there...

M: Oh wow.

P: The vice president was there.

M: Okay.
P: People from the strategic planning committee was there. So, it’s like, it’s like, when you’re enrolled in this kind of study, it’s more engaging and it’s more applicable to how...

M: The real world.

P: To how you will use these tools in the real world.

M: Exactly.

P: So, that was the primary reason to study abroad.

M: Were there any other reasons, or was that the one?

P: That was it. I was actually an officer in the reserve forces...

M: Okay.

P: And, uh, I was a sportsman, so I studied shooting for the Indian team. I represented them in continental championships, world championships and stuff.

M: Wow.

P: But, I missed the Olympics, the 2008 one, only missed out by two points. When they had the trials for the 2012 Olympics I was in military camp at that time, so I couldn’t go.

M: Wow.

P: So, after this, I wasn’t that satisfied with the steps the army was taking towards promoting me within my sport.

M: Okay.

P: Because it requires a lot of funding.

M: Okay.
P: So, then I decided, I’m twenty-eight right now in which if I go and study and if I start working there for a while in the cooperate sector, or maybe even in the public sector, I would be able to do better. But otherwise, if I would have stayed back, I would have stagnated.

M: Gotcha.

P: So, I said if I’m going to study, I’m going to go abroad and study and get a better quality education.

M: Okay. Wow, wow, that’s real interesting. Umh, it’s funny because side conversation for me is I grew up as a bowler…

P: Uh huh.

M: So, growing up, it’s one of those, oh, you want to pursue it as a professional thing and it’s expensive, you know.

P: Yeah.

M: It just cost too much, so my family couldn’t afford to put us that route, so…

P: But sports are good. Bowling is an individual sport. I think you get to learn the most in individual sports, not in team sports.

M: Right.

P: Because I know when I was going to shoot a target, before I was on the station I knew whether or not I was going to hit it or miss it. I think it’s pretty much the same as bowling.

M: umh humh.

P: So, before you have rolled off the ball, you know…
M: (laughing) right…

P: If it's going to be a strike or not, even before its reached the pins over there, so…

M: (laughing). Very true. Very good, so talk about some of the reasons now that you chose to study specifically here at Cal State San Bernardino.

P: When I wrote my GMAT, I only applied for one school and that was CSUSB. And the primary reason was because my brother, he studied over here and he lives in San Bernardino, so…

M: Oh, okay.

P: So, it was basically because of my cousin. So, that's why I didn't apply to any other school. I didn't apply to UCLA or USC, or any other school. This was the only school I applied to.

M: So, your cousin was in the MBA program as well?

P: Yeah.

M: And now is a US..?

P: He's a permanent resident, I think.

M: Okay.

P: In one or two more he can apply for his citizenship.

M: Oh, okay. So, he lives local?

P: Yeah.

M: Alright.

P: His house is right opposite Cal State.
M: That’s real convenient then. (laughing).

P: Yeah.

M: Alright, so talk about your application processes to study abroad. I guess it was only this one, so…

P: The application process, it wasn’t too complicated for me because I had already knew how to go about stuff because my brother had been here earlier, and, uh, I think the international office, they were pretty good and they were quite prompt at replying to any queries that I had, so I never had any issues with that.

M: Great.

P: Only one thing was with my I-20, they did not include my middle name, so, but my passport carries my middle name and the other documents I had asked, said hey, can you send me, so they did that, it wasn’t a problem. I never had any problems.

M: Good, very good. Umh, I guess that brings us to number five…

P: Yep.

M: How was your experience working with staff at CSUSB, whether it be Center for International Studies and Programs or Bursars or Student Accounts? Things like that.

P: Umh, I actually never had any kind of problem, be it at the MBA office, be it at the international center, be it the faculty. But, there is one thing that I do, if there is a certain request that I need, if there is a paper that I need processed, if I need my, let’s say, a hold to be taken off, so, I do give them enough time, I don’t go I
just have two days left and they and the process will take five days. Then I go
and say, you gotta do this for me.

M: Right.

P: So, if I have to wait five days, I go seven or eight days. So, I think they do a
lot to help the students.

M: Umh huh.

P: So, to me, I have never faced any kind of opposition. But, the things I can
control, I control, like being there on time.

M: Right.

P: And not going to them last minute and saying, you have to do this for me.

Soo, the other thing, why I also do this is because I have been representing my
country for many years when I used to compete, so I also feel that when I’m over
here I’m representing my country.

M: Right.

P: So, I will not be, nobody will like that I pressure them and say like, oh, I need
this statement. I have to catch my flight tomorrow and you need to sign my I-20.

M: Correct.

P: I don’t think that’s right.

M: Well, that’s good. More students need to be like that. That’s really good.

Umh, well, number six, you obviously mentioned I guess to a certain degree you
had heard of it because of your family.

P: Of course.
M: So, I guess now that that’s done, is there anything else you want to talk about?

P: About other things, CSUSB, apart from the fact that my cousin was over here, and he studied at San Bernardino. I also read about the business program.

M: Okay.

P: So, I felt it was, for the fee that was being charged over here, I think you get the best bang for the buck.

M: Okay.

P: So this is exactly what I told the interviewing officer at the embassy. That was his only question because I had been to the US a couple times before.

M: Okay.

P: So, my name was already there. So his only question was, why do you want to go to Cal State. I’m pretty sure he was Californian.

M: (laughing).

P: Now that I’m over here because of peoples’ accents and stuff.

M: Okay (laughing).

P: So, I just told him straight up front that, you know, the fee structure over there fit my budget.

M: Uhm huh.

P: I can’t go to USC or UCLA and then be, you know, it just doesn’t fit my budget. I don’t want to be too much in debt.

M: Right, right.
P: So, that was one thing, and the other thing was the MBA program.

M: Okay.

P: And I was coming over here for MBA, so that is why I looked into. I have friends over there in the computer science program. They say it’s not that good, but I think the MBA program is pretty good. The only thing I think they can improve a little bit for international students is...

M: Uhm huh...

P: When the time comes for recruitment, they need to get more companies over here that hire international students.

M: Humh.

P: Because one of the major challenges that I find, I started applying for jobs towards the ending of summer because I was supposed to finish in winter of next year.

M: Right.

P: So, I won’t hear from most of the people because I mentioned I required a sponsorship. Other than my OPT, so I think the college can try to get more companies to come over here. Those who sponsor international students.

M: Right, right.

P: So, cuz a lot of other schools do it. Schools in the Boston area, they do it. So, I think we can do it to. And, umh, I think if they do this kind of thing…they will...

M: Increase…
P: They will definitely, you know, go higher in their ratings as a institution of choice for international students to come. So, they can definitely do this.

M: That’s interesting. I had another student say the exact same thing.

P: Yeah.

M: Actually he’s in the MBA program too.

P: I actually never realized until I wasn’t close to finishing, but I knew that I can’t be filling out applications when I’m filling out my comps, so I wanted to start six months earlier. So, I started, but I wouldn’t hear back from most places. So, that was something, and the other thing was, uh, but that’s not anything to do with the university over here, but I think for foreigners, more preference is in technical services. Like you know, umh, computer programs, if you use software tools, data analysis, those kind of things.

M: Umh huh.

P: My kind of interest is in marketing research. Statistics. I’m pretty sure you will be doing statistics with your research.

M: Right.

P: So, I do all that, but I couldn’t qualify because I didn’t have the IT stamp on me.

M: Gotcha.

P: So, that’s the reason why I’m doing this second concentration.

M: Okay. That makes sense. You bring it all, the full package.
P: Yeah. And now, because they have because of big data, research has now extended to IT as well. So, I've been speaking to the other professors that were there, they say it's going to be there for a long, long, long time.

M: Right.

P: The other way to go was cyber security. There are a lot of jobs in that, but I will not qualify for most of them because I'm not a citizen.

M: Right.

P: Even in the private sector they want you to have security clearances and stuff like that.

M: Alright, well is there anything else you want to add about your experiences thus far as an international student?

P: Uhm, I've never had any problems. I've had some students come and say, I had to go and they delayed my paperwork. But then, I'm not certain they went to them in time or not. Or did they just go to them but they were so busy.

M: Right.

P: So, I don't know, everyone's been fine to me at the international center, at the MBA office they've been very helpful. I don't have any problems.

M: Great. Very good, very good….
APPENDIX I

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
Mr. Mark Gene Darby and Dr. Jay Piene  
Department of Educational Leadership and Technology  
College of Education  
California State University, San Bernardino  
5500 University Parkway  
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Mr. Darby and Dr. Piene:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Understanding Why International Student Applicants Choose A Public 4-year Institution" has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The attached informed consent document has been stamped and signed by the IRB chairperson. All subsequent copies used must be this officially approved version. A change in your informed consent (no matter how minor the change) requires resubmission of your protocol as amended. Your application is approved for one year from September 15, 2014 through September 14, 2015. One month prior to the approval end date you need to file for a renewal if you have not completed your research. See additional requirements (Items 1 - 4) of your approval below.

Your responsibilities as the researcher/investigator reporting to the IRB Committee include the following 4 requirements as mandated by the Code of Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46 listed below. Please note that the protocol change form and renewal form are located on the IRB website under the forms menu. Failure to notify the IRB of the above may result in disciplinary action. You are required to keep copies of the informed consent forms and data for at least three years. Please notify the IRB Research Compliance Officer for any of the following:

1) Submit a protocol change form if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your research protocol for review and approval of the IRB before implemented in your research.
2) If any unanticipated adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.
3) To apply for renewal and continuing review of your protocol one month prior to the protocols end date.
4) When your project has ended by emailing the IRB Research Compliance Officer.

The CSUSB IRB has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional approvals which may be required.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the IRB Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7388, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillespie@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval identification number (listed at the top) in all correspondence.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Judy Sylva

Judy Sylva, Ph.D., Chair  
Institutional Review Board  

IS/mg

cc:

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