

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CLOTHING AND INTERCULTURAL ADJUSTMENT FOR
AMERICAN AND JAPANESE EXCHANGE STUDENTS

by

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(Under the Direction of Jan Hathcote and Naz Kaya)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the inability to find clothing in the host country related to intercultural adjustment for American and Japanese exchange students. Possible relationships between clothing availability, satisfaction with fit sites, body image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social support, and adjustment were also explored. Results indicated that clothing availability was not directly related to adjustment for either sample. Strong linear relationships were found between self-esteem and adjustment, self-efficacy and adjustment, and social support and adjustment for both samples. Limitations, implications, and areas of future research were discussed.

INDEX WORDS: Clothing, Self-Esteem, Body-Image, Fit, Intercultural Adjustment

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B.B.A., The University of Georgia, 2003

A.B., The University of Georgia, 2003

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2005

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August 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the unyielding support of my major professors and committee members. From these amazing women, I have learned that hard work does pay off and that the road to success can be just as fun as the actual accomplishment. Many thanks go to Dr. Jan Hathcote and Dr. Naz Kaya for their support and encouragement. Not only was their advice invaluable to the completion of this thesis, their friendship proved to be a motivating force throughout my graduate school career. Also, I would like to express thanks to Dr. Soyong Kim and Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock for serving on my thesis committee and for offering their statistical expertise. Their brilliance reminded me that numbers can be fun.

Without the assistance of fellow students and professors throughout the United States and Japan who administered the questionnaires at their respective club meetings and universities, this thesis would not have been possible. Much thanks goes to the Japanese Student Associations at the following universities: Washington State University, University of San Diego, University of Minnesota, University of Nevada, Oklahoma State University, University of Mississippi, and the University of New York. For their help administering the surveys in Japan, I would like to thank the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Waseda University, Nagoya University, Sophia University, Gifu University, and the Tokyo American Club.

Gratitude is expressed to my family and friends for constantly providing love and encouragement throughout my studies at the University of Georgia. A special thanks is given to my father, Richard Crosby, who constantly reminds me that I can do anything I set my heart to.

Also, much appreciation is given to Bradley Rogers for his unyielding love and patience throughout the completion of this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The international student population has increased dramatically over the past fifty years. Students from all over the world are beginning to realize that preparation for success in a global future needs to include overseas study. Open Doors, the annual report on international education published by the Institute of International Education indicates that study abroad is more popular than ever among American students (2003). Since 1991/92, the number of American students studying abroad has more than doubled (from 71,154 to 160,920, an increase of 126%) (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2003).

Japan has long been a favorite destination for ambitious students wanting to increase their job potential. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Japan's economy was booming and the country seemed poised to dominate international commerce. Therefore, studying Japanese was considered a smart choice for business-minded college students. Over the past few years, however, Japan has gained cult status in a completely different area - cool pop culture (Parker, 2004). According to Welles (2002), the number of students studying Japanese in U.S. institutions of higher education rose to 52,238 in 2002, a jump of 21% over 1998. In 2004, Japan was the 10th most popular destination for American college students, with 3,457 students choosing to study abroad in Japan (IIE, 2004). According to Open Doors, the number of students choosing Japan as their study abroad destination increased 9% since 2003 (IIE, 2004). Not only is Japan increasingly becoming a top choice for American students wanting to study abroad,

Japan is one of the top sources of international students in the United States (Andressen, Curtis, & Gainery, 2002).

The development of higher education contacts between the United States and Japan was heavily influenced by WWII and the immediate post-war period. During the occupation era, the United States established scholarship programs. These programs, which continue even today, formed academic ties between the two countries. Because of the close relationship between the United States and Japan, the United States has become the most favored destination for Japanese students studying abroad, comprising about 30% of the total number of Japanese students studying abroad (Ono & Piper, 2004).

As the top third nation in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Japan has also become one of the world's leading economic powerhouses. Globalization of production and finance as well as the need for English skills has triggered migration to the United States (Ono & Piper, 2004). In 2003/04, there were 40,835 Japanese students studying in the United States. Although this number decreased slightly from the previous year (down 11.2% from 45,960), Japan is still the fourth-leading place of origin for students in the United States. Because of the continued interest in both the United States and Japan as study abroad destinations for Japanese and American students, respectively, cross-cultural research is imperative in promoting and maintaining a high level of exchange between the two countries.

There are many benefits to cross-cultural interactions. On a global level, cross-cultural interactions may lead to effective international relations. Increased diplomatic relations are expected to result in a more homogenous and stable world where the best from each culture is integrated and synthesized (Pedersen, 1991). On an individual level, sojourners report an increased appreciation of the home culture; broader perspective; reduction of ethnocentrism,

intolerance and stereotypes; increased cognitive complexity and greater personal self-awareness, self-esteem, confidence and creativity (Church, 1982). Assisting students in and throughout the adjustment process can help ensure a more positive international experience for the student sojourner.

Researchers have devoted a great deal of effort to the study of adjustment problems and issues of international students with four categories of adjustment problems having been defined: (1) general living adjustment, (2) academic adjustment, (3) socio-cultural adjustment (i.e. culture shock, racial discrimination), and (4) personal psychological adjustment, such as homesickness, depression, or isolation (Tseng & Newton, 2002). It has even been suggested that female foreign students may report a greater number of these adjustment problems than do male students studying in a foreign country (Church, 1982; Fong & Peskin, 1969; Rosenthal, Ranieri, & Klimidis, 1996).

Although past research has touched on emotional adjustment problems, there has been little focus on the possible relationship between the inability to find clothing in the host country and the emotional adjustments of female study abroad students. Past research has determined that females in general are more concerned about their physical appearance and have lower appearance self-esteem than males (Kowner, 1996; Pliner, Chaiken, & Flett, 1990). Studies also have found a high correlation between body image and self-esteem (Kowner, 2002; Secord & Jourard, 1953). Therefore, a decrease in body-image caused by the inability to find clothing could negatively affect the self-esteem of study abroad females. In turn, it has been suggested that self-esteem influences both self-efficacy and social interaction, two factors which are commonly known to influence intercultural adjustment (Church, 1982; Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1960; Harrison, Chadwick, & Seales, 1996; Manese, Sedlacek, & Long, 1988; Perrucci & Hu,

1995; Schram & Lauver, 1988). This study attempts to determine whether an indirect relationship exists between the inability to find clothing in the host country and intercultural adjustment. Possible relationships between clothing availability, body image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social support, and adjustment are also explored.

Theoretical Framework

In 1954, a framework was developed by Leon Festinger proposing that people strive to evaluate their opinions and abilities by making comparisons with salient and similar others. More recent adaptations of the social comparison theory, however, insist that people compare themselves with salient others, whether these others are similar or not. Studies have shown that these comparisons are pivotal to a person's self-evaluation (Wood, 1989). Therefore, comparisons that result in negative evaluations can have a detrimental effect on a person's self-esteem.

For both the American and Japanese females studying in their respective host countries, the salient host female (including her shape, size, weight, etc.) becomes the new benchmark on which self-evaluations are made. If the female exchange student is unable to find clothing in the host country because her own body shape or size differs from the host norm, this could cause anxiety and could result in a negative self-evaluation. This study uses the social comparison theory (and its more recent adaptations) as an umbrella under which the cause of negative self-evaluations prompted by the inability to find clothing in the host country can be explained. The main goal of this study was to determine whether or not the inability to find clothing due to differences in physical traits and proper size unavailability relates indirectly to the emotional adjustments of American females studying in Japan and Japanese females studying in the United States.

Objectives

This study investigates the possible indirect relationship between clothing and the emotional adjustment of American and Japanese female study abroad students. The aim of the study is to identify the specific sizing issues that the females face in their respective host countries and to determine the degree to which the American and Japanese study abroad females are satisfied with the fit of clothing available in their respective host countries. Possible relationships between clothing availability, body image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social interaction, and adjustment are also explored.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine whether the American and Japanese female samples differ in regards to clothing availability, satisfaction with fit sites, body image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social support, and adjustment;
2. Determine whether a relationship exists between clothing availability and satisfaction with fit sites for both the American and Japanese female samples;
3. Determine whether a relationship exists between clothing availability and body image for both the American and Japanese female samples;
4. Determine whether a relationship exists between body image and self-esteem for both the American and Japanese female samples;
5. Determine whether a relationship exists between self-esteem and self-efficacy for both the American and Japanese female samples;
6. Determine whether a relationship exists between self-esteem and social support for both the American and Japanese female samples;

7. Determine whether a relationship exists between self-efficacy and adjustment for both the American and Japanese female samples;
8. Determine whether a relationship exists between social support and adjustment for both the American and Japanese female samples.

Conceptual Definitions

1. Adjustment – to adapt or accommodate oneself (The Random House Dictionary, 1980).
2. Assimilation – to be or become a part of a country or community (The Random House Dictionary, 1980).
3. Intercultural Adjustment – adjustment that occurs among or between different cultures (The Random House Dictionary, 1980).
4. Sojourner – one who stays in a place temporarily (The Random House Dictionary, 1980).
5. Body-Cathexis – satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the physical body in whole or in part (Horn & Gurel, 1981).
6. Body Image – the totality of “perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and personal reactions of the individual in relation to his own body” (Kolb, 1959, p.751).
7. Self-Esteem – an individual’s sense of value or self-worth, or the extent to which people value, appreciate, or like themselves (Lane, Lane, & Kyprianou, 2004).
8. Self-Efficacy - the level of confidence that individuals have in their ability to accomplish tasks (Bandura, 1986).

9. Clothing Involvement – women’s perceived relevance of clothing based on inherent needs, values, and interests (Zaichkowsky, 1985).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter outlines the theory of social comparison and its more recent adaptations. The following literature also discusses clothing involvement and availability, body image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social support and interaction with host nationals. Information gathered during focus group sessions with both American and Japanese females is also included throughout this chapter. This chapter concludes with the discussion of intercultural adjustment.

Theories of Social Comparison

According to Festinger (1954), people best serve the need for self-evaluation by measuring their attributes against direct, physical standards. When objective standards are unavailable, Festinger proposes that individuals compare themselves with other people. Research indicates that the degree to which individuals define themselves in relation to others in their social environment, rather than on the basis of objective criteria, is quite striking (Marsh & Parker, 1984). One of the fundamental propositions of Festinger's theory of social comparison is the idea that individuals prefer to compare themselves with similar others in order to precisely evaluate their opinions and abilities. Later research, however, contradicts this essential aspect of Festinger's original theory (Kowner, 1996; Miller, 1983).

It has been proposed that an individual's feelings about their body may ebb and flow with situational variations in the individual's social circumstance. Females have clearly defined "templates" of the ideal, extremely thin female figure (Rodin, Silberstein, & Striegel-Moore, 1986). This "template," however, can be altered to fit the environment. It has been determined

that in most situations, the context people rely on when observing others and evaluating themselves is the immediate social context. That is, people who are usually in the vicinity of the observer, serve as a temporary standard for one's schema of appearance evaluation (Kowner, 1996). Miller (1983) suggests people may compare themselves with people who are salient or available, or with whom frequent or recent interactions have taken place whether there is the desire to compare or not. Morse and Gergen (1970) indicate that even when comparison should have been irrelevant, in a noncompetitive situation, it occurred anyway. Therefore, it seems that comparison may be automatic (Goethals, 1986). Although more recent studies challenge Festinger's implicit depiction of the social environment as an inactive backdrop for the individual's comparisons, the basic thrust of Festinger's theory is widely supported; people compare themselves with other people, and their comparisons are pivotal to their self-evaluation (Wood, 1989).

A more recent adaptation to the social comparison theory, the adaptation-level theory also describes how social comparison information might temporarily alter one's comparison standard. Higgins, Strauman, and Klein (1986) suggest that people use many comparison standards. Momentary changes in social setting may make one particular standard more cognitively accessible than others. In the context of the problem studied here, exposure to the average female host national might cause the host cultural norm to become more salient temporarily (at least for the duration of the study abroad experience) and change the comparison level for attractiveness judgments. Helson's (1947) concept of adaptation level (AL) also helps explain the temporary alteration in one's comparison standards. According to Helson (1947), people compare a new stimulus (in our case, clothing size) with a subjective average of all past and present stimulation on a particular dimension. The judgment of the new stimulus then

becomes part of the rater's (study abroad female's) experience, adjusting the adaptation level to some extent (Richins, 1991). Thus, clothing size will be judged bigger when it is evaluated in a series of smaller sizes than when it is evaluated within a series of bigger sizes and vice versa.

Allen and Gilbert (1995) suggest that social attractiveness is a key dimension for social comparison. Research has also shown that a tendency to compare one's physical appearance with others seems to be related to body dissatisfaction (Heinberg & Thompson, 1992). If women surrounding the female study abroad student have similar physical sizes and proportions, this could be subconsciously validating. If, however, women surrounding the female study abroad students are not similar in appearance, shape, and size, this does not foster validation but may cause increased body dissatisfaction and anxiety (Thompson & Heinberg, 1993) during a time when the female study abroad student may already be exceptionally vulnerable.

Model Development

The main goal of this research project was to determine if clothing availability relates indirectly to intercultural adjustment for American and Japanese exchange students. The model illustrating the possible indirect relationship between clothing availability and adjustment was developed as follows. Beginning with intercultural adjustment, an extensive review of literature was conducted in order to determine possible factors of adjustment. Two factors in particular were consistently found to lessen the amounts of adjustment strain experienced by student sojourners. The first factor is self-efficacy and the second factor is social support/interaction. Research was then conducted to determine variables that relate to both self-efficacy and social support/interaction. Therefore, beginning with adjustment and working backwards, seven variables were identified in order to illustrate a possible indirect linkage between clothing availability and assimilation (as measured by adjustment strain) (see Figure 2-1). The existence

of significant relationships between the inability to find clothing in the host country and variables that have been found to effect intercultural adjustment may indicate the necessity to gain more insight into this particular area of cross-cultural research.

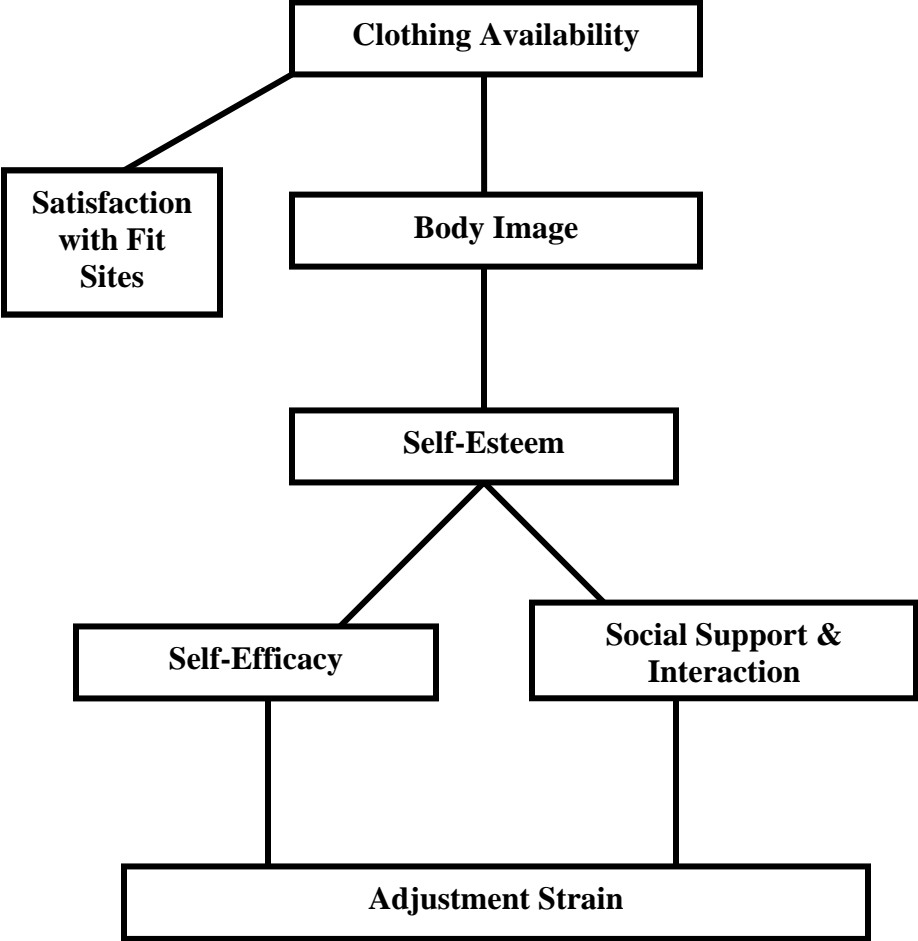


Figure 2-1. Conceptual Model

Clothing Involvement

Over the years, numerous consumer behavior theorists have proposed that consumers actively search for and use information to make informed purchase choices (Bettman, 1979; Engel, Kollat, & Blackwell, 1978). These theories imply that the consumer is an intelligent, rational, thinking, and problem-solving organism, who stores and evaluates sensory inputs to

make reasoned decisions (Markin & Narayana, 1975). Not every purchase, however, requires such pre-purchase research. Indeed, the average consumer makes dozens of mundane decisions each day. Previous research indicates that even for the purchase of major items, a great deal of consumer behavior does not involve a comprehensive evaluation of the choice alternatives. Given the fact that not every purchase is analyzed, theorists now view consumer behavior in terms of a two-fold dichotomy: low involvement consumer behavior and high involvement consumer behavior (Engel & Blackwell, 1982).

High involvement with products leads to a greater perception of attribute differences, perception of greater product importance, and greater commitment to brand choice (Howard & Sheath, 1969). Similarly, high involvement with purchases leads consumers to actively search for more information and spend more time searching for the right selection (Clarke & Belk, 1978). In general, high involvement means personal relevance, whereas low involvement indicates that the product or purchase bears little significance for the consumer. In this study, clothing involvement was defined as a person's perceived relevance of clothing based on inherent needs, values, and interests. If clothing is not perceived as important, clothing availability may have no bearing on the intercultural adjustment of the female study abroad consumer.

Clothing forms an important part of everyday consumption decisions and is also a central component of almost all daily events. What we wear influences what and where we eat, how we communicate, and the inherent nature of our thinking (O'Cass, 2001). For consumer-driven cultures, such as the United States and Japan, clothing consumption goes far beyond what is required to sustain a life out of poverty. Consumer involvement in regards to clothing choice can be seen in the ever-evolving nature of fashion, implying that people are often drawn into the

“style” of the moment. Western women, especially, have an intense interest in fashion (Hansen, 2004) and have throughout the ages been willing to alter their bodies to conform to each historical era’s ideal of beauty (Striegel-Moore, Silberstein, and Rodin, 1986). As indicated by a recent study, Japanese females’ concern with physical appearance rates similarly to that of American females (Kowner, 2002). Because clothing holds such a defining role in affluent societies, it is assumed that there will be no significant difference between the American and Japanese female exchange students in regards to their clothing involvement. Both samples, based on their cultures of origin, should perceive clothing as being a relevant part of daily life.

Clothing Availability

According to the Being-A-Broad website, a survival guide for Western women in Japan, “Western women face two issues when it comes to clothing in Japan: the few clothes available that fit the Western figure and the style crisis” (Pover, 2005). For petite American females who have previously had a difficult time finding clothes in the United States, shopping for clothes in Japan can be a great experience. For most Western women, however, shopping for clothing in Japan can become extremely frustrating. This frustration stems not only from a lack of clothing, but also because many Western women begin to feel unattractive and frumpy compared to the always stylish Japanese woman (Pover, 2005). Most Japanese women pay great attention to their appearance. Designer clothes are everyday clothes, high heels are considered ideal for shopping or traveling, and everything is in immaculate condition (Pover, 2005). Most women in the United States, however, seem to care more about comfort than style. A feeling of inadequacy resulting from clothing comparison is what was previously referred to as the “style crisis.” According to previous research and the focus group results, however, size and fit problems appear to rate more problematic than the “style crisis.”

As seen in Table 2-1, Japanese females in general, naturally have smaller frames than their American counterparts (Taki, 2001), and the majority of clothing available in Japan reflects this size difference. Shape is another distinct difference between Japanese and American female bodies. This difference in body shape (see Table 2-1) could cause garments made for Japanese females to fit strangely on the American female body and vice versa. According to Berry (1963), fit is defined as “a correspondence in three-dimensional form and in placement of detail between the figure and its covering to suit the purpose of the garment, to provide for activity, and to fulfill the intended style.” Apparel design and production experts believe that the fit of a garment is one of the most important factors in producing garments that flatter the individual (Minott, 1978).

Table 2-1.

Comparison of Average American and Japanese Female Measurements

American	Height	Bust	Waist	Hips
Rounded cm/Kg	160	104	88	109
Rounded Inches/Lbs	63.0	41.0	34.5	43.0
Japanese	Height	Bust	Waist	Hips
Rounded cm/Kg	158.2	83.1	63.8	90.5
Rounded Inches/Lbs	63.0	36.9	28.4	40.2

Note. American female measurements are based on 2004 SizeUSA data; Japanese female measurements are based on the 2001 JIS Sizing Systems

According to the National Sizing Survey conducted by [TC]² (2004), American female body shapes have gradually morphed from an hourglass shape to more of a pear shape, with the hips being larger than the bust. The study indicates that approximately 60% of the American

female population has hips bigger than their shoulders. Although it has been suggested that the Japanese female body shape is gradually becoming more curvaceous, there is still not as much disparity between the measurements for hips and waist as in the American female population. Indeed, one of the biggest complaints of the American female focus group participants was the inability to find properly-fitting pants and jeans. According to the focus group participants, this was due to the available clothing being made for the “hipless” Japanese female.

Similarly, the average Japanese female body tends to be less shapely than its American counterpart. One major complaint of the Japanese female focus group participants was the inability to find properly fitting underwear in the United States due to the difference in lower body shape between American females and Japanese females. Many complained about “baggy” jeans and underwear. Most of the Japanese participants also lamented about the difficulty in finding pants and jeans that were the appropriate length. Although the American female focus group participants seemed to have size and fit problems exclusively, several Japanese focus group participants stated that shopping in the United States was actually “easier” and “better” than shopping in Japan. It seems as though the limited size availability in Japan even affects the Japanese females who do not “fit the skinny mold.”

In order to determine the level of satisfaction felt by both the American and Japanese study abroad females in regards to the fit of clothing available in the host country for twelve different body sites, this study utilizes the satisfaction with fit sites scale. Less clothing availability should lead to less satisfaction with the fit of clothing available. Based on size data, focus group responses, and average body measurements for both the American and Japanese female population, it is being hypothesized that the American sample will have more difficulty

finding clothing in their host country. Given less clothing availability, the American sample will also be more dissatisfied with the fit of clothing available in Japan.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference between the American and Japanese female study abroad students in regards to clothing availability.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference between the American and Japanese female study abroad students in regards to satisfaction with fit sites.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant relationship between clothing availability and satisfaction with fit sites for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Body Image

Women in particular tend to place physical appearance in higher priority than males (Kowner, 1996). This is true for both American and Japanese females, whose concern with physical attractiveness, weight, and body esteem rated similarly in a recent study (Kowner, 2002). Clothing is a significant force in the enhancement of the self and is the easiest and most natural way to maintain a good physical appearance. Because clothes are such a visual part of the self, they are often included in the conscious evaluation of self-characteristics (Horn & Gurel, 1981). Therefore, not finding clothes to fit their body size may lead some study abroad females to have a lower body image. Body image is the mental picture that individuals have of their body. This includes both how individuals “see” their size, shape, weight, etc. and also what is felt about these attributes. In discussing the psychology of product design, Norman (1988) argues that users are often quick to blame themselves when the product does not work. McVey (1984) also found that ill-fitting branded garments give a message to the consumer that something is wrong with the consumers themselves, and that their body is less than ideal. Therefore, when clothing does not fit (or is unavailable) consumers may perceive the cause as

related to their own body and not the clothing. This could result in negative feelings about the body and its attributes.

The symbolic interaction theory can be used as a framework to describe the association between body image and satisfaction with fit (LaBat & DeLong, 1990). In 1962, Stone developed the concepts of program and review, two fundamental ideas of the social identity theory. If these concepts are applied to the current study, the body is presented by the individual as a part of the program, which is reviewed by others. When the reviewer validates the program of the other, self-concept is heightened. If the program is rejected, however, self-concept is lowered. The symbolic interaction theory also indicates that the review may come from comparing oneself to established social symbols, such as the ideal female figure. Applying Stone's concept of program and review, the body as program is validated if fashionable clothing is readily available to fit the body. A negative review could result if the social organization (or host country) does not provide fashionable or attractive clothing to fit the body (of the female exchange student).

Clothing has been referred to as an extension of the body scheme and may be incorporated into the body scheme, thereby changing body image. Therefore, people who have a high degree of confidence in their adornment behavior may also have high self-concepts of their physical attributes. Clothing (or the lack of), however, also may become a source of embarrassment, discomfort, or belittlement. Considerable empirical evidence shows that feelings of clothing deprivation have a significant relationship with low self-concepts and body image (Edwards, 1971). Sankowsky (1981), however, found that a woman's body satisfaction can fluctuate radically depending on how attractive she feels in comparison to other women in the immediate vicinity. It appears that a people's self-perceptions about their own appearance

reflect comparisons (and the feedback received from these comparisons) with others. These assessments are then incorporated into one's own body-image evaluation.

Davis and Katzman (1998) also found that social comparison greatly affects the way in which people see themselves. These two researchers compared the body image scores of a sample of people from Hong Kong with a sample of Chinese, the majority born in Hong Kong, who had resided in the United States for up to five years. Their findings indicated that the Chinese sample of individuals living in the United States had slightly lower body esteem than their American counterparts. This was especially true for the female sample. The same sample had significantly higher body esteem than their compatriots from Hong Kong. This may reflect the abandonment of Chinese values regarding the body and the acquisition, instead, of values common in the American mainstream. This supports the idea that comparison standards can be affected by salient others and are altered depending on the immediate environment. Unrealistic standards, however, are impossible to attain (or maintain) and can have an impact on body image and gradually self-esteem.

College-age American females tend to be extremely concerned with their appearance. Even among American college women who perceive themselves as of normal weight, Raudenbush and Zellner (1997) report that 88% of the women still wanted to be thinner. Excessive exercise and dieting in order to maintain a slim physique is therefore not an uncommon occurrence throughout U.S. universities. Mintz and Betz (1988) report that 64% of an American college sample exhibited some degree of disordered eating behavior and used food to control weight. Japanese females studying at universities in the United States would therefore come face-to-face with large numbers of Western women constantly striving to be "more attractive" or "slimmer." For the female Japanese students, the possible incongruence between

their own body shape and the shape of American college females could become more prominent and lead to negative thoughts about the self (Kowner, 2002). The feeling of failure could lead to overgeneralization for the female study abroad student, whereby the inability to find clothes due to culturally-based differences in body shape could make salient other feelings of personal inadequacy (Kernis, Frankel, & Brockner, 1989) and could lead to lower body image and gradually to lower self-esteem.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant relationship between clothing availability and body image for the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Self-Esteem

Body esteem or body image is directly related to self-esteem. Secord and Jourard (1953), who constructed the classical Body Cathexis Scale measure, demonstrated that feelings about the body are commensurate with feelings about the self. More specifically, they suggested that negative feelings about the body are also associated with anxiety and with a feeling of insecurity about the self (Kowner, 2002). Self-esteem refers to an individual's sense of value or self-worth, or the extent to which people value, appreciate, or like themselves. Therefore, it is appropriate to assume that any factor that causes a negative change in the study abroad females' view of their body, will also cause an increase in insecurity about the self.

McGuire and Padawer-Singer (1976) suggest that whatever aspect of oneself is distinctive in relation to other people in any particular setting is prominent in one's thoughts about the self. American females studying in Japan may find their larger frame a distinctive characteristic and may constantly compare their size to Japanese female host nationals. For American females studying in Japan, the smaller Japanese size, however, may become an impossible benchmark on which to form opinions and make observations about their own size.

Although people are motivated to evaluate themselves against direct physical standards, negative information is threatening to a person's self-esteem. Therefore, not being able to fit into Japanese clothes due to differences in body shape and/or size, could be seen as a failure to the American female students in Japan and could adversely affect body image and self-esteem.

Several social psychologists have implicated self-esteem in models of social comparison processes (Wells & Marwell, 1976; Wylie, 1979), indicating that decreases in self-esteem could increase instances of social comparison. It has been found, however, that a negative comparison may be more likely to result in a significant impact upon self-esteem when it occurs in an area of a person's life which is important to him or her. Therefore, it is appropriate to assume that the female participants, who believed clothing to be important, may have been more susceptible to possible negative social comparisons resulting from a decreased self-esteem.

Past research also indicates that there is an established relationship between negative social comparison and psychological problems (Allen & Gilbert, 1995; Swallow & Kuiper, 1988). Clinical psychologists (e.g. Angyal, Horney, Sullivan, & Rogers) believe that self-esteem problems underlie neurosis and maladjustment. Cash, Winstead, and Janda (1986) also recognized that a negative body image is associated with lower levels of personal adjustment.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant relationship between body image and self-esteem for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Self-Efficacy

Previous research has found that self-esteem plays an important role in the formation of the psychological state, self-efficacy (Brown & Mankowski, 1993; Campbell, 1990; Dodgson & Wood, 1998; Kernis, Brockner, & Frankel, 1989; Moreland & Sweeney, 1984), one of the factors consistently found to influence international adjustment. Self-efficacy is the level of

confidence that individuals have in their ability to accomplish tasks (Bandura, 1986). In other words, efficacy judgment is less concerned with the skills and abilities an individual possesses. It considers what individuals believe they can do with whatever skills and abilities they may possess to be more important (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). High self-efficacy has been found to influence the international adjustment process, especially for female international students (Manese et al., 1988).

Individuals high in self-efficacy have been found to be more persistent in overcoming difficulties encountered in the pursuit of a goal. Research conducted by Sherer and Adams (1983) also provides indirect support for the application of self-efficacy in the study of cross-cultural adjustment. Although the Sherer-Adams study did not investigate adjustment to a new culture, it examined the relationship between self-efficacy and students' adjustment in their college environment (another point of interest in the present study). The findings indicated that students who rated themselves high on self-efficacy also believed themselves to be significantly better adjusted than students with low self-efficacy scores (Harrison et al., 1996).

Harrison et al. (1996) found expatriates high in self-efficacy to be better adjusted to their general environment, to interaction with host nationals, and to work roles than those low in self-efficacy. Therefore, self-efficacy may not only affect international students' perceptions about their abilities to perform successfully in the new host environment, but also their skills at relating effectively to host nationals (Gist, Stevens, & Bavetta, 1991). Therefore, we can assume that any negative influence on body-image may also negatively influence self-efficacy and increase the chance of maladjustment for the female sojourners.

Hypothesis 6: There will be a significant relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Social Support/Interaction

Body image also bears a relationship to psychosocial adjustments (e.g., eating disturbances, depression, and social anxiety) (Mecca, Smelser, & Vasconcellos, 1989; Mruk, 1995). Kowner (2002) found body image to correlate positively with self-esteem and negatively with social anxiety for both American and Japanese females. In other words, individuals who are dissatisfied with their appearance may not present themselves in situations where their bodies may be evaluated (Cox & Russell, 2003). Therefore, a decrease in self-esteem caused by the inability to find clothes could lead both American and Japanese females to avoid some social situations. Considerable empirical evidence shows that feelings of clothing deprivation have a significant relationship with lack of social confidence and low self-concepts (Edwards, 1971). Studies have shown that young Japanese females in particular tend to be overly concerned about their body weight and shape (Hsu, 1989) and extremely susceptible to social anxiety (Kowner, 2002). Consequently, not finding clothes to fit their frame could lead to a decrease in both body image and self-esteem and lead to less social involvement for Japanese females studying in the United States.

Social support supplies validation to the sojourner's self-esteem and self-image. Traveling abroad for educational purposes deprives the student sojourner of established support systems. This estrangement from friends and family can cause the very common feelings of loss and homesickness. If social support is available in the host country, however, sojourners feel supported and more in control (Church, 1982). Research has also revealed that sojourners who have little contact with host nationals report feeling more alienated and less well-adjusted than those who cultivate friends of the host nationality (Perrucci & Hu, 1995; Schram & Lauver, 1988). Social relations and adjustment reinforce each other, with improved social relations

easing adjustment, and greater adjustment freeing the student to enter more fully into social relations (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1960). It has been determined, however, that more social difficulty and greater adaptation problems are found in groups that make large rather than small cross-cultural transitions (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Parker & McEvoy, 1993).

Cultural novelty has also been found to determine an individual's ease in interacting in the new environment. Past research has found that the more culturally 'novel' the host country is from a person's home culture, the more difficult the adjustment will be for the sojourner (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Parker & McEvoy, 1993). Cultural distance can also relate to mental health indicators such as anxiety and medical consultations. In their 1982 study, Furnham and Bochner noted that differences in adaptation were reported in European, Middle Eastern, and Asian students in the United Kingdom, with the Middle Eastern and Asian groups having the highest levels of maladjustment, respectively. This same pattern was described by Ward and Kennedy (1993) in their study of Asian students in Singapore and New Zealand. Greater difficulties were experienced by the Asian students who relocated to New Zealand compared to those who relocated to the more culturally similar Singapore. Although Furnham and Tresize (1981) found no support for the link between cultural distance and psychological disturbances, they suggest that cultural distance may be related to abilities to negotiate social encounters in a new culture.

Although both relationships with others from one's home country and friendships with host country nationals have both predicted adjustment in many studies (Furnham, 1988), some researchers argue that relationships with host nationals are more effective in predicting at least some forms of sojourner adjustment (Furnham & Bochner, 1982). Because social support is

thought to act as a buffer against the psychological effects of stress, this lack of association with people of the host country could greatly affect the personal adjustment of the female students. Furnham and Bochner (1982) demonstrated, however, that cultural dissimilarity and social difficulty were significantly related. In other words, the more dissimilar the host culture is from the female's home culture, the more difficult social interaction may be for the female. Therefore, the differences in American and Japanese culture could make interaction with host nationals extremely difficult for the study abroad females.

Collectivist/Individualist Cultures

The United States and Japan are known to be individualist and collectivist cultures, respectively (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1989). Individualists give priority to personal goals over the goals of the group. Collectivists, on the other hand, either make no distinction between personal and collective goals, or if they do make sure distinctions, they subordinate their personal goals to the goals of the group (Triandis et al., 1988). Social networks differ between collectivist and individualist cultures. Markus and Kitayama's (1991) theory of self-construals helps explain the dichotomy between these two culture types. A basic premise of the Markus and Kitayama theory is that individuals vary widely in their construal of the relations between self and others. Individuals with a well-developed independent self-construal view themselves as relatively autonomous from their social context. Therefore, their self-concept is primarily defined by internal factors. By contrast, individuals with a well-developed interdependent self-construal view themselves as interconnected with their social context, and thus their self-concept is largely defined in relational terms (Abe, 2004). According to Markus and Kitayama, independent self-construal tends to be more characteristic of individuals in

Western cultures, whereas interdependent self-construals tend to be more characteristic of individuals in East Asian cultures.

An influential precursor to Markus and Kitayama, Triandis (1989) proposed that in collectivist cultures, individuals belong to a few, tight-knit in-groups and have intense relationships within those groups. The main goals of these individuals are to live up to social norms, roles, and obligations. Maintaining harmonious relationships with others is of utmost importance to individuals in collectivist cultures such as Japan. Americans, by contrast, belong to many in-groups where in-group membership is viewed as voluntary, and responsibilities and attachments to most others within those groups are less intense than they are in collectivist cultures. Individualistic, western cultures tend to breed individuals who are more concerned with emphasizing their own unique qualities and abilities.

Students who make cross-cultural transitions are generally expected to conform to the normative values, attitudes and behaviors of their host countries. If these prescribed commitments are inconsistent or incompatible with those of their cultures of origin, adjustment could prove to be a very demanding and difficult process. The anxieties associated with immersing oneself in the social environment of the host culture may cause many sojourners to form enclaves of fellow nationals (Church, 1982). Research suggests that Asian students, in particular, prefer the cultural values and practices of their own nationality (Sodowsky & Plake, 1992) and are particularly inclined to form close relationships with conationals (Abe & Zane, 1990). It is possible that the Japanese female students visiting the United States may feel uncomfortable with Americans' apparently superficial friendships and become reluctant to make host national friends. Perkins, Perkins, Guglielmino, and Reiff (1977) found social isolation to be a major problem with Asian college students, due to the great disparity of lifestyles between

the two cultures. It has also been found that Asian exchange students are unsure of how to react to the independent, competitive nature of typical American students (Ojano Sheehan & Pearson, 1995). Several anthropologists and psychiatrists claim that many Japanese suffer maladjustment in a foreign environment (Inamura, 1980), and that the Japanese suffer greater culture shock compared with people from other countries (Nakane, 1972; Ueda, 1982). Okazaki-Luff (1991), however, found no empirical support for this claim. Instead, she claims that Japanese sojourners are prone to certain types of adjustment problems. Two such problems are concern with communication and lack of friendships with host nationals.

American females may find it difficult to penetrate the stable Japanese social group. According to Gudykunst and Nishida (1986), there is more intimacy with acquaintances, coworkers, colleagues, best friends, and close friends in Japan than in the United States. Also, in order to understand Japanese social behavior, an individual must be able to distinguish between the relationships with benefactors, true friends, coworkers, acquaintances, and outsiders. The determinants of the social behavior shift depending on this classification (Atsumi, 1980). Therefore, understanding and living up to the social norms of Japanese culture could be an extremely difficult process for the American female student.

Socially alienated students may feel powerless and meaningless, and their academic and personal goals may be seriously affected by the lack of connection with host nationals. Social anxiety, caused by physical insecurities and the novelty of both host cultures, could inhibit positive social interaction with host nationals and therefore, overall adjustment for both groups of study abroad females. Self-efficacy and social support each influence the ease in which student sojourners adapt to their host environment. Any situation or stimuli that impinge on one

or both of these factors could have a detrimental effect on students' adjustment into their host country.

Hypothesis 7: There will be a significant relationship between self-esteem and social support for both the American and Japanese female exchange students.

Adjustment

Culture shock is a very common occurrence for students traveling overseas for educational purposes. Although all college students deal with academic stress and issues stemming from normal development, international students experience added difficulty (Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002). Differences experienced in climate, food, living conditions, social values, ways of behaving, styles of learning, and modes of communication can be very stressful for international students (Westwood & Barker, 1990). International students also face the challenge of learning to function in an alien environment with marginal language skills.

Past research has determined that once an individual has arrived in a foreign culture, there is usually a short "honeymoon" phase before the "adjustment" phase (Adler, 1986). During the "honeymoon" phase (which usually occurs within the first 1-2 months of arrival), the individual is still fascinated by all the new and exciting aspects of the host culture. After the honeymoon phase, variables that reduce uncertainty after arrival will facilitate adjustment, while variables that increase uncertainty after arrival will inhibit adjustment (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Evidence also indicates that adjustment increases with time (Hawes & Kealey, 1981). As much as possible, the survey portion of this study was conducted after the "honeymoon" phase in order to determine whether clothing availability may facilitate adjustment, as indicated by a significant relationship between these two variables.

Hypothesis 8: There will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and adjustment for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Hypothesis 9: There will be a significant relationship between social support/interaction and adjustment for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

After an extensive review of literature on the subject of intercultural adjustment, it is believed that the following model may appropriately illustrate possible relationships between clothing availability, satisfaction with fit sites, body image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social support, and adjustment (as measured by adjustment strain). It is projected that clothing availability will relate positively with both satisfaction with fit and body image for both samples. A positive correlation between body image and self-esteem is expected for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Likewise, self-esteem is expected to relate positively with self-efficacy and social support. Self-efficacy and social support, however, are expected to relate negatively to adjustment strain, with higher levels of self-efficacy and social support lessening the adjustment strain experienced by the study abroad females.

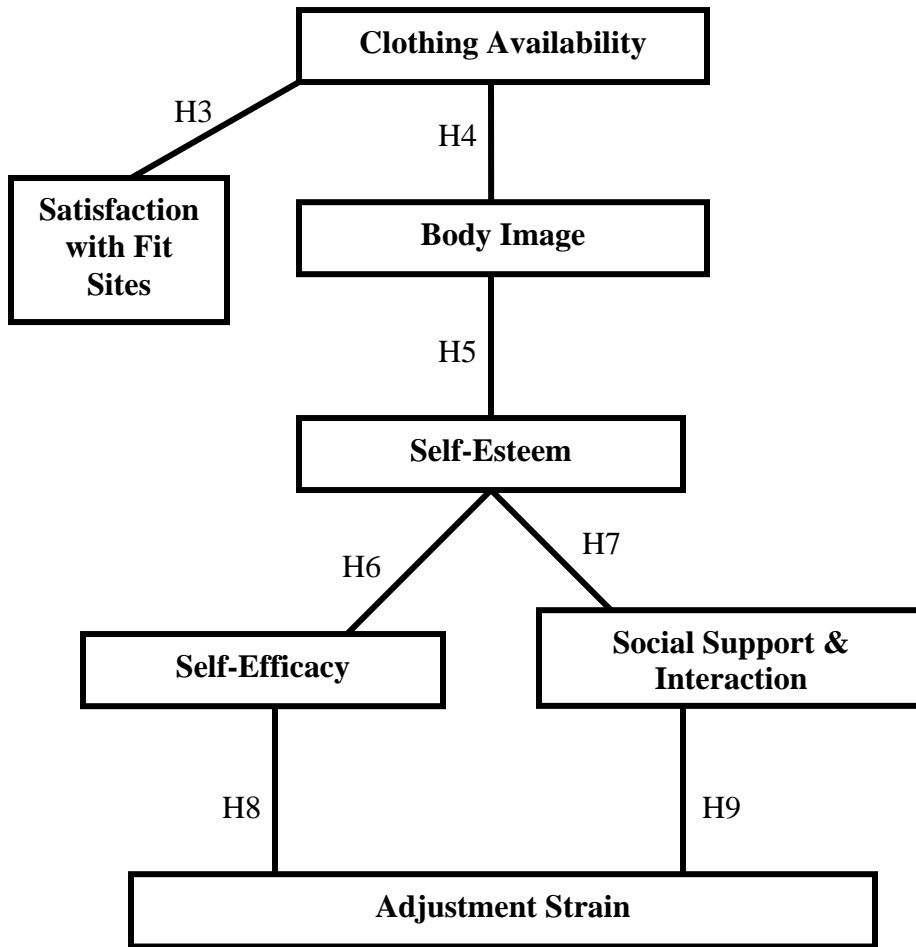


Figure 2-2. Proposed Relationships

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology used in conducting this study and includes operational definitions, a description of the instrument, and a description of the sample. This chapter concludes with information regarding data collection.

Operational Definitions

1. Clothing Availability (Q1 – Q6) – Degree to which clothing was readily available for purchase for each female sojourner in their respective host country. Each participant was asked questions regarding their individual shopping experience and shopping satisfaction. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to determine the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed with the statements asked [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree].
2. Adjustment (Q7 – Q27) – The degree of a person’s psychological comfort with various aspects of a new setting (Black, 1988). Adjustment was measured using the International Student Adjustment Strain [ISAS] scale. Participants were asked to indicate on a six-point scale [0=No Strain, 5=Very Much Strain] their perceived amount of strain relating to five areas of adjustment. Greater adjustment is indicated by lower levels of adjustment strain. Likewise, higher levels of adjustment strain indicate lower levels of adjustment.
3. Body-Cathexis (Q28 – Q38) – Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the physical body in whole or in part (Horn & Gurel, 1981). The participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert-type scale [1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied] their degree of satisfaction with various body features.

4. Body Image (Q39– Q51) – The totality of “perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and personal reactions of the–individual in relation to his own body” (Kolb, 1959, p.751). Overall body image was measured using the Body-cathexis scale with higher numbers indicating a higher body image [1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied].
5. Clothing Involvement (Q52 – Q57) – Women’s perceived relevance of clothing based on inherent needs, values, and interests (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert Scale [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree] the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements asked.
6. Self-Esteem (Q58 – Q68) – An individual’s sense of value or self-worth, or the extent to which people value, appreciate, or like themselves (Lane et al., 2004). Rosenberg’s Self-esteem scale was utilized to measure self-esteem. Participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree] how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements asked.
7. Self-Efficacy (Q69 – Q79) – the level of confidence that individuals have in their ability to accomplish tasks (Bandura, 1986). The respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree] the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements asked.

Description of the Instrument

The research instrument was developed to collect the necessary data for each variable of interest. Eight, pre-tested scales were used in the final instrument to measure each of their respective variables. Each section was formulated using variables researched extensively by other psychologists and international study researchers. Data collected during the focus group sessions were used to construct the clothing availability scale.

Clothing Availability (Q1 – Q6) The first section of the questionnaire consisted of six questions developed specifically for use in this study. In order to measure the degree to which Japanese and American female exchange students' struggle to find clothing in their respective host countries, the participants were asked questions regarding their individual shopping experience and shopping satisfaction. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to determine the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed with the statements asked [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree].

International Student Adjustment Strain [ISAS] Scale (Q7 – Q27) The second section of the questionnaire measured the overall adjustment of the female exchange students. The ISAS scale consists of 38 items that assess participants' perceptions of strain relating to six areas of adjustment. These are (a) Education – strains related to schooling, (b) English – difficulties associated with the English language, (c) Problem – global concerns such as health or diet, (d) Personal – problematic personal concerns, e.g., homesickness, (e) Social – dating and relationship issues, and (f) Host – issues related to host family. Not all of the survey participants in this study were living with a host family. Therefore, questions on the ISAS relating to this factor were dropped. Based on pre-test results, the four questions with the highest reliabilities from the remaining five sections were kept. Therefore, the final ISAS scale adapted for use in this study contained 20 items. Also, for the American sample, the word “English” was replaced with “Japanese” in order to measure the strain the American females associated with the Japanese language. Each item in the test is scored on a six-point scale [0=No Strain, 5=Very Much Strain] scale. The total score possible on the adjusted scale used in this study was 100. The higher the score, the greater the adjustment strain experienced. Crano and Crano (1993) reported strong internal consistency for the instrument with an alpha coefficient of .90.

Body Cathexis (Q28 – Q38) Section three of the questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate on a 5-point Likert-type scale their degree of satisfaction [1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied] with various body features. The body features/sites were selected based on information gathered during the focus group sessions. Ten specific body sites were selected from a scale used by LaBat and Delong (1990).

Satisfaction with Specific Fit Sites (Q39 – Q51) In order to determine which articles of clothing were the most difficult to find for the females in their respective host countries, the fourth section of the questionnaire ascertained to what degree the respondents were satisfied with fit at eighteen specific body sites. This scale, which was developed and validated by LaBat and Delong in 1990, was also a 5-point Likert-type scale [1=Very Dissatisfied, 5=Very Satisfied]. Based on pre-test results, twelve questions were selected for use in the final instrument.

Clothing Involvement (Q52 – Q57) The fifth section of the questionnaire used five items from the Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) developed by Zaichkowsky (1985). Only 5 out of 20 items were selected for two reasons: (a) past research indicated that all of the items do not have to be included for the clothing involvement measure (Fairhurst, Good, & Gentry, 1989; Kang-Park, 1991; Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1991), and (b) some of the adjectives were not appropriate for the description of “clothing” (e.g. “essential...nonessential” or “wanted...unwanted”).

Self-Esteem (Q58 – Q68) The sixth section of the questionnaire measured self-esteem using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, a widely used and well-validated (test-retest correlations are typically in the range of .82 to .88) 10-item measure of global self-esteem. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree].

Self-Efficacy (Q69 – Q79) The seventh section of the questionnaire measured the self-efficacy of the participants. This assessment of self-efficacy measured generalized self-efficacy

expectations dependent on past experiences and on tendencies to attribute success to skill as opposed to chance (Sherer & Maddux, 1982). The respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert-type scale [1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree] the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements asked. Because of the high internal consistency of the General self-efficacy scale, several questions were omitted due to time and spatial concerns. Of the total 17 questions, only the 10 with the highest factor loadings were used in this study.

Social Support (Q80 – Q84) Social support was measured using questions adapted from Cross' 1995 study on cross-cultural adaptation. These questions addressed aspects of the female exchange students' relationships with co-nationals and host nationals. A measure of satisfaction was created by having the participants answer statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale [1=Not at all Satisfied, 5=Very Satisfied].

Demographics and Physical Characteristics The final part of the questionnaire asked the respondents several questions related to demographic characteristics and questions regarding weight, dress size, shopping behavior, and exercise frequency.

Description of the Sample

This study is based upon a sample survey of approximately 100 American female and 100 Japanese female exchange students. The American female sample was gathered through contacts at universities throughout Japan. The Japanese female sample consisted of students studying abroad at universities throughout the United States.

Procedure

Five stages were used for the development of the instrument, they include: (a) Institutional Review Board Approval, (b) informal interviews, (c) questionnaire development, (d) pretest, and (e) final administration.

Before beginning the research process, applications were submitted to the Institutional Review Board at the University of Georgia in order to be approved for the use of human subjects. After approval was granted, focus group participants were gathered for informal interviews. In the spring of 2004, two focus group sessions, one with a Japanese sample and one with an American sample, were held. One focus group was conducted with a convenience sample of Japanese female exchange students studying at the University of Georgia. This group consisted of six females ranging in age from 19-26. Likewise, American females, who had previously studied abroad in Japan, were asked to participate in a focus group session. Only two American females agreed to participate in the discussion of the shopping experiences that each had while studying abroad in Japan. The focus group with the American sample was held in two parts, due to scheduling difficulties with the participants. Each volunteer received a \$10 gift certificate from the University of Georgia bookstore as a token of appreciation.

Each focus group provided important insights and opinions on clothing and its importance in the emotional adjustment of exchange students. By using both focus groups and surveys, the proposed methodology sought to minimize the number and types of assumptions that must be made regarding this study. By using a mixed methodology, focus group participants were probed for in-depth answers, decreasing many of the potential problems associated with other methodologies. Focus group discussions also allowed the researchers to follow topics of importance to the participants, which may not have been apparent until stated by the participants. For instance, specific sizing problems were discussed. The focus group participants not only named specific garments that were difficult to buy in the host country, but also the exact reasons why these particular garments did not fit their respective body types. The focus group participants were also asked questions pertaining to social pressures and whether or not the

pressures to dress nicely in the host country are different from those experienced in the home country. These in-depth discussions allowed for richer, more grounded results, which eventually led to the formation of a more valid survey/questionnaire.

A pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted in the fall of 2004 with a sample of Chinese exchange students studying at the University of Georgia. The pre-test was used to determine the validity of the instrument. It helped determine whether the questions were clear and easily understood and also gave an indication of the approximate time needed for completion of the questionnaire.

Participation in the final survey was voluntary and was targeted at 100 female Japanese exchange students in the United States and roughly 100 female American students in Japan. Japanese female students were identified as follows. Working with the Office of International Education and the Japanese Department at the University of Georgia, a list of Japanese female students studying at the University of Georgia was compiled. The students were sent an e-mail message serving as the cover letter, describing the study with a request for their participation. Japanese student organizations throughout the United States also were contacted by e-mail with a request for the participation of their female members. In the end, student organizations from seven universities (Washington State University, University of San Diego, University of Minnesota, University of Nevada, Oklahoma State University, University of Mississippi, and the University of New York) volunteered to participate.

The American female sample was gathered from five Japanese universities (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Waseda University, Nagoya University, Sophia University, Gifu University) and the Tokyo American Club. Permission was granted to place a copy of the survey in the mailboxes of the American female students studying at each university, along with

a description of the study, and a request for their participation. After completion, the questionnaires were returned to a designated mailbox located at each university by a certain date and time. The universities then collected the surveys and mailed them back to the primary researcher using a self-addressed, stamped envelope provided for this purpose. The Tokyo American Club volunteered to pass out surveys to the club members who fit the profile of the target sample. Throughout several weeks, the Tokyo American Club collected the surveys and then returned the surveys to the primary researcher using a provided self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The surveys were disseminated approximately two months after fall classes had begun in each country in an attempt to miss the honeymoon phase. Instead, this study wanted to determine if the inability to find clothing led to an increased level of uncertainty and therefore, was an inhibiting factor in the adjustment process for the female students. In the fall of 2004, 120 questionnaires were mailed to Japanese student associations across the United States. During the same time period, a total of 98 surveys were sent to five universities and one international club located in Japan. Of the 120 surveys sent to Japanese females in the United States, sixty-seven usable surveys were returned. A total of fifty-seven usable surveys were gathered from the possible 98 sent to American females studying in Japan. The overall return rate for both samples equaled 56.9%.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter includes a description of the survey participants and measures of reliability for each scale used in the final survey. Results from independent samples t-tests, principle components factor analysis, and bivariate correlations are also included. This chapter concludes with an overview of the original hypotheses and statements indicating whether or not these hypotheses were rejected or accepted.

Demographic Characteristics

A summary of demographic information is shown in Table 4-1. Data were gathered from a total of 57 American female exchange students and 67 Japanese females exchange students. Frequency and mean analyses were utilized for each demographic variable. Ages of the respondents ranged from 19 to 25. The American sample averaged slightly older than the Japanese sample. The length of time spent in the host country averaged much higher for the Japanese females studying in the United States. Over 50% of the Japanese sample had lived in the United States for over two years, and only 2% of the Japanese respondents had lived in the United States between one and six months. Twenty-three (40.4%) of the American respondents had lived in Japan six months or less. For 68.7% of the Japanese females, the current study abroad experience was the first time to visit the United States. Half of the American sample, however, had been to Japan previously. The majority of both samples (American=73.7%, Japanese=80.6%) spend less than \$200 per month in their respective host countries on clothing, accessories, jewelry, and shoes. Both samples agreed that they spend less money on these items

Table 4-1.

Demographic Characteristics of the American and Japanese Samples

Variables	American (n=57)	Japanese (n=67)
<i>Age (in years)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i> 22.4 (1.89)	<i>M (SD)</i> 21.66 (1.68)
	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
<i>Length of time spent in host country</i>		
1 – 6 months	23 (40.4)	2 (3.0)
7 months – 1 yr	8 (14)	11 (16.4)
1.1 – 2 yrs	14 (24.6)	18 (26.9)
Over 2 yrs	12 (21.1)	36 (53.7)
	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
<i>First experience in host country</i>		
Yes	28 (49.9)	46 (68.7)
No	29 (50.1)	21 (31.3)
	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
<i>Monthly expenses on clothing, accessories, jewelry, shoes, etc. in host country</i>		
Less than \$200	42 (73.7)	54 (80.6)
\$201 - \$300	12 (21.1)	6 (9.0)
\$301 - \$400	2 (3.5)	6 (9.0)
\$401 - \$500	1 (1.8)	1 (1.5)
More than \$500	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	<u>n (%)</u>	<u>n (%)</u>
<i>Do you spend more or less money on the above items since arriving in host country?</i>		
More	21 (36.8)	13 (19.4)
Less	25 (43.9)	46 (68.7)
Same Amount	11 (19.3)	8 (11.9)

since arriving in their respective host countries.

Reliability of Measures

Using Cronbach's alpha, internal reliability of each scale was examined separately for the American and Japanese samples. Table 4-2 shows Cronbach's alpha coefficients of each scale for both samples. All eight scales demonstrated high internal consistency.

Table 4-2.

Reliabilities

Scale	American (n=57)	Japanese (n=67)
Clothing Availability	.74	.66
Clothing Involvement	.92	.92
Body-Cathexis	.88	.89
Satisfaction with Fit Sites	.87	.89
Self-Esteem	.88	.85
Self-Efficacy	.85	.78
Social Support	.78	.83
Adjustment	.88	.89

Independent Samples T-test

Prior to testing the relationships between variables, it was necessary to determine whether the American and Japanese samples differed in regards to the eight variables in question. The variables were grouped according to culture and were compared using independent samples t-tests. As seen in Table 4-3, at alpha level .05, the two samples differed significantly in regards to clothing availability, body-cathexis, satisfaction with fit sites, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and

Table 4-3.

Descriptive Statistics for the American and Japanese Samples

Variables	Range of Possible Scores	American M (SD)	Japanese M (SD)	t
Clothing Availability	6 to 30	16.30 (5.38)	19.52 (4.48)	-3.59**
Clothing Involvement	5 to 25	19.68 (4.47)	20.96 (4.26)	-1.61
Body-Cathexis	10 to 50	31.77 (8.44)	24.04 (7.59)	5.32**
Satisfaction with Fit Sites	12 to 60	30.30 (8.85)	33.61 (7.80)	-2.19*
Self-Esteem	10 to 50	39.96 (7.16)	32.47 (7.20)	5.77**
Self-Efficacy	10 to 50	38.89 (6.22)	34.33 (5.73)	4.22**
Social Support	4 to 20	15.80 (3.27)	14.73 (3.37)	1.79
Adjustment	0 to 100	33.65 (16.34)	46.79 (16.41)	-4.46**

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

adjustment strain. At alpha level .05, the American and Japanese female study abroad students were not significantly different in regards to clothing involvement and social support.

T-test results indicate that the American and Japanese samples differ in six out of eight variables.

Therefore, the two groups were analyzed separately.

Factors of Adjustment

Principle components factor analysis with varimax rotation was employed to capture the underlying themes of adjustment for both the American and Japanese samples. Because the ISAS scale was originally constructed to measure intercultural adjustment for student sojourners within the United States, principle components factor analysis was used to determine whether the ISAS scale is also a valid measure of adjustment for American females studying abroad (see Table 4-4). For the American sample, using factors with an eigenvalue greater than one resulted in the emergence of seven factors. Therefore, five factors were extracted. After forcing the extraction, the five factors of each group were found to correspond to the five sub-scales in the ISAS scale. Two items in the personal sub-scale and two items in the education sub-scale did not load. Therefore, these four items were removed. For the Japanese sample, factors with an eigenvalue greater than one were used for further analysis. Five factors emerged according to the five ISAS subscales, indicating validity. Only one item in the social sub-scale did not load and was therefore removed.

After the removal of the five total factors that did not load for both the American and Japanese female samples, the ISAS scale was reduced to 15 items with a total possible range of 0 to 75. Factor one, Language, included four items relating to language difficulties. Factor two, Education, included two items concerned with the educational experience of the study abroad females in their host college. Factor three, Problem, included four items relating to health and diet concerns. The fourth factor, Personal, included two items relating to personal concerns such as homesickness, loneliness, and depression. The final factor, Social, included three items concerned with social interaction. For the Japanese sample, the five factors explained 67.54% of the total variance. For the American sample, the five factors explained 64.77% of the total

variance. Although the ISAS scale did not explain as much variance for the American sample, it can still be considered a valid measure of adjustment for American females studying abroad.

Table 4-4.

Factor Loadings of Adjustment Subscales for American and Japanese Samples

Factor/Factor items	Factor loadings	
	American	Japanese
Factor 1: Language		
I am troubled when I attend lectures in English/Japanese	.632	.785
Not being able to understand slang phrases in English/Japanese troubles me	.546	.800
My limited vocabulary troubles me	.749	.824
Knowing that I need help with English/Japanese troubles me	.651	.803
Factor 2: Education		
Feeling uninterested in the college I am attending troubles me	.659	.714
My concerns with grades in school trouble me	.822	.483
The fact that education in my host country is not what I expected troubles me	-	-
Relationships between teachers and students in my host country troubles me	-	-
Factor 3: Problem		
The differences between the food of my host and home country troubles me	.803	.710
Dietary problems trouble me	.891	.795
Rapidly losing or gaining weight troubles me	.874	.712
Concern that my health is deteriorating troubles me	.573	.659
Factor 4: Personal		
Being lonely troubles me	-	-
Difficulty in making new friends in my host country troubles me	-	-
Feelings of homesickness trouble me	.682	.737
Frequently crying or feeling depressed troubles me	.758	.490
Factor 5: Social		
The relationships between men and women troubles me	.861	.795
The dating practices of people in my host country trouble me	.825	.868
Not feeling at ease among groups of people troubles me	-	-
Confusion that I have about the morals in my host country troubles me	.606	.517

In order to determine which factors accounted for the differences in adjustment between the American and Japanese samples, independent samples t-tests were computed on each of the

adjusted ISAS sub-scales and the total ISAS score. Table 4-5 shows significant differences in the total and subscale adjustment strain scores between the American and Japanese samples. Specifically, the Japanese females had a more difficult time adapting to life in the United States than the American had adapting to life in Japan. For the Japanese participants, overall mean scores on the ISAS were 35.99 (SD = 13.31). In contrast, American participants had an ISAS mean score of 23.97 (SD = 13.18). Given that 75 (indicating greater adjustment difficulty) was the highest score possible on the revised scale, neither group experienced extreme strain in adjusting to life in their respective host countries.

Table 4-5.

American and Japanese ISAS Scores

ISAS scale	Range of Possible Scores	American M (SD)	Japanese M (SD)	t
Total ISAS	0 to 75	23.97 (13.18)	35.99 (13.31)	-5.04**
Language	0 to 20	8.21 (4.92)	11.09 (5.00)	-3.22**
Education	0 to 10	2.65 (2.60)	4.30 (2.60)	-3.52**
Problem	0 to 20	5.21 (5.20)	10.75 (5.30)	-5.86**
Personal	0 to 10	2.84 (2.55)	3.52 (2.46)	-1.51
Social	0 to 15	5.02 (3.73)	6.33 (3.30)	-2.00*

Note. ISAS – International Student Adjustment Strain

*p<.05, **p<.01

American females scored lower on all five ISAS sub-scales, indicating better adjustment (or less adjustment strain) in each domain. The only domain in which the two samples were not significantly different was personal adjustment concerns. Therefore, both the American and

Japanese female study abroad students adapted similarly in regards to feelings of loneliness, difficulty in making friends, feelings of homesickness, and feelings of depression. The American study abroad females were generally more satisfied with their support system in Japan (see Appendix E). Over 82% of the American sample were neutral, satisfied, or very satisfied with the relationships they formed with Japanese host nationals. Only 72% of the Japanese females were satisfied with these relationships. Both samples were equally satisfied (89.5%) with their relationships with co-nationals in their respective host countries.

Correlations

Due to the small sample size resulting from the separation of the two samples, it was impossible to determine cause and affect relationships between the variables. Therefore, bivariate correlations were used to determine whether relationships between variables existed for both the American and Japanese samples separately. The nature and size of the relationships between variables were measured using a Pearson correlation coefficient (symbolized by r) and a significance value. The Pearson correlation coefficient is a measure of linear association between two variables. The range of possible values is from -1.00 for a perfect negative correlation to +1.00 for a perfect positive correlation. The closer the coefficient is to either +1.00 or -1.00, the higher or stronger the correlation is; the closer the coefficient is to zero, the lower or weaker the correlation. If the significance level is very small (less than 0.05) then the correlation is significant and the two variables are linearly related. For this study, only correlations with significance levels less than or equal to 0.02 were being considered.

As seen in Tables 4-6 and 4-7, there are several strong relationships common to both samples. These correlations include the relationships between self-esteem and adjustment strain,

Table 4-6.

Correlations for American Sample

	Clothing Availability	Satisfaction with Fit Sites	Body-Cathexis	Self-Esteem	Self-Efficacy	Social Support	Adjustment
Clothing Availability	-	.412**	.204	-.349**	-.052	-.185	-.071
Satisfaction with Fit Sites		-	.180	-.174	-.114	-.108	-.059
Body-Cathexis			-	.146	.228	.088	-.336*
Self-Esteem				-	.647**	.442**	-.646**
Self-Efficacy					-	.359**	-.422**
Social Support						-	-.386**
Adjustment							-

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

Table 4-7.

Correlations for Japanese Sample

	Clothing Availability	Satisfaction with Fit Sites	Body-Cathexis	Self-Esteem	Self-Efficacy	Social Support	Adjustment
Clothing Availability	-	.386**	.015	.315**	.231	.097	.178
Satisfaction with Fit Sites		-	.244*	.211	.430**	.145	.188
Body-Cathexis			-	.471**	.144	.371**	.178
Self-Esteem				-	.311*	.513**	-.543**
Self-Efficacy					-	.266*	-.379**
Social Support						-	-.338**
Adjustment							-

Note. *p<.05, **<.01

self-esteem and social support, and self-efficacy and adjustment. Pearson correlations of $-.646$ ($p = .000$) and $-.543$ ($p = .000$) were found between self-esteem and adjustment strain for both the American and Japanese samples, respectively. A direct relationship between self-esteem and social support was also found between the American ($r = .442$, $p = .001$) and Japanese ($r = .513$, $p = .000$) samples. Relationships between self-efficacy and adjustment strain were also found for both samples. Pearson correlations of $-.422$ ($p = .001$) and $-.379$ ($p = .002$) between self-efficacy and adjustment strain were found for the American and Japanese samples, respectively.

Other relationships common to both samples include correlations between self-esteem and self-efficacy and social support and adjustment. Although the relationship seems slightly stronger for the American sample, there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy for both the American ($r = .647$, $p = .000$) and the Japanese ($r = .311$, $p = .01$) samples. Pearson correlations of $-.386$ ($p = .003$) and $-.338$ ($p = .005$) were found between social support and adjustment for the American and Japanese samples, respectively. Clothing availability was significantly related to satisfaction with fit sites for both samples ($p = .001$). Relationships between clothing availability and self-esteem were also found for both the American and Japanese samples. Clothing availability was negatively related to self-esteem for the American sample but positively related to self-esteem for the Japanese sample.

A strong correlation was found between body-image and self-esteem for the Japanese sample ($r = .471$, $p = .000$). No linear relationship was found between these two variables for the American sample. Similarly, body-image was positively correlated with social support ($r = .371$, $p = .002$) for the Japanese study abroad females, whereas no such relationship was found with the American sample. A Pearson correlation of $-.336$ ($p = .011$) was found between body image and adjustment for the American sample.

Satisfaction with Fit Sites

In general, the American female study abroad students had more difficulty in finding clothing to fit their body shapes (see Table 4-3). The American female sample scored lower than the Japanese female sample in nine out of the twelve fit sites. In order to determine where significant differences existed between the American and Japanese female samples in regards to satisfaction with fit sites, independent samples t-tests were run for each of the twelve items (see Table 4-8). Significant differences were found between the two samples for five fit sites: thigh, buttocks, hips, waist, and abdomen. The American female sample scored significantly lower than the Japanese female sample for each of these five fit sites. Specifically, American females were dissatisfied with the fit of clothing in the thigh, buttocks, hip, and waist areas. Although not significantly lower than the American female sample, Japanese females tended to be dissatisfied with the length of pants available in the United States. They were also slightly disappointed with crotch length in pants.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference between the American and Japanese female study abroad students in regards to clothing availability.

T-test results indicated that the two samples did significantly differ in regards to clothing availability. Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference between the American and Japanese female study abroad students in regards to satisfaction with fit sites.

T-test results indicated that the two samples did significantly differ in regards to satisfaction with fit sites. Therefore, the second hypothesis was supported.

Table 4-8.

Satisfaction with Fit Sites for American and Japanese Samples

Fit Site	American (n=57) <i>M (SD)</i>	Japanese (n=67) <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t</i>
Pant length	2.39 (1.28)	2.06 (1.15)	1.50
Crotch length	2.47 (1.18)	2.57 (0.96)	-4.87
Thigh	1.96 (1.02)	2.90 (1.00)	-5.11**
Buttocks	2.07 (1.03)	2.91 (.90)	-4.79**
Hips	2.12 (1.90)	2.81 (0.96)	-3.68**
Sleeve length	2.98 (1.20)	2.91 (1.10)	.355
Waist length	2.60 (1.07)	2.94 (0.97)	-1.88
Waist	2.49 (1.07)	3.00 (0.97)	-2.75**
Abdomen	2.47 (1.10)	2.91 (0.81)	-2.47*
Bust	2.65 (1.34)	2.72 (1.00)	-.320
Shoulder	2.82 (1.20)	2.87 (0.92)	-.216
Lower Arm	3.26 (1.23)	3.03 (1.02)	1.16

Note. Mean scores range from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*).

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant relationship between clothing availability and satisfaction with fit sites for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated that there was a significant relationship between clothing availability and satisfaction with fit sites ($p = .001$) for both samples. Therefore, the third hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant relationship between clothing availability and body image for the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson Correlation coefficients indicated that there was no significant relationship between clothing availability and body image for either sample. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant relationship between body image and self-esteem for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated that there is a significant relationship ($p = .000$) between body image and self-esteem for the Japanese sample. However, there was no significant relationship found between these two variables for the American sample. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 6: There will be a significant relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 7: There will be a significant relationship between self-esteem and social support for both the American and Japanese female exchange students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 8: There will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and adjustment strain for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the eight hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 9: There will be a significant relationship between social support/interaction and adjustment strain for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the ninth hypothesis was supported.

Summary

In summary, the results in this chapter indicate that American and Japanese female study abroad students differ in regards to clothing availability, body-cathexis, satisfaction with fit sites, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and adjustment. The two samples, however, were not significantly different in regards to clothing involvement and social support. Overall, the American sample had higher body-image, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social support than the Japanese sample. The American study abroad students also had more difficulty in finding clothing in the host country and were less satisfied with the fit of clothing available in Japan.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a summary of the data results and provides possible justification for these findings. Revised models for both the American and Japanese samples are included in this chapter. Chapter five ends with implications and limitations of the current study.

Analysis of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference between the American and Japanese female study abroad students in regards to clothing availability.

T-test results indicated that the American sample was significantly more dissatisfied with the level of clothing availability in Japan. Therefore, the first hypothesis was **supported**. The survey results mirrored the conclusions gathered in the focus group sessions. It does appear as though American study abroad female students living in Japan may be limited in their clothing choice. The Japanese sample was significantly more satisfied with clothing available for purchase in the United States.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference between the American and Japanese female study abroad students in regards to satisfaction with fit sites.

T-test results indicated that the American sample was significantly more dissatisfied with the fit of clothing available in Japan. Therefore, the second hypothesis was **supported**. Because of the difficulties the American female students encountered while shopping for clothing in their host country, it is understandable that the American sample would be more dissatisfied with the fit of clothing available. The Japanese female sample, on the other hand, was significantly more

satisfied with both the level of clothing availability and the fit of the clothing available in the United States.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant relationship between clothing availability and satisfaction with fit sites for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated that there was a significant relationship between clothing availability and satisfaction with fit sites for both samples. Therefore, the third hypothesis was **supported**. For both samples, the inability to find clothing in the host country was highly correlated to the level of satisfaction with the fit of clothing available in the host country (see Figures 5-1 and 5-2). Although the relationship between these two variables was strong for both samples, the correlation was found to be slightly stronger in the American female sample.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant relationship between clothing availability and body image for the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson Correlation coefficients indicated that there was no significant relationship between clothing availability and body image for either sample (see Figures 5-1 and 5-2). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was **rejected**. In both the American and Japanese female samples, it appeared as though clothing had no direct relationship with body-evaluation. Several explanations can be used to explicate the lack of a significant relationship between clothing availability and body image. It is possible that both the American and Japanese study abroad females engaged in minimal comparison with the host females of their respective host countries. Therefore, the females did not base their own self-evaluations on comparisons with the host norm. It is also possible that although clothing was perceived as important for both female samples, its

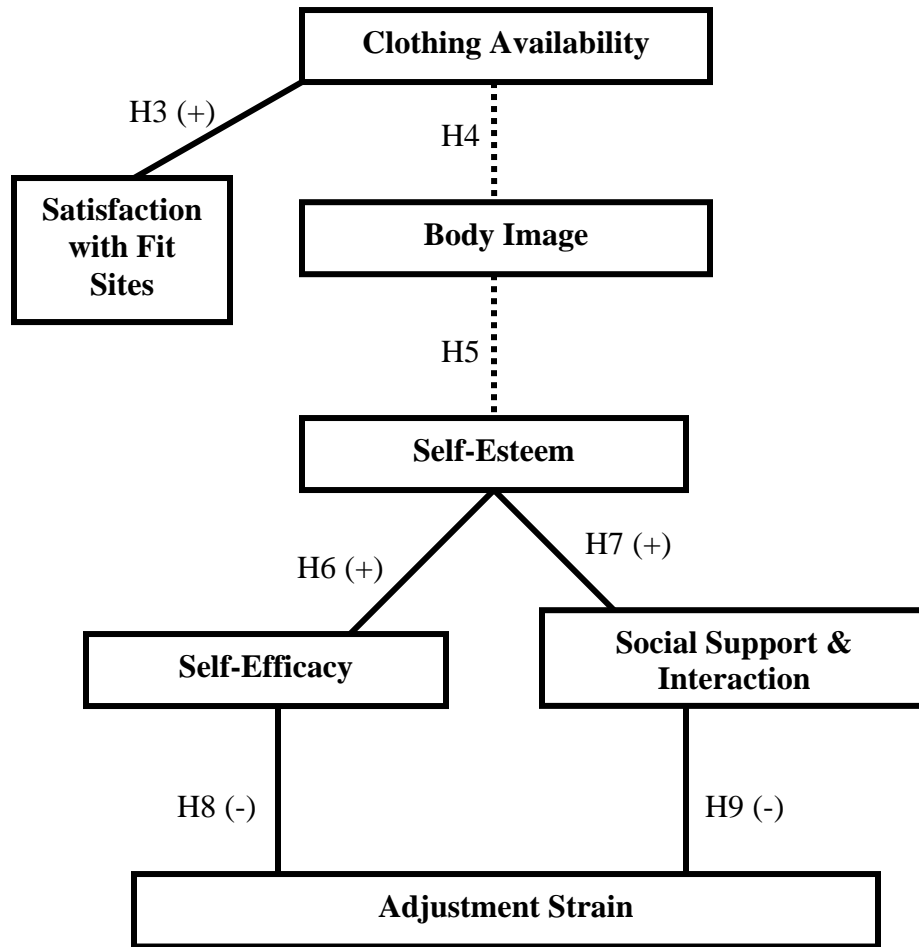


Figure 5-1. *Relationships for American Sample*

Note. Dashed line indicates no relationship

availability had no impact on the females' view of their own bodies. Both the American and Japanese female study abroad students may perceive clothing as a basic need, and therefore important, but not a factor on which to make judgments about one's own body. It is also possible that the length of the study abroad experience could have caused this non-relationship. On average, the American female study abroad students had lived in Japan for one year or less. It is possible that these females packed enough clothing for their relatively short

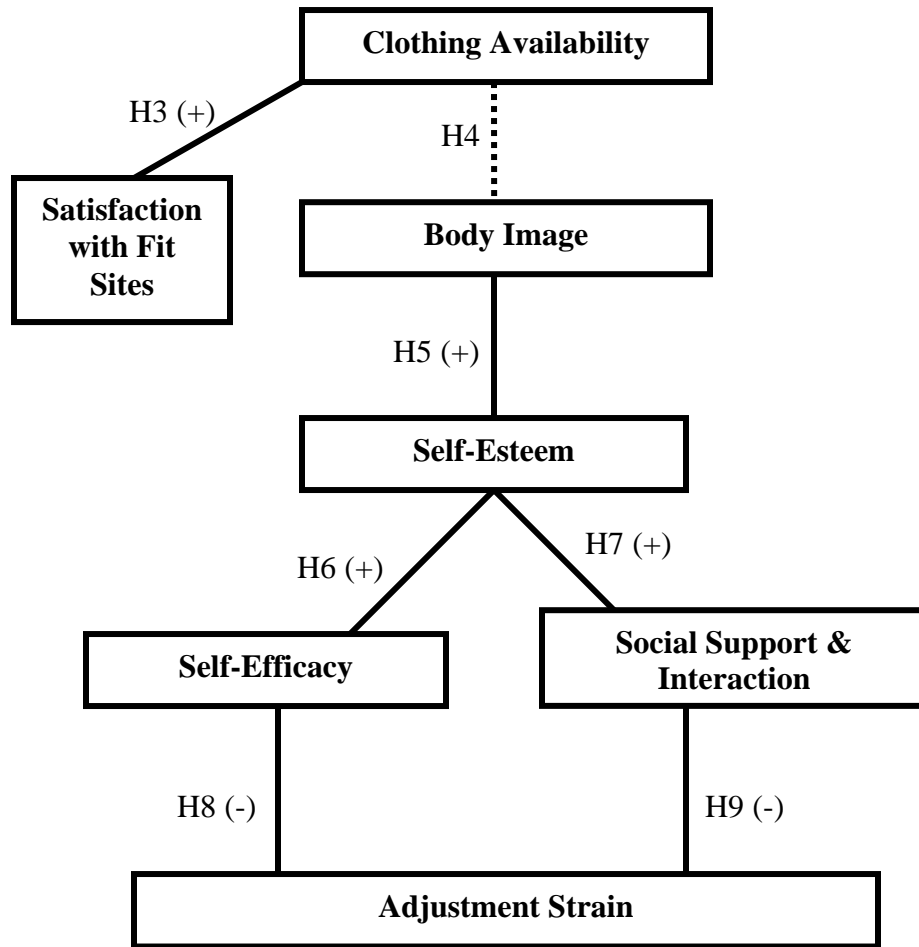


Figure 5-2. Relationships for Japanese Sample

Note. Dashed line indicates no relationship

time abroad and therefore, had no need to shop for clothing in the host country. The Japanese females, on the other hand, averaged two or more years in the United States. After spending so much time in the host country, these females could have grown accustomed to any lack of clothing in the United States.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant relationship between body image and self-esteem for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated that there is a significant relationship ($p = .000$) between body image and self-esteem for the Japanese sample. However, there was no significant relationship found between these two variables for the American sample (see Figures 5-1 and 5-2). Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was **rejected**. Body-image was not found to relate to self-esteem in the American sample. The American sample, however, had significantly higher levels of both body image and self-esteem than did the Japanese female sample. This separation of body image and self-esteem in the American sample indicates that the American females have an overall positive orientation towards themselves regardless of how they view their bodies. This finding can be attributed to the individualistic characteristics of the American female study abroad students. Instead of basing self-evaluations on body assessment, the American female students appraised themselves based on their abilities and accomplishments.

Hypothesis 6: There will be a significant relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis was **supported**. For the American sample, self-esteem related more strongly with self-efficacy than social support. American students tend to be more competitive, individualistic, and assertive than Japanese study abroad students. Rather than depending on the group for identification, American students define themselves in terms of their own abilities and accomplishments. It seems appropriate, therefore, that self-esteem related more strongly to social support for the Japanese study abroad females, whereas, for the American female students, the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy was slightly stronger.

Hypothesis 7: There will be a significant relationship between self-esteem and social support for both the American and Japanese female exchange students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis was **supported**. Self-esteem was found to be positively related to social support in both the American and Japanese female samples. The relationship between self-esteem and social support, however, was found to be slightly stronger in the Japanese sample. Past research has found low self-esteem to be an indication of relational incompetence (Hayes & Lin, 1994). Individuals of collectivist cultures tend to define themselves based on their membership within a group. The inability to construct relationships and support systems in the host country may therefore relate more strongly to the self-esteem of the Japanese rather than the American study abroad females.

Hypothesis 8: There will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and adjustment strain for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the eighth hypothesis was **supported**.

Although a relationship between self-efficacy and adjustment strain was found for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students, the relationship was found to be slightly stronger in the American sample. Therefore, higher levels of self-efficacy translated into less adjustment strain for the American sample.

Hypothesis 9: There will be a significant relationship between social support/interaction and adjustment strain for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students.

Pearson correlation coefficients indicated significant relationships for both the American and Japanese female study abroad students. Therefore, the ninth hypothesis was **supported**.

Although a relationship between social support and adjustment strain was found in both samples, the relationship was found to be slightly stronger in the American sample. Past research indicates that forming relationships with host nationals leads to greater adjustment and less adjustment strain. Results of the study indicate (see Appendix E) that the American sample was more satisfied with their relationships with host nationals. This could have caused the correlation between social support and adjustment to be slightly stronger in the American sample.

Additional Interests

After analyzing survey results, several other interesting relationships were found between variables in both the American and Japanese samples. Two models (see Figures 5-3 and 5-4) were developed in order to illustrate all resulting relationships, including those hypothesized and those not hypothesized, for both samples.

For the American sample, (see Figure 5-3) clothing availability related linearly to the degree of satisfaction with the fit of apparel. The availability of clothing, however, had a negative linear relationship with self-esteem but had no relationship with body image. Body image also related directly to adjustment strain, indicating that as body image increased adjustment strain decreased. As hypothesized, self-esteem was found to be related to both self-efficacy and social support. Similarly, self-efficacy and social support were found to be linearly related to adjustment strain.

For the Japanese sample, (see Figure 5-4) clothing availability was found to have a linear relationship with self-esteem. Similar to the American sample, self-esteem was found to have a positive linear relationship with self-efficacy, adjustment strain, and social support. As hypothesized, both self-efficacy and social support were found to be related to adjustment strain.

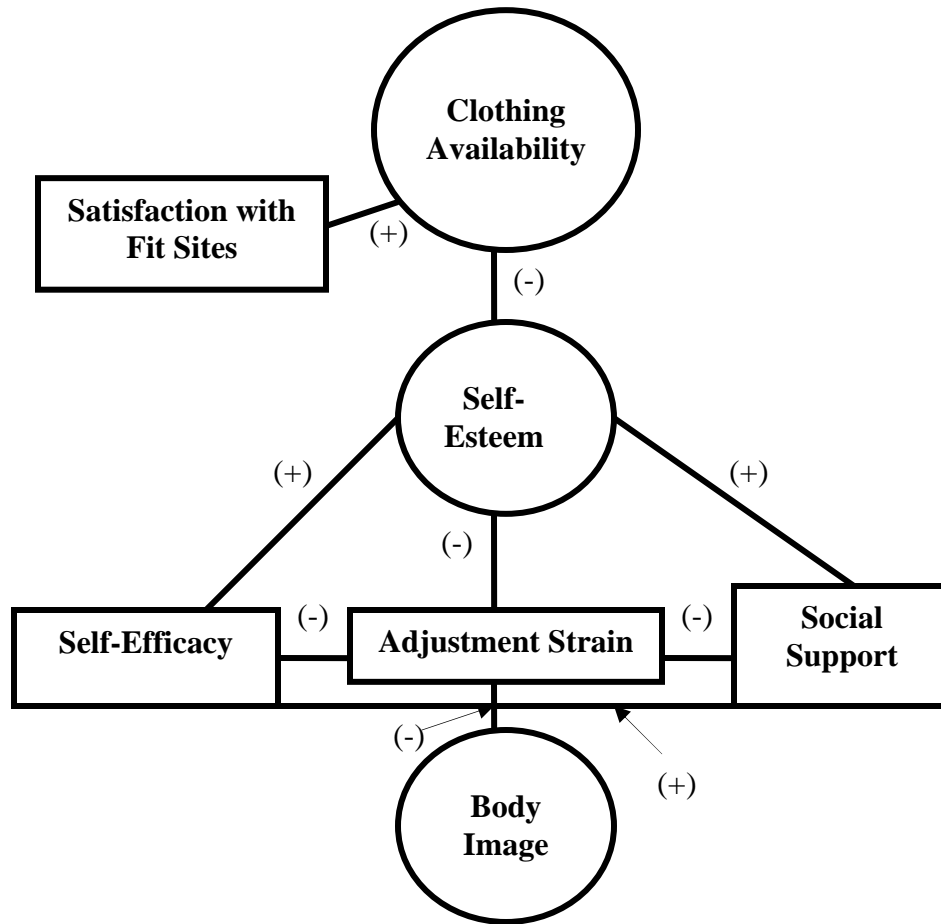


Figure 5-3. *Revised American Model*

For the Japanese sample, body-image was related to both self-esteem and social support. Unlike the American sample, satisfaction with fit was positively correlated with self-efficacy, indicating that satisfaction with fit increased along with self-efficacy.

Relationships between clothing availability and self-esteem were found for both the American and Japanese samples (see Figures 5-3 and 5-4). Clothing availability was negatively related to self-esteem for the American sample. However, for the Japanese sample, this relationship was positive. A review of literature on the subject of the clothed appearance

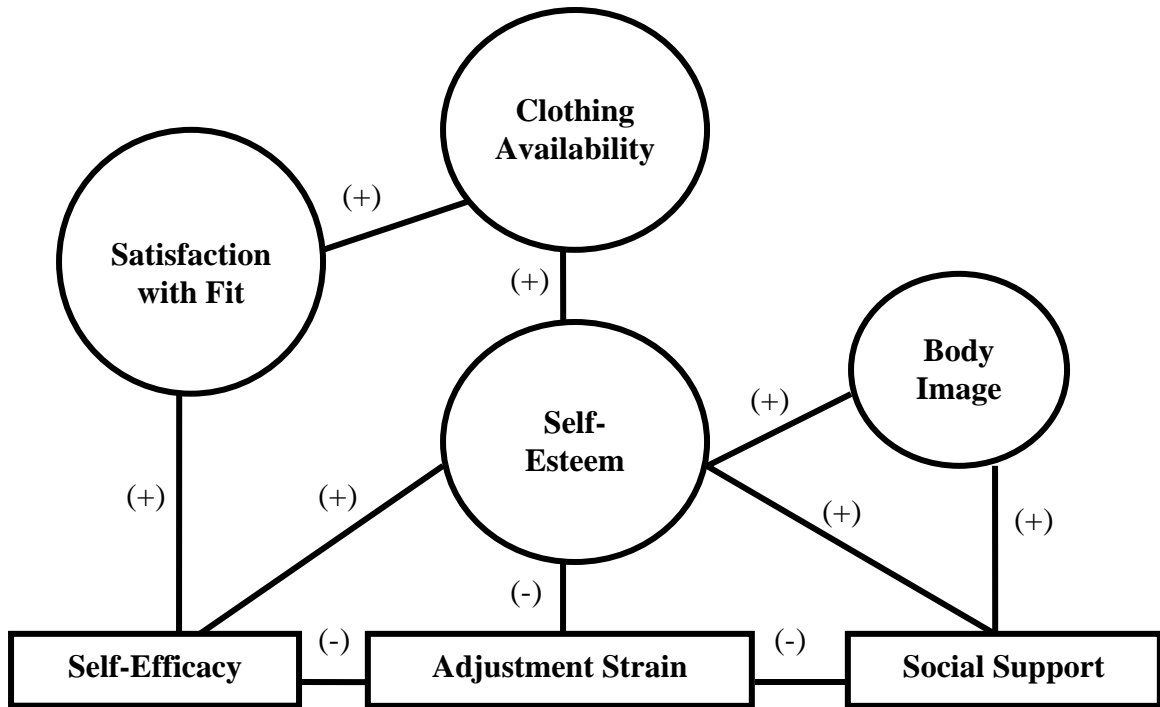


Figure 5-4. *Revised Japanese Model*

indicates that clothing allows people to communicate themselves to some audience. Validating responses to the clothed appearance from the audience are seen as essential to the establishment of the self (Stone, 1962). It is surprising that a negative relationship between these two variables, indicating self-esteem increases as clothing availability decreases, was seen in the American sample. In general, however, the American sample rated high in both self-esteem and body-image, indicating an overall positive view of self-worth. The view of the body was not related to the overall view of the self. It seems as though the self-esteem of the American study abroad students increased regardless of whether or not clothing was available in the host country.

Although it was not hypothesized that there would be a relationship between self-esteem and adjustment strain, this finding was not surprising. Past research indicates that high self-

esteem is robustly associated with life satisfaction for students of individualist cultures (Diener & Diener, 1995). For students of collectivist cultures, such as Japan, self-esteem and relationship harmony were found to be of equal importance in predicting life satisfaction. It is appropriate to assume that being content and satisfied with life would positively impact intercultural adjustment and lead to less adjustment strain.

Past research indicates that in independent cultures, such as the United States, subjective well-being of individuals is largely influenced by internal factors. In collectivist cultures, such as Japan, however, subjective well-being is influenced by both internal and relational factors. Therefore, personal adjustment for the American female students depends primarily on self-view. For the Japanese female students, however, social relationships play an important role in personal adjustment. According to the literature reviewed for this study, those study abroad students who have more contact and form relationships with host nationals are more likely to have greater adjustment (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Perrucci & Hu, 1995; Schram & Lauver, 1988) and to experience less adjustment strain. Only 38.8% of the Japanese females were satisfied or very satisfied with their relationships with host nationals. Over fifty-two percent of the American females, however, were satisfied with their relationships with Japanese host nationals. Because both samples were equally satisfied with their relationships with co-nationals, it appears that forming bonds with host nationals may lead to less adjustment strain for study abroad females.

Body image was related to different variables for both the American and Japanese samples. For the American female study abroad students, a weak positive, linear relationship between body-image and adjustment strain was found. This result was somewhat surprising but could be attributed to the high levels of both self-esteem and body image found in the American

sample. Body-image could have impacted specific aspects of cross-cultural adjustment, such as social issues or health concerns. Although the American female study abroad students did not question their overall self-worth, certain insecurities about the body could have affected their adjustment.

Body image, however, was found to be linearly related to both self-esteem and social support for the Japanese sample. Studies have shown that Japanese women have significantly lower body esteem than their American counterparts (Kowner, 2002). Kowner (2002) also finds correlations between body-esteem, self-esteem, and low anxiety in a Japanese sample. The same results were found in the current study. This pattern could be due to many factors including the Japanese cultural norm of humble presentation of self typical of collective societies or the high levels of social anxiety typically felt by Japanese individuals (Kowner, 2002). Social support plays an important role in the validation of self-esteem and self-image. Therefore, the possible social anxiety felt by the Japanese female exchange students could have caused the triangular relationship between body image, social support, and self-esteem.

For the Japanese sample, however, a positive linear relationship was found between clothing availability and self-esteem. In general, the Japanese females sampled had lower self-esteems and body esteem than their American counterparts. The results also indicate that for the Japanese female sample, positive linear relationships between body-image, self-esteem, and clothing availability do exist. Therefore, it seems as though the Japanese females may be more concerned about appearance than American females. It also appears as though the clothed self relates to overall self-regard in the Japanese female sample. Because Japanese females may be more susceptible to social anxiety, concern over outward appearance and the possible resulting evaluations seems plausible.

A strong linear relationship between satisfaction with fit and self-efficacy was found in the sample of Japanese female study abroad students. Literature reviewed for this study revealed that ill-fitting branded garments may give a message to the consumer that something is wrong with the consumer themselves (McVey, 1984). A growing body of research also revealed that Japanese people may be systematically biased toward viewing themselves in an unrealistically negative light (Heine, Takata, & Lehman, 2000). It appears as though Japanese females questioned their own ability, instead of the lack of availability, when clothing in the host country did not fit properly. Unlike the American study abroad females, the Japanese female consumers may have perceived the cause as related to their own body and not the clothing.

Limitations

1. Because of the threat of a very small sample, any American or Japanese female exchange student, regardless of age, was asked to participate in the study. Therefore, the results are limited to the sample that was actually gathered.
2. Because of the scope of the study, only scales related to the actual idea in question were included. Cultural novelty, therefore, was assumed.
3. The U.S. apparel industry has not adopted a single system of clothing sizing. Therefore, it was impossible to directly compare the sizes of the U.S. study abroad females to the Japanese study abroad females, since U.S. females tend to wear a wide range of sizes depending on the brand of clothing.
4. The time needed to adjust to life in a foreign culture varies for different students. Personal factors make quantifying adjustment extremely difficult. Therefore, accurately measuring adjustment throughout the entire sample was a limitation in this study.

Implications

Data obtained from this study will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the sizing issues that account for the variations in emotional adjustments among Japanese and American female exchange students. Findings can be used by universities to create appropriate preparatory materials for exchange programs. Counseling sessions designed to inform female students of the possibility of not finding clothing in the host country should be implemented. The potential changes in body-image and self-esteem caused by the lack of clothing and possible physical comparisons with female host nationals should also be discussed.

Further Research

Models of bulimia nervosa suggest that a woman with a poor self-concept or low self-esteem is likely to see changing her appearance as a way to meet societal standard and improve her self-esteem (Calhoun & Henriques, 1999). The heightened drive to improve appearance is thought to lead to dietary restraint and ultimately, in some cases, to bulimic symptoms (Calhoun & Henriques, 1999). The idealized female shape has gradually shifted from a curved figure to a more lean and angular look (Garner & Garfinkel, 1980). Socio-cultural theory suggests that cultures with a “thin ideal,” or widespread belief that a thin body is idyllic, provide a setting for the development of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders.

Outside the West, only Japan has reported a significant number of anorectic cases (Hsu, 1989). The Japanese fascination with thinness may not only have a detrimental affect on the American students studying in Japan, but it may also affect Japanese females studying in the United States. Because Japanese females may carry these unrealistic ideals with them to their new host country, they may be setting themselves up for disappointment from the beginning. Because of the difference in diets, Japanese women may sometimes find it difficult to maintain

their previous weights while living in the United States. Increasing in body size or dress size may lead to an increase in vulnerability to lower body image and lower self-esteem. Future research could address the possible relationships between weight concerns, clothing availability, and body-image.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled “Sizing Issues and Their Effects on the Emotional Adjustment Processes of Female Study Abroad Students: A Cross-Cultural Study” conducted by Melanie Crosby from the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Georgia (542-4886) under the direction of Dr. Jan Hathcote, Merchandising Department, University of Georgia (542-4907). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can stop taking part without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this focus group discussion is to obtain in depth information on how clothing and sizing issues (i.e. not finding clothing because of size or fitting problems) affects the emotional adjustment of female study abroad students.

If I volunteer to participate in this focus group discussion, I will be asked to do the following things:

- 1) Answer questions pertaining to my adjustment into my host country
- 2) Describe my shopping habits before and after my arrival into my host country
- 3) Answer questions pertaining to the level of satisfaction I receive from shopping
- 4) Answer questions about whether or not clothing is difficult to find and wear in my host country
- 5) Answer questions about my body image and how it has changed since arriving in my host country
- 6) Describe how I believe my body size and shape compares to that of the females in my host country
- 7) Be asked to participate in the discussion group for up to one hour
- 8) Allow myself to be audio taped during the discussion

I understand that I will receive a \$10 gift certificate from my university bookstore for participating in the focus group discussion.

Possible discomfort may occur since body size and body image are both sensitive issues. However, I realize that I am not required to answer any question that I am not comfortable with or willing to answer. I am aware that I can quit the discussion group at any point in time.

I am aware that it is my right to review or edit the recorded discussion. I am also aware that only the researcher will have access to the tapes and that the tapes will be kept in her personal office under lock and key until June 2005, when the audio tapes will be erased. Any information that is obtained in this focus group discussion and that can be identified with me will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with my permission or as required by law.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the discussion and can be reached by telephone at: 542-4886 or in her office: 304 Dawson Hall, University of Georgia or by e-mail: mcrosby@uga.edu

My signature below indicates that the researcher has answered my questions to my satisfaction and that I consent to volunteer for this focus group discussion. I understand that I will be given a copy of this form.

Signature of Researcher

Phone: 542-4886

Email: mcrosby@uga.edu

Date

Signature of Participant

Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher

For questions or problems about your rights please call or write: Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7441; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE OF REQUEST – JAPANESE FEMALES

Japanese Study Association Member
ABC University
Anytown, ST 12345-0123

Dear Club Member:

I am a graduate student at the University of Georgia and have begun work on my thesis. I am conducting a cross-cultural study between the United States and Japan in order to determine whether the inability to find clothing in the host country could affect a female exchange student's adjustment into that country. I am surveying Japanese females studying in the United States and American females studying in Japan.

I am concerned that I will be unable to gather enough surveys at the University of Georgia, so I am e-mailing Japanese Student Associations throughout the United States. I located your e-mail address on-line and am writing to inquire about the possibility of requesting your participation.

If you or any female member of your association would be willing to fill out a survey, I will be happy to send you a packet of surveys along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope so that you can return the surveys to me at no charge. The surveys are short and simple and should only take 5-10 minutes to complete. Each survey contains an informed consent page and instructs each participant on their rights as a research participant. There are no questions asking personal information. Therefore, information gathered from the surveys cannot be linked back to the individual participants. The surveys have been approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Georgia.

With your help, it will be possible to gain a greater understanding of how clothing related to adjustment. This research will also be used to create appropriate preparatory materials designed especially for females planning to study abroad. Please let me know if you are willing to participate.

Regards,

Melanie Crosby
Graduate Assistant
Textiles, Merchandising, & Interiors
304 Dawson Hall
The University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602
(706) 542-4886

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OF REQUEST – AMERICAN FEMALES

International Student Office
ABC University
Anytown, Japan 12-345

Dear International Student Office:

I am a graduate student at the University of Georgia and have begun work on my thesis. I am conducting a cross-cultural study between the United States and Japan in order to determine whether the inability to find clothing in the host country could affect a female exchange student's adjustment into that host country. I am surveying Japanese females studying in the United States and American females studying in Japan.

I am currently e-mailing International Student Offices throughout Japan in order to recruit American female participants. I located your e-mail address on-line and am writing to inquire about the possibility of requesting your participation. The surveys are short and simple and should only take 5-10 minutes to complete. Each survey contains an informed consent page and instructs each participant on their rights as a research participant. There are no questions asking personal information. Therefore, information gathered from the surveys cannot be linked back to the individual participants. The surveys have been approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Georgia.

If any American female attending your university would be willing to fill out a survey, I will be happy to send you a packet of surveys along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope so that you can return the surveys to me at no charge. I will also be conducting field research on the Japanese fashion market in Japan from November 15th until December 10th. Therefore, I will also be available to pick up the survey packet in person if this is more convenient. I will simply need you to distribute the surveys and collect the surveys after completion. If you are willing to help, please let me know which method you prefer.

With your help, it will be possible to gain a greater understanding of how clothing relates to adjustment. This research will also be used to create appropriate preparatory materials designed especially for females planning to study abroad. Please let me know if you are willing to participate.

Regards,

Melanie Crosby
Graduate Assistant
304 Dawson Hall
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear participant,

This research is being conducted by Melanie Crosby from the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Georgia (706-542-4886) under the direction of Dr. Jan Hathcote, Merchandising Department, University of Georgia (706-542-4907) and Dr. Naz Kaya, Interiors Department, University of Georgia (706-542-0150).

The reason for this study is to determine how and to what extent the inability to find clothing in the host country affects the emotional adjustments of American females studying in Japan and Japanese females studying in the United States. This research topic was of enormous interest to the primary researcher because of her own shopping experiences in Japan. With your help, it will be possible to gain a greater understanding of how clothing related to adjustment. This research will also be used to create appropriate preparatory materials designed especially for females planning to study abroad.

Your participation is voluntary. You can stop taking part without giving any reason and without penalty. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be asked to answer questions about shopping, clothing sized, body image, and adjustment issues.

No discomfort or stresses are expected. No psychological risks are expected. There are no questions asked that can identify you and therefore, you will remain anonymous. Should you have any further questions about the research, you may contact Melanie Crosby at (706) 542-4886 or by e-mail, mcrosby@uga.edu.

Thank you for your participation.

Melanie Crosby
Principal Investigator
304 Dawson Hall
Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors
The University of Georgia
(706)542-4886
mcrosby@uga.edu

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7441; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

The following questions measure overall shopping experience and **clothing availability**. Please answer the questions using the following scale.

[1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree]

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>			Strongly <u>Agree</u>	
1. I enjoy shopping for clothing in my host country	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel that there is a wide variety of clothing to choose from in my host country	1	2	3	4	5
3. Clothing stores in my host Country always carry my size	1	2	3	4	5
4. Trying on clothing in my host country is a negative experience for me	1	2	3	4	5
5. I enjoyed shopping more in my home country	1	2	3	4	5
6. I often feel discouraged when shopping for clothing in my host country	1	2	3	4	5
7. I generally shop at international stores (i.e. Gap, Zara) because of their wide range of sizes	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel that the clothing in my host country is not made for my body shape	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions measure **adjustment** into your host country. Please answer the questions using the following scale:

[0=None, 1=Hardly at all, 2=A little, 3=Some, 4=Much, 5=Very much]

1. Being lonely troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Difficulty in making new friends in my host country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Feelings of homesickness trouble me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Frequently crying or feeling depressed troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am troubled when I attend classes and lectures in English because I don't understand the language very well:	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Not being able to understand slang phrases in English troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. My limited vocabulary troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Knowing that I need help with English troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. The difference between the food of my host country and the food of my home country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Dietary problems trouble me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Rapidly gaining or losing weight since I arrived in my host country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. Concern that my health is deteriorating troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. The relationship between men and women troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. The dating practices of people in my host country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5

[0=None, 1=Hardly at all, 2=A little, 3=Some, 4=Much, 5=Very much]

15. Not feeling at ease among groups of people troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Confusion that I have about the morals in my host country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Feeling uninterested in the college I am attending in my host country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. My concerns with grades in school trouble me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. The fact that education in my host country is not what I expected it to be troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. Relationships between teachers and students in my host country troubles me:	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions measure body satisfaction/or **body-cathexis**: Please answer the questions using the following scale.

[1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=satisfied, 5=very satisfied]

How satisfied are you with your....

	Very <u>Dissatisfied</u>			Very <u>Satisfied</u>	
Thighs.....	1	2	3	4	5
Hips.....	1	2	3	4	5
Buttocks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Abdomen.....	1	2	3	4	5
Weight.....	1	2	3	4	5
Leg Length.....	1	2	3	4	5
Waist.....	1	2	3	4	5
Bust.....	1	2	3	4	5
Arms.....	1	2	3	4	5
Height.....	1	2	3	4	5

When shopping for clothes in your host country do you experience problems with the fit? The following will help determine the precise location of fitting problems experienced in the host country. Lower numbers indicate greater dissatisfaction with the way the clothing fits in each body area.

How satisfied are you with the fit of clothing in these areas:

	Very <u>Dissatisfied</u>			Very <u>Satisfied</u>	
Pant length	1	2	3	4	5
Crotch length	1	2	3	4	5
Thigh	1	2	3	4	5
Buttocks	1	2	3	4	5
Hips	1	2	3	4	5
Sleeve length	1	2	3	4	5
Waist length	1	2	3	4	5
Waist	1	2	3	4	5
Abdomen	1	2	3	4	5
Bust	1	2	3	4	5
Shoulder	1	2	3	4	5
Lower Arm	1	2	3	4	5

The following measures your thoughts on clothing/or **clothing involvement**. Please circle the number that best describes your feelings toward clothing. Lower numbers indicate more negative feelings toward clothing.

Clothing is:

1. Unimportant.....Important

1 2 3 4 5

2. Boring.....Interesting

1 2 3 4 5

3. Unappealing.....Appealing

1 2 3 4 5

4. Undesirable.....Desirable

1 2 3 4 5

5. Worthless.....Valuable

1 2 3 4 5

Please answer the following question pertaining to **self-esteem** using the following scale:

[1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree]

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>			Strongly <u>Agree</u>		
1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I feel that I have a number of good Qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I am able to do things as well as most People.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.		1	2	3	4	5
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5	

Please answer the following question pertaining to **self-efficacy** using the following scale.

[1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree]

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>			Strongly <u>Agree</u>		
1. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I give up on things before completing them.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Failure just makes me try Harder.		1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel insecure about my ability to do things.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. I give up easily.	1	2	3	4	5	

The following questions measure **social support** and your level of interaction with people in your host country. Please answer the questions using the following scale:

[1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree]

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>			Strongly <u>Agree</u>	
1. I have friends in my host country that I can comfortably ask about things	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have friends in whom I can confide in my host country	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am satisfied with the social relationships I have with co-nationals in my host country	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am satisfied with the social relationships I have with host nationals in my host country	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E

SOCIAL SUPPORT MEASURES

<u>Social Support Items:</u>	<u>American</u> (n = 57) n (%)	<u>Japanese</u> (n = 67) n (%)
I am satisfied with the relationships I have with co-nationals in my host country		
Very Dissatisfied	3 (5.3)	1 (1.5)
Dissatisfied	3 (5.3)	6 (9.0)
Neutral	14 (24.6)	24 (35.8)
Satisfied	20 (35.1)	24 (35.8)
Very Satisfied	17 (29.8)	12 (17.9)
I am satisfied with the relationships I have with host nationals in my host country		
Very Dissatisfied	2 (3.5)	1 (1.5)
Dissatisfied	7 (12.3)	15 (22.4)
Neutral	18 (29.8)	25 (37.3)
Satisfied	19 (33.3)	13 (19.4)
Very Satisfied	11 (19.3)	13 (19.4)