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Assessing the Relationship Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence: An Empirical Study of Faculty at Higher Education Institutions in the United States

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Abstract

Assessing the Relationship Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence: An Empirical Study of Faculty at Higher Education Institutions in the United States

Casey J. Aldrich

This dissertation explores the relationship between faculty's intercultural competence and their inclusion competence within the context of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the United States. The construct of intercultural competence refers to effectiveness in engaging people across cultural differences, while inclusion competence focuses on competences critical for effective performance related to inclusive behavior. Studying these two constructs together provides insight into the potential of intercultural education to contribute to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts at US HEIs, especially in terms of fostering inclusive learning environments. Drawing from data collected using two psychometric assessments – the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) to measure intercultural competence and the Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI) to measure inclusion competence - this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence?

2. To what extent, if any, do faculty members' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence?

The study's findings reveal a strong positive relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence, providing empirical evidence to support the idea that intercultural learning can be a useful tool in facilitating the goals of inclusion (J. M. Bennett, 2013). Though the results do not provide evidence of a causal relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence, understanding the relationship between the two constructs may help institutions consider which types of faculty training and professional development opportunities are likely to contribute to creating inclusive learning environments at HEIs in the US.

Key words: Intercultural Competence, Inclusion Competence, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Higher Education

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retreats. I am so grateful for the friendships forged and the collective knowledge shared within our cohort.

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Dedication

To my family,

Thank you for your sacrifices and your boundless love, support, and encouragement.

This achievement is as much yours as it is mine.

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List of Abbreviations

BEVI	Beliefs, Events and Values Inventory
CDO	Chief Diversity Officer
CQI	Cultural Intelligence Inventory
DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
GIL	Growing Intercultural Leaders
GPI	Global Perspectives Inventory
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
IBI	Inclusive Behaviors Inventory
ICI	Inclusion Competencies Inventory
IDI	Intercultural Development Inventory
IES	Intercultural Effectiveness Scale
IPEDS	Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research Problem

Within the past few years, a series of tragedies and crises have drawn attention to many of the inequities persisting within U.S. society. The murders of George Floyd in May of 2020 by Minneapolis police, and of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery shortly before that, have underscored the systemic racism plaguing the United States. In addition, the Covid-19 global pandemic has disproportionately affected black, brown, and indigenous communities, serving as "a vivid reminder of the pervasiveness of racism across multiple systems and policy areas" (Wesley et al., 2021, p. 6.) These inequities are complex and cut across many domains, including higher education. Educational inequities such as differing access and completion rates, student experiences, debt burdens, and (un)employment rates across racial and ethnic groups are significant (Taylor et al., 2020) and require response and action from campus leaders.

Addressing educational inequities has been the focus of institutional diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts at higher education institutions (HEIs) in the United States for many years. However, these efforts have been perceived by many as being "more concerned with optics than with tangible change" and as merely "an attempt to placate students' desire for change without putting in any substantial effort" (Allard, 2021, para. 2). The recent crises prompted powerful responses from campus communities across the country demanding more effective strategies that will lead to equitable outcomes for underrepresented populations (Benson Clayton, 2021). Community members at HEIs of all types have protested, penned opinion pieces and open letters, and called on their schools to take action to effectively address racial and social injustice and to create more inclusive campus communities. At Dartmouth College – a small, private Ivy League research university in New Hampshire – for example,

more than 1,100 members of the community signed an open letter (2020) addressed to the Dartmouth President demanding that the institution "take concrete steps to unravel its built-in structural racism perpetuated through the superficial and short-term fixes that [the] senior leadership constantly applies to the problem" (Coly, 2020 para. 1). The letter outlined a series of action items meant to "cultivate truly inclusive collaboration" and forge a "sense of responsibility for each other and for the broader world" (para. 10). Similarly, a professor at San Bernardino Valley College representing the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges wrote a letter addressing "College Educators Across the Nation" (2020) in which she argued that "the academic community must adopt an iterative process of developing and enforcing meaningful strategies in the aim of peace, from systemic violence and racism aimed at minoritized communities in our educational system to society as a whole" (Herron, 2020, last para.).

Both letters emphasized the increasing racial and ethnic diversity of HEIs in the United States and the need to better serve this diverse demographic. Indeed, our campuses and classrooms are more diverse now than ever before (Taylor et al., 2020), with campus populations comprising students of differing racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, religions, ages, socio-economic statuses, and levels of (dis)ability. Over the last 20 years alone, the percentage of undergraduate students who identify as a race other than White has increased from approximately 30 to about 45 percent (Espinosa et al., 2020). In addition to the increasing racial diversity of domestic students, over one million international students studied at HEIs in the United States in the 2022-23 academic year (IIE Open Doors, 2023). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2022), however, there is a glaring gap in representation between faculty and the student population their institutions serve. Compared to the increasingly diverse

student body, the faculty body at HEIs across the US remains largely white. In the fall of 2021 (the most recently available data at the time of writing), 73 percent of full-time HEI professors were White; 12 percent were Asian; 6 percent were Black; and 6 percent were Hispanic. Faculty who identified as Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaska Native individuals made up 1 percent or less, respectively, and 1 percent of faculty were of two or more races (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). Herron argues that "this profound gap is the primer for a slurry of potentially harmful interactions" (Herron, 2020, last paragraph). In addition to closing this gap, she argues, educators must adjust their behavior to address the educational inequalities existing on HEI campuses.

Despite the challenges many institutions face in navigating increasingly diverse DEI contexts, the potential benefits of diversity at the individual, institutional, and societal levels are great. They include "improved racial and cultural awareness, enhanced critical thinking, higher levels of service to community, and a more educated citizenry, to name a few" (Benson Clayton, 2021, para. 2). However, to actualize these benefits requires intentional, active, and ongoing effort to promote inclusion and equity at the institutional level. By taking an equity-minded approach to leadership and facilitating greater inclusion, HEI leaders can help to realize the benefits while ensuring that our institutions deliver on "the nation's promise of higher education for all students" (Benson Clayton, 2021, para. 5). Scholars (e.g., Bennett, 2009; Harvey, 2021) have speculated that increasing faculty's intercultural competence – that is, their ability to interact effectively and appropriately across difference, may serve to facilitate the goal of inclusion, "which is to respect and encourage the full participation of all individuals and groups" (Bennett, 2014, p. 11). Though this certainly seems a logical assumption, there is no current empirical evidence to support this hypothesis. This study contributes empirical evidence to the

body of intercultural and DEI literature through an exploration of the relationship between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence.

Definition of Terms

Defining the terms *DEI*, *inclusion*, *inclusion competence*, *culture*, and *intercultural competence* is necessary so the reader can fully understand this study.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

To contextualize this study, we must understand what diversity, equity, and inclusion (*DEI*) means within the educational context in the US. Historically, HEIs were created to serve wealthy white men (Wilder, 2013). While student bodies at institutions across the US have grown increasingly diverse over the years (Espinosa et al., 2020), whiteness and masculine privilege remain the core of academic institutions (Cabrera, 2019). In recognition of the benefits of diverse educational environments, institutions across the country have undertaken a variety of efforts to diversify historically white organizations and make them more inclusive. These efforts are often situated under the umbrella term "diversity, equity, and inclusion" or *DEI*, and can be distinguished according to their distinctive goals (Bensimon et al., 2016; Stewart, 2017). Specifically,

> diversity work aims to increase the number of historically underrepresented people in a space, while inclusion work attempts to reform organizational cultures and structures so historically underrepresented people might feel a sense of belonging inside the organization. Equity work seeks to resolve organizational barriers that impede equitable outcomes for underrepresented people. (Gonzales et al., 2021, p. 446)

Collectively, DEI can be defined as the "fair and just treatment of different groups of people regardless of personal identification or association to create a sense of belonging" (Kincey et al.,

2022, p. 95). According to Sengupta et al. (2019), DEI forms the very foundation for quality teaching and learning throughout every stage of the learning process, including access, participation, and completion, and is vital in all aspects of running a higher education institution (i.e., mission, policies, strategies, programs, and practices). While diversity, equity and inclusion are all principles that should be an integral part of educational policies, plans, and practices, this study focuses specifically on inclusion and the role that faculty can play in helping to reform organizational cultures and structures so historically underrepresented people feel a greater sense of belonging at HEIs in the US.

Inclusion and Inclusion Competence

The term *inclusion* refers to "a state and an experience that is nurtured with a sense of connection, care, and trust, facilitating a state of open communication and fairness, creating self-awareness about intrapersonal perceptions of belonging and overall integrating the entire community in a holistic manner" (Sengupta et al., 2019a, p. 5). In the HEI context, promoting an inclusive campus means creating and maintaining a learning environment (at the classroom and campus-wide levels) where community members of all backgrounds feel that their voices are valued, where they feel represented on campus and in the curriculum, and where they feel that they belong and matter (Taylor et al., 2020). Experiences of inclusion (or, conversely, exclusion) greatly impact every member of a campus community, and significantly influence "the learning, curriculum, innovation, retention, success, and satisfaction of its stakeholders" (p. 5).

Considerable research in recent years addresses the creation of inclusive learning environments where students of differing backgrounds and abilities can succeed at HEIs in the United States, including that by Hoffman et al. in their edited books, *Strategies for Facilitating Inclusive Campuses in Higher Education: International Perspectives on Equity and Inclusion*

(2019a) and *Strategies for Fostering Inclusive Classrooms in Higher Education: International Perspectives on Equity and Inclusion* (2019b). However, this research is still relatively new and has not yet resulted in widespread change (Sengupta et al., 2019a). Rather, DEI efforts remain fragmented and tend to vary tremendously from institution to institution (Anderson, 2019). Common efforts include creating DEI offices, adding diversity statements to websites, and developing DEI trainings and workshops (Nunes, 2021, para. 1), as well as developing myriad DEI-related policies and initiatives meant to influence the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff (Cartwright, 2012). While these undertakings are certainly worthwhile, research shows that the experiences of students in higher education continue to vary greatly along racial and ethnic lines (Taylor et al., 2020). Some scholars argue, in fact, that many DEI efforts have had an adverse effect, triggering "a complex mix of reactions from the people for whom the policies were intended to assist and from those who must work under these policies" (Valentino, 2019, p. 18).

The concept of inclusion has become an important topic within the field of higher education (HE), and "now occupies a critical position in the realms of HE" (Sengupta et al., 2019a, p. 4). A large body of research and literature demonstrates the need to "address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in US higher education contexts so that educational leaders can live out the espoused values of their institutions as they work to transform students into responsible citizens" (Barnett, 2020, p. 20). However, much of the research conducted to date focuses specifically on governance practices and broad institutional policies and initiatives. Clearly there is a critical need for good governance and solid structural policies to effectively address issues of DEI. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of these high-level, top-down initiatives. According to Valentino (2019),

> mandated changes that require just treatment of all community members through the creation of opportunities, quota systems, and the removal of barriers that address historic and current disadvantages for under-represented and marginalized groups have served only to make a superficial difference in the complexion of our classrooms. When the veneer of the legislation is removed, biased and discriminatory beliefs and values continue to be harbored deep in individuals' psyche, preventing the establishment of inclusive classrooms. (p. 19)

The concepts of diversity and inclusion are complex and thus, HEIs will need multifaceted strategic approaches to create inclusive campus climates and learning environments (Goosby Smith, 2016; Sengupta et al., 2019). In addition to high-level institutional policies, Cote-Meek (2018) believes that we must prioritize the "importance of building human and more human relationships" (as cited in Valentino, 2019, p. 18). This requires what the Kozai Group refers to as *inclusion competence* at the individual level. *Inclusion competence* is defined as "an ability to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups" (Kozai Group, 2022a, para. 1). The Kozai Group deems it a necessity to be more inclusive with people of differing backgrounds, whether in terms of "race, ethnicity, generational, religion, country culture, gender identity, ability, socio-economic class, political mindset, or other areas. Having inclusion competence enables an individual to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups and other groups that are different from one another" (para. 1).

Culture

Before discussing the concept of intercultural competence, we must first define *culture*. *Culture* refers broadly to "the learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of a community of interacting people" (Bennett, 2013, p. 1). Culture includes language, food, dress, music, arts,

and literature, as well as the group's shared customs, beliefs, attitudes, and values. Culture is not homogenous or static, but rather dynamic and ever-changing. According to Kleinman and Benson (2006), "culture is not a single variable but rather comprises multiple variables, affecting all aspects of experience" (p. 3). The authors describe culture as "a process through which ordinary activities and conditions take on an emotional tone and a moral meaning for participants," and these processes, they say, "frequently differ within the same ethnic or social group because of differences in age cohort, gender, political association, class, religion, ethnicity, and even personality" (p. 3).

This broad definition of culture as a set of learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors common to a group of interacting people "allows us to consider many of the well-known groups defined in diversity work as cultures, including those based on nationality, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, education, profession, religion, organization, and any other differences learned and shared by a group of interacting people" (Kleinman & Benson, 2006, p. 2). Furthermore, and critical to this study, while it was originally believed that race differed from culture in that race was a biological construct, findings from human genetics research have challenged the view that race is genetically determined. The research suggests that race, rather, is a "socially constructed concept referring to a category or group of people that share a common ancestry, physical characteristics, and/or language" (Messer & Gonzalez, 2021, p. 6538). Therefore, in line with this view and the thinking of many scholars (i.e., Messer & Gonzalez, 2021; Phinney, 1996; Worrell, 2014) this study considers race as a dimension of culture, as well. As Worrell (2014) argues, "it is not possible to answer the question 'what is culture?' without invoking answers that draw on and involve race and ethnicity intimately. Similarly, it is naïve to think that one can study race, ethnicity, and racial and ethnic

identity as variables that are independent of culture and the cultural context" (p. 264). Throughout this study, the terms *culture* and *cultural groups* will be used to refer to groups of people who share a set of learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors. These groups may represent people of differing nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, education, profession, religion, or organization, to name a few.

A recognition and respect for the complexity of cultural identities is necessary for understanding culturally influenced patterns of interaction and for comprehending the juncture between global and domestic diversity (Bennett, 2013). As our campuses grow increasingly diverse in terms of nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, education, and religion – the ability to interact effectively and appropriately across difference becomes more important than ever.

Intercultural Competence

While there are many definitions of intercultural competence, there is consensus amongst scholars that the term refers to an individual's ability to function effectively across cultures (Whaley & Davis, 2007). Hammer et al. (2003) define intercultural competence as "the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways" (p. 422). Johnson et al. (2006) add some context to their definition, whereby they refer to the concept as "an individual's effectiveness in drawing upon a set of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes in order to work successfully with people from different national cultural backgrounds at home or abroad" (p. 530). Similarly, Deardorff (2008) defines the term as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 33). In each case, intercultural competence is gained through a transformational learning process by which one converts disconnected knowledge and experiences (often beyond the classroom) into

systemized behavioral outcomes and cognitive competence (Li, 2013). This process is referred to as intercultural learning, which Bennett (2010) defines as "the acquisition of general (transferable) intercultural competence; that is, competence that can be applied to dealing with cross-cultural contact in general, not just skills useful only for dealing with a particular other culture" (p. 419).

Growing bodies of research and literature suggest that simply having diversity on campuses "does not equate to people engaging effectively and appropriately across difference" (Harvey, 2021, para. 2). Through intentional intercultural learning, however, individuals learn to experience cultural differences in more complex ways (J. M. Bennett, 1986; M. J. Bennett, 1986; Paige, 2004; Vande Berg et al., 2009), thus becoming better able to engage appropriately and effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds. In addition, research has shown that intentional intercultural training with prospective teachers increased their intercultural awareness and decreased their levels of ethnocentrism, or their views that their own culture is natural and superior to other cultures (Aslantaş, 2019). Intercultural learning, therefore, may be able to meaningfully contribute to creating inclusive campus environments where diverse learners can thrive.

No previous research study has examined the link between intercultural competence and inclusion competence, especially in the HEI context. The literature that does exist presumes a positive relationship between the two but has been theoretical or speculative in nature, providing no empirical evidence to support this assumption. This study addresses that gap by contributing empirical evidence which will help us understand with more certainty the validity of these assumptions. Because inclusion rests heavily on teachers' attitudes toward students who are minoritized and/or underrepresented in US higher education classrooms, (Sengupta et al.,

2019a), this study focuses specifically on faculty members' roles in advancing their campuses' DEI efforts.

Research Purpose and Research Questions

This dissertation explores the relationship between faculty's intercultural competence and their inclusion competence within the context of HEIs in the United States. The construct of intercultural competence refers to effectiveness in engaging people across cultural differences, while inclusion competence focuses on competencies critical for effective performance related to inclusive behavior. Studying these two constructs together provides insight into the potential of intercultural education to contribute to DEI efforts at US HEIs, especially in terms of fostering inclusive learning environments. Drawing from data collected using two psychometric assessments – one measuring intercultural competence and the other measuring inclusion competence - this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence?
2. To what extent, if any, do faculty members' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence?

Approach to the Study

This quantitative study utilizes a correlational design to examine the relationship between two primary variables: intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Participants are faculty at four-year public and not-for-profit private, bachelor's degree-granting HEIs located in the United States. The institutional sample includes thirty-one institutions meeting the study's criteria that were selected at random from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) College Navigator portal. Participants completed an online survey comprising questions

from the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES), which assessed their intercultural competence, as well as the Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI), which measured their inclusion competence.

Both instruments also included question items that captured participants' background characteristics, including country of citizenship, age, gender, and race/ethnicity. In addition to the primary data collected through the IES and ICI, secondary data on each institution was collected from IPEDS. This information included institution type, size of institution, percentage of students who are international (visa holders), percentage of students who identify as being from underrepresented racial/ethnic populations, percentage of faculty or staff who are international, and percentage of faculty or staff who identify as being from underrepresented racial/ethnic populations. Participant characteristics and institutional characteristics were used as control variables in the analysis to answer research question one (RQ1) since the literature suggests that they may relate to the outcome variables considered in this study (the ICI scale). Controlling for these variables allowed me to isolate more robustly the relationship between individual faculty's intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Participant characteristics, especially demographics, were used as primary variables of interest to answer research question two (RQ2).

The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES)

To assess participants' intercultural competence, the IES was used as a research instrument. The IES was developed by the Kozai Group in 2008 to evaluate an individual's ability to interact effectively with people from differing cultural and demographic backgrounds (Mendenhall et al., 2012). The instrument contains sixty items that assess three main dimensions of intercultural effectiveness (*Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement*, and *Hardiness*)

with two sub-dimensions within each domain (*Self-awareness* and *Exploration* in the *Continuous Learning* domain; *Global Mindset* and *Relationship Interest* in the *Interpersonal Engagement* domain; and *Positive Regard*, and *Emotional Resilience* in the *Hardiness* domain). The first dimension, *Continuous Learning*, examines how participants learn about another culture and the accuracy of that learning. The second dimension, *Interpersonal Engagement*, looks at how participants develop and manage relationships with people from differing backgrounds and cultures, broadly defined. Finally, the third dimension, *Hardiness*, is concerned with how participants manage the challenges and stress involved in interacting with cultural differences. Each of these dimensions is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, where a detailed description of the IES is provided.

The Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI)

To assess educators' inclusion competence, the Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI) was used as a data collection instrument. Developed by the Kozai Group in 2021, the ICI is a fifty-question online assessment meant to serve as "a catalyst that motivates individuals and teams to improve inclusion behaviors. It achieves this by measuring and evaluating competencies critical for effective performance related to inclusive behavior and interaction with people who are different from themselves" (Kozai Group, 2022b).

The ICI contains fifty items that measure three Inclusive Engagement factors (*Knowing Yourself, Knowing Others, and Bridging Differences*) encompassing six sub-dimensions (*Openness to Change* and *Adaptability* in the *Knowing Yourself* domain; *Connecting with Others* and *Reading Others* in the *Knowing Others* domain, and *Valuing Different Perspectives* and *Power Sensitivity* in the *Bridging Differences* domain) to assess inclusion competencies. An Overall ICI score is generated by averaging the mean scores of the three dimensions.

The dimension *Knowing Yourself* looks at participants' self-awareness, their "inclination to change and develop over time," and the "likelihood to be adaptive and resilient in challenging situations" (Kozai Group, 2021, p. 2). The *Knowing Others* dimension examines one's interest in and actions to develop relationships with people who differ from oneself and the ability to better understand them. The final dimension, *Bridging Differences*, is concerned with one's interest in and ability to see and understand multiple perspectives and sensitivity to the inequity in power differences present in many scenarios (Kozai Group, 2021). These dimensions are discussed in greater detail, along with a more detailed overview of the ICI in Chapter 4.

Rationale and Significance of Research

By examining the relationship between educators' level of intercultural competence and their inclusion competence, this study provides a rationale for a more holistic approach to DEI that can be taken by various stakeholders at every level of the institution, including faculty, to foster more inclusive campus environments in HE. Most institutional initiatives and policies are developed and implemented by a select few senior leaders. Although this study is not causal and will not determine whether intercultural competence causes inclusion competence or the other way around, understanding whether a statistically significant relationship exists is a first step toward identifying ways in which faculty training and professional development opportunities may contribute to creating more inclusive learning environments at HEIs in the US.

For example, a positive relationship between educators' intercultural competence and inclusion competence may suggest that creating more widespread intercultural learning opportunities for faculty and staff could serve to create more inclusive learning environments where students of differing backgrounds and abilities can thrive. Some institutions have already created such programs. For example, Purdue University, a large public land-grant research

university in West Lafayette, Indiana, has been working on institutionalizing intercultural capacity-building efforts since 2011. One of their key initiatives is the Growing Intercultural Leaders (GIL) program, which is "a professional development opportunity for faculty and staff designed to cultivate the intercultural leadership skills that will move Purdue-West Lafayette toward more inclusion, equity, and belonging" (Purdue University, 2022, para. 1). Program participants are supported by meetings with a mentor, financial incentives and other activities and opportunities (Purdue University, 2022). The program has proven successful in facilitating the intercultural learning of its participants, with 75% of Fellows achieving the stated learning outcomes in four of the six target domains on the Intercultural Leadership Matrix used to outline and assess the program. These domains include wellbeing, self-awareness, theoretical foundations, assessment and integration of learning, reflection, and ownership/self-directed learning (Purdue University, 2022).

While initiatives such as Purdue's GIL program exist, they are not the norm. Finding a positive relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence may justify the need for more widespread, intentional intercultural learning on HEI campuses. In addition to catalyzing DEI efforts, working to develop the intercultural competence of campus community members would have a number of other positive effects. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018),

> against a context in which we all have much to gain from growing openness and connectivity, and much to lose from rising inequalities and radicalism, citizens need not only the skills to be competitive and ready for a new world of work, but more importantly, they also need to develop the capacity to analyse and understand global and intercultural issues (p. 2).

Increasing the intercultural competence of HEI faculty may serve as a stepping stone toward realizing these positive effects.

Researcher's Assumptions

This study is based on several underlying assumptions. First, it is assumed that there is a demonstrated need to foster more inclusive learning environments and campus climates in US higher education contexts for institutions to better live out their espoused values. This assumption is based on a literature review that will be shared in greater detail in Chapter 2. Second, it is assumed that to create an inclusive campus climate, community members must demonstrate inclusive behavior. Additionally, it is assumed that intercultural learning is a valuable and important form of individual development. This assumption is also based on significant research (reviewed in Chapter 2) demonstrating the outcomes of intentional intercultural learning, as well as on personal experience, as will be discussed in the following section. Finally, it is assumed that the chosen data collection instruments, the IES and the ICI are valid and reliable and can measure intercultural competence and inclusion competence to the extent that such measurement is possible. While no instrument is perfect, these assumptions are based on research conducted on the reliability and validity of each instrument as will be discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

Researcher's Positionality

My positionality as a white, female, multilingual, educated staff member working with diverse groups of underrepresented students at a predominantly white HEI in a small, rural town in the United States has played a large role in shaping my interest in this research topic. Further, the intercultural training and work I have engaged in over the past ten years contributes significantly to the assumptions I have made that intercultural learning is a

valuable and important form of personal (and professional) development. These two factors led me to develop the specific set of research questions this study explores. I have been intentional to remain mindful while undertaking this study to balance my desire to use intercultural learning to contribute to more inclusive campus environments with an understanding of how my lived experiences, assumptions, and biases may affect my research, including "the kinds of measures used, the data collected, the participants involved in the research, the statistical methods used, and the interpretations of the results" (Carter & Hurtado, 2007, p. 32).

In addition to my positionality as a staff member at an HEI in the US, I approached this study with an acknowledgment of my identity as a white, middle-class, able-bodied woman – that is, as a member of multiple dominant cultural groups. My positionality as a member of these groups impacts my "embodied views, values and beliefs and insider-outsider status in relation to the research process, research setting, research context, [and] research focus" (Booysen et al., 2018, p. 29). Though many quantitative researchers consider quantitative research to be inherently objective, the chosen research categories and measures are neither 'natural' nor given and numbers do not speak for themselves (Gillborn et al., 2018). For this reason, it was critical to remain mindful of my identity and positionality, especially given the topic of this study, which focuses on issues around DEI. As with any study, it was also important to practice self-reflexivity throughout the project. Regularly reflecting on my own assumptions and biases by journaling and keeping reflective memos helped me remain mindful of my positionality and to practice self-reflexivity throughout the research process. To maintain balance in my perspective, I also engaged in regular discussion with my advisors.

Summary of Introduction and Organization of the Dissertation

This chapter has provided a background for the study and outlined its research problem, purpose, and significance, the research questions, and the definition of terms. It has highlighted the need, following a series of recent tragedies and crises, to respond to the call to action from community members at HEIs across the country to foster more inclusive learning environments and campus climates. Finally, it has addressed the rationale and purpose for exploring the potential for a relationship between educators' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence as a possible way to do this, as well as the need for greater empirical evidence to support the work of faculty on competence development as a means to more effective DEI efforts and strategies in US HEIs.

The following two chapters provide a review of the literature (Chapter 2) and conceptual framework (Chapter 3) on which this study is built. Chapter 4 discusses the research design and methodology used in the study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the research findings. Finally, Chapter 6 offers a discussion of findings, conclusions, implications of the study, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2 : Literature Review

This dissertation builds on previous literature on intercultural competence and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), with a particular focus on inclusion and inclusion competence, or the ability to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups, in the US higher education context. This chapter will summarize the literature written between the late 1980s and today, focusing on peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, books, and dissertations while examining areas of complementarity between the two fields and highlighting existing gaps. The 1980s were taken as the point of departure since, before that, with the exception of a few institution-specific survey studies, DEI was not a subject of empirical inquiry. Though earlier literature exists on intercultural competence, indeed dating back five decades, this chapter will focus on more recent literature that summarizes earlier findings and their application to the DEI field. The chapter begins with literature offering a brief overview of the history of DEI in the US higher education context and discussing the need for more effective DEI initiatives. Next, it will summarize literature exploring the relational construct of inclusivity as a key aspect of these efforts. A third section will offer an overview of the literature on intercultural competency and intercultural effectiveness. The final section will discuss the gaps in this literature that this dissertation fills.

DEI in the US Higher Education Context

To understand some of the challenges HEIs in the US face in implementing effective DEI strategies today, it is useful to consider the history and original purpose of these efforts. Domestic diversity efforts first took shape in the US during the civil rights movements of the late 1960s and 1970s. They arose in response to federal legislation such as Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned racial discrimination in the country's public and private colleges, and the 1965 Higher Education Act, which made college more accessible to low- and

middle-income students by creating the modern federal student aid program (Smith, 2020). The student protests of the late 1960s and the "influx of Black students into Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) in the 1970s" (Patton et al., 2019, p. 174) served to catalyze the efforts further.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the primary focus of institutional diversity efforts was to increase access to higher education for members of historically oppressed groups, especially African Americans and White women. Little consideration was given, however, to student success or institutional systems and capacity to support a more diverse student body (Smith, 2020). It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that the conversation shifted to include ways in which colleges and universities were and were not prepared to educate diverse students of color for success (Smith, 2020). In his well-known monograph, *The Challenge of Diversity*, Smith (1989) outlined a robust body of literature looking at the educational experiences of Latino, Asian American, and Black students and highlighting the negative experiences of students from minoritized groups and non-traditional backgrounds. He found that these students often reported "powerful and alienating experiences with racism, discrimination, and stereotypic responses," "experienced campus attitudes and behaviors that isolate[d] them," and "experienced campuses that socially, physically, or programmatically (for example, through the curriculum) communicate[d] to them that they do not belong or are not welcome" (Smith, 1989, p. 19). Until this time, these experiences had often been attributed to students' background characteristics. Smith, however, insisted that institutions and their capacity to function in a pluralistic environment were equally important to students' success (Smith, 1989).

Over the past several decades, HEIs across the country have increasingly implemented formalized DEI initiatives meant to support students from historically and racially

underrepresented populations while enhancing campus diversity. Williams (2013) was among the first scholars to examine these efforts with his national survey of chief diversity officers (CDOs) at more than 700 academic institutions across the US. His large-scale study revealed that "most colleges and universities [were] deploying general and diffuse diversity technologies, mentioning diversity in campus strategic plans, and providing general updates on diversity efforts to senior administrators and boards" but that it was "obvious that institutions were slow to embrace the most robust techniques for driving diversity" (p. 369). Nearly a decade after this study, research continues to show that DEI efforts remain "peripheral and the responsibility of a small number of offices or individuals" at many institutions (Harvey, 2021, para. 7). For this reason, DEI efforts are often criticized for being overly general and vague initiatives rather than robust strategies to advance diversity and inclusion (Williams, 2013).

In recent years, especially since 2020, the so-called 'year of racial reckoning' - a growing body of scholarly literature has emerged focusing on the shortcomings of common institutional DEI efforts and arguing the need for more effective strategies to create more inclusive campus climates (Barnett, 2020). Some of these key criticisms are outlined below. To be clear, the research-based critiques outlined below are not to be confused with the politically motivated critiques made by lawmakers aiming to implement legislation that would prohibit HEIs from having DEI offices or staff; ban mandatory diversity training; forbid the use of diversity statements in hiring and promotion; or bar institutions from considering race, sex, ethnicity, or national origin in admissions or employment (*DEI Legislation Tracker*, 2024). It is the aim of this research to provide a clear rationale and evidence to improve DEI campus efforts in the interest of more inclusive learning environments at HEIs.

Siloed Approach

As noted previously, the siloed approach to conceptualizing and implementing DEI policies and practices at many institutions is one key area of criticism surrounding DEI efforts. Scholars contend that to be effective, DEI efforts "must be consistent throughout all aspects of the academe, [and] should begin from the institution's philosophy to its mission statement, vision, policies, and standards and percolate to its everyday practice and operational efforts" (Sengupta et al., 2019a, p. 13). Tuitt (2016) agrees, arguing that "when we isolate diversity work to a specific person or unit on campus, we reinforce the notion that unless diversity work is in an individual's job description, it is someone else's problem or, more commonly, someone else's fault" (p. 68). Critics call for a collaborative leadership approach and appropriate infrastructure to guide the organizational transformation process and facilitate campus DEI initiatives at all levels of the institution. Otherwise, they claim, attempts to build momentum and sustain change efforts will be stifled (Tuitt, 2016). To produce "meaningful progressive outcomes that have an impact on institutional culture, reduce institutional stress, and improve the overall quality of communication throughout the campus environment" (Tuitt, 2016, p. 68), DEI must be perceived as everybody's business. Involving stakeholders at all levels and segments of the campus, including faculty, must be an institutional priority.

Lack of Authenticity

Relatedly, another key research-based criticism of common DEI initiatives revolves around the perception that institutional leadership is often seen as "supporting a cosmetic desire for inclusion" (Von Robertson et al., 2016, p. 14) rather than taking an authentic approach to increasing diversity, promoting equity, and enhancing inclusion in alignment with espoused institutional missions. Inauthentic efforts, critics argue, "only serve to make the university appear

inclusive but do not illustrate a true commitment to students of color" (Von Robertson et al., 2016, p. 14). A robust body of research and literature documents the negative experiences of minoritized (both domestic and international) students at HEIs in the United States (e.g., Engstrom & Tinto, 2008; Lee & Rice, 2007; Von Robertson et al., 2016; Zanolini Morrison, 2010) and suggests, in less abstract terms, the need for more effective DEI strategies. Research suggests that students of minoritized groups often perceive campus climates as "less welcoming and tolerant of diversity than white students and efforts to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus as institutional rhetoric" (Harper & Hurtado, 2007, as cited in Barnett, 2020, p. 21). To remedy this negative perception, critics argue that "academic leaders must do more than pay lip service to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues on campus" (Barnett, 2020, p. 29). Their vision for change must be authentic and must translate into language and action that can be embraced at multiple levels of the institution – including by faculty so as to be enacted in classrooms.

Deficit Approach

In considering the diversity of students on HEI campuses and how to better serve them, many institutions take a deficit approach, or what Winkle-Wagner and Locks (2014) refer to as a "diversity-as-an-adjective" approach (p. 7). In this approach, minority students are seen as lacking something in their backgrounds that HEIs can "fix." Further, in this approach, diversity is seen as a challenge to be managed or dealt with (Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2014). While bringing diverse groups of people together undoubtedly poses challenges, many scholars and practitioners criticize this deficit approach for overlooking the enormous benefits of diversity at the individual, institutional, and societal levels. These benefits include improved racial and cultural awareness, enhanced critical thinking, higher levels of service to the community, and a

more educated citizenry, to name a few (Milem, 2003). Critics argue that "deficit models of diversity, whether explicit or implied, undercut positive movement. Believing in the capacity of a student to achieve success and believing that diversity will bring strength are preconditions for developing an environment in which students can succeed and learn from one another" (Smith, 2020, p. 311). They argue that we must work to create educational environments that do not perceive diversity in deficit terms but rather accept the value that all students bring to higher education (O'Shea et al., 2016). This work will require a shift in thinking on the part of all institutional stakeholders, especially faculty.

US-centric Approach

A final critique of common DEI approaches is one sometimes raised by interculturalists or those working in the Comparative and International Education (CIE) sector. These scholars and practitioners claim that most diversity and social justice education initiatives in the United States tend to take a US-centric approach, often overlooking global perspectives. This is a source of frustration for "those who desire to bring in non-US perspectives and to consider issues such as race and ethnicity, power, and privilege, equality, gender, social justice, oppression, and a host of other issues in a broader, global context" (Olson et al., 2007, p. 25). In addition, while DEI efforts focus on increasing the diversity on campus by recruiting international students, they often overlook this same population in programming meant to foster inclusive campus climates. For this reason, international students often feel excluded and struggle to fit in (Puneney, 2017). Puneney (2017) argues that "as educators and student affairs professionals, we have an obligation to create an inclusive environment by helping all members of our communities" (p. 79).

Overall, these critiques suggest the need for institutional leadership that moves beyond thinking of DEI as an abstract concept and toward intentional, comprehensive implementation. They highlight the need for action and more inclusive behavior on the part of all campus community members. By examining the relationship between faculty's levels of intercultural competence and their inclusion competence, this study will explore whether working to develop faculty's intercultural competence could be one way to respond to that call. Although this study is not causal and will not determine whether intercultural competence causes inclusion competence or the other way around, understanding whether a statistically significant relationship exists may help institutions consider which types of faculty training and professional development opportunities are likely to contribute to creating more inclusive learning environments at HEIs in the US.

Inclusion

In the push for more effective strategies for addressing DEI issues, the concept of inclusiveness has come to occupy "a critical position in the realms of HE" (Sengupta et al., 2019a, p. 4). As defined in Chapter 1, the term inclusion refers to "a state and an experience that is nurtured with a sense of connection, care, and trust, facilitating a state of open communication and fairness, creating self-awareness about intrapersonal perceptions of belonging and…integrating the entire community [in] a holistic manner" (Sengupta et al., 2019a, p. 5). In the HEI context, this means creating and maintaining environments where community members of all backgrounds – especially those who are under-represented or minoritized – feel their voices are valued, where they feel represented on campus and in the curriculum, and where they feel they belong and matter (Taylor et al., 2020). Experiences of inclusion (and, conversely,

exclusion) greatly impact every member of a campus community and significantly influence "the learning, curriculum, innovation, retention, success, and satisfaction of its stakeholders" (p. 5).

Creating an inclusive campus climate is the responsibility of all higher education constituents. According to Winkle-Wagner and Locks (2014), this responsibility is directly related to the concept of inclusion as an action – that is, something that one can demonstrate, behave, and enact. Inclusion, they argue, "is not something that happens on its own. To enact diversity in positive ways requires the act of inclusion. And inclusion assumes the deliberate act of bringing people into the group, the norms, into the opportunities that will allow for a meaningful pursuit of happiness" (p. 1).

The challenge for many institutions seems to be knowing which concrete actions will generate meaningful change. One framework that many institutions have adopted to guide their institutional action is the Inclusive Excellence model. Developed in 2005 by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), Inclusive Excellence is a framework for advancing diversity and inclusion efforts on HEI campuses. In their paper, "Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions," which was included in a series commissioned by the AAC&U as part of the Making Excellence Inclusive initiative, Williams et al. (2005) describe Inclusive Excellence as "a framework for comprehensive organizational change to help campuses achieve Inclusive Excellence" (p. v). The model frames the diversity and inclusion journey as an "intentional effort to change institutional culture" (Williams & Clowney, 2007, p. 9). Rather than a step-by-step plan, the framework is meant to serve as a philosophy encompassing a variety of strategic 'levers' for changing strategy, organizational structure, human performance enhancement programs, reward systems, and processes of the institution (Galbraith, 2002). These levers include having senior leadership guide the change

journey; engaging the campus community in the change process; focusing on transforming institutional culture; developing a strategic plan for diversity; establishing accountability strategies to drive change; creating motivational and entrepreneurial strategies to encourage change; and communicating campus DEI efforts relentlessly, among others (Williams & Clowney, 2007).

While the Inclusive Excellence framework has been touted for its potential as a comprehensive, multi-dimensional approach to advancing diversity and inclusion efforts on college and university campuses (Williams & Clowney, 2007), after more than a decade of implementation efforts, scholars including Tuitt (2016) argue that "the unfortunate reality is that despite our best intentions, we have not been successful in our efforts to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse campus environment" (p. 64).

Indeed, research conducted in 2015, a decade after the introduction of the Inclusive Excellence initiative, confirmed that many underrepresented minority students continued to experience discrimination, bias, and feelings of exclusion at alarmingly high rates. Hurtado and Alvarado (2015) conducted a large-scale study looking at the experiences of 8,887 underrepresented minority (URM) students at 58 four-year campuses that took part in the Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) survey – a national survey designed to assist campuses in evaluating their campus climate, institutional practices, and student outcomes – between 2010 and 2015. Their sample included 24 public and 34 private four-year institutions varying in terms of URM enrollment, where African Americans were not the largest minority group. They also used a larger dataset comprising 82 campuses to look specifically at Latina/o student patterns of discrimination and bias experiences. African American and Latina/o students reported experiencing both overt and subtle forms of discrimination at their institutions. For example,

"62.3% of Latina/o students reported personally experiencing discriminatory verbal comments, 44.3% felt excluded from events and activities, and almost one-third (32.3%) reported visually offensive images on campuses with low URM representation" (p. 2). Black students at moderately diverse institutions also reported experiencing bias and discrimination on their campuses. "68.7% reported being the target of verbal comments, 48.1% reported feeling excluded from events or activities, and 38.8% reported seeing offensive visual images" (p. 3).

Tuitt (2016) attributes the failure to implement effective strategies for increasing inclusive excellence to what he refers to as three "traps" or missteps: "Trap #1: Believing [Inclusive Excellence] programs would transform institutional systems, structures, and overall campus culture" (p. 64); "Trap #2: Being seduced by the 'happy talk' of inclusive excellence and forgetting to focus on racial justice" (p. 66); and "Trap #3: Believing the hype of the magical CDO and failing to develop accountability structures that engage all stakeholders in organizational transformation efforts" (p. 67).

This third trap, in particular, echoes the criticism so commonly expressed about the siloed approach to DEI efforts at large. A siloed approach in which there exists a singular office or person with diversity in their title may set the expectation that that office or person is the only one responsible for carrying out the institution's DEI work. Tuitt (2016) argues that "this fallacy allows others in [the] organization to relieve themselves of any responsibility to address [DEI matters], even if that matter falls within their scope of responsibility" (p. 67). For true organizational transformation to occur, there must be collaborative leadership and infrastructure to guide and facilitate the transformation process and direct campus DEI initiatives at all levels of the institution. Involving all segments of the campus actively in these efforts must be a top priority. When individuals and groups at all levels of the institution collaborate to form

accountability structures and work together to navigate competing demands and expectations related to institutional change initiatives, HEIs are more likely to produce significant and beneficial results that positively influence the institutional culture (Tuitt, 2016).

While not explicitly mentioned in the Inclusive Excellence framework, the role of faculty in advancing DEI efforts is especially vital, as "inclusion heavily rests on attitudes of teachers toward their pupils with special needs and those who are marginalized" (Sengupta et al. 2019, p. 7). In addition to the influence that faculty have on student learning and development through developing and delivering the curriculum, advancing knowledge through research and scholarship, and engaging the campus and community through service, they also play a critical role in shaping how students perceive the learning climate. Faculty members influence the learning environment through multiple mechanisms at many different levels: "setting institutional academic policies, structuring curricula, and decid[ing] what to teach and how to design opportunities for learning in the classroom" (Ryder et al., 2016, p. 348). While all of these mechanisms influence learning, the proximity of the classroom environment to student learning is the most powerful (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Substantial empirical evidence highlights the importance of educators' role in advancing DEI efforts on HEI campuses. Aragón et al. (2017) conducted a study, for example, looking at how 'colorblind' and multicultural ideologies are associated with faculty adoption of inclusive teaching practices. 'Colorblindness' in the context of their study refers to an ideology that downplays differences such as race and ethnicity rather than embraces them (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). The findings of their study suggest that when faculty use inclusive teaching practices – specifically by applying multicultural rather than colorblind approaches to teaching –they report greater participation in the classroom by traditionally underrepresented students. Additionally,

research shows that offering diversity-related coursework increases students' awareness of institutional discrimination and their empathic perspective-taking (Muller & Miles, 2017), as well as contributes to greater bystander intervention in cases of discrimination (Dessel et al., 2017). Faculty also play an important role outside the classroom by mentoring students of underrepresented and minoritized groups and providing advice and information that supports their success (Gasman et al., 2017).

Though educators' involvement in DEI efforts is essential to their success, the challenge remains that many faculty may be simply unsure of how to behave or which actions to take to foster inclusive learning environments, and frameworks such as Inclusive Excellence often lack clear guidance. To address this challenge, many scholars (i.e., Clayton-Pederson, 2022; Landorf et al., 2018; Romsa et al., 2019) have outlined best practices for effective teaching that enhance learning outcomes for all students. Based on Kuh's (2008) research on the demonstrable impact of High Impact Practices (HIPs) on student learning outcomes, as well as on her personal research on student outcomes, the four best practices listed below were put forth by Clayton-Pedersen (2022):

> 1. Effectively adopting teaching practices known to have a positive impact on learning outcomes (e.g., high-impact practices [HIPs]);
> 2. Broadly implementing equitable teaching practices (i.e., providing faculty and staff professional development focused on equity-minded approaches that support all students' desire to learn);
> 3. Robustly assessing [disaggregated] student learning outcomes (e.g., examining student learning outcomes disaggregated by students' entering characteristics such as

race/ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status, previous learning versus solely reviewing grades); and

4. Intentionally identifying and exploiting students' previous successes, recognizing and addressing the gaps in their learning because both strategies are needed to build new knowledge (i.e., leverage students' strengths and identify means to overcome the weaknesses). (pp. 27–28)

Considine et al. (2017) agree that educators' communication and behaviors can dramatically impact student learning. They also acknowledge, however, that faculty often experience barriers on personal and institutional levels that may delay or prohibit them from implementing these best practices. As faculty may lack the political power necessary to effect change, the authors suggest they must "use their own agency to confront the powerful structure of the status quo and create coalitions that can respond collectively" (p. 181). Few university instructors, however, have formal training in pedagogy and like most people, may harbor "deep unconscious biases that [they] do not even know they hold that prevent them from modeling inclusive classrooms" (Valentino, 2019, p. 19). Inclusive behavior and practices are not commonly or explicitly taught. However, as has been discussed, input from all stakeholders – including faculty members – is paramount to advancing institutional DEI initiatives. This study explores the potential of intercultural education to contribute to these initiatives.

Inclusion Competence

The Kozai Group, whose Inclusion Competencies Inventory (discussed in detail in Chapter 4) this study uses to measure inclusion competence, suggests that to behave inclusively, we must possess what the authors refer to as *inclusion competence*. They define inclusion

competence as “an ability to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups” (Kozai Group, 2022) and argue that:

> Maintaining a high degree of inclusion competence is a necessity in order to be more inclusive with people who differ from you, whether it be race, ethnicity, generational, religion, country culture, gender identity, ability, socio-economic class, political mindset, or other areas. Having inclusion competence enables an individual to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups and other groups that are different from one another (Kozai Group, 2022b, p. 1).

The Kozai Group, comprising five scholars and practitioners of global leadership and intercultural competence, identifies three key factors encompassing six dimensions that make up these competencies. These factors include: *Knowing Yourself, Knowing Others,* and *Bridging Differences. Knowing Yourself* involves one’s self-awareness and sensitivity to one’s own social tendencies, as well as one’s likelihood to be emotionally resilient in challenging contexts. *Knowing Others* refers to one’s interest in and actions to develop relationships with people who differ from oneself and the ability to understand them. *Bridging Differences* pertains to one’s interest in multiple perspectives and the ability to see and value them and be sensitive to the inequities present in many contexts (Kozai Group, 2022a).

While the term *inclusion competence* is not a term used widely in the literature, other scholars have identified similar characteristics, traits, and behaviors necessary to promote inclusion across cultural groups. Researchers at Deloitte, for instance, developed an Inclusive Leadership Model outlining six signature traits that enable leaders to operate more effectively across diversity. These characteristics include:

- Commitment – a deep commitment to diversity and inclusion and the ability to articulate this commitment authentically, challenge the status quo, and take responsibility for change
- Courage – humble about capabilities and invites contributions from others
- Cognizant of bias – conscious of one's blind spots and flaws in the system, works to ensure opportunities for others
- Curiosity – open mindset, curious about others, listens without judgment, and seeks to understand
- Culturally intelligent – attentive to others' cultures and able to adapt as needed
- Collaborative – empowers others, and creates conditions such as team cohesion for diversity of thinking to flourish. (Bourke, 2016)

The development of this model was informed by an extensive literature review as well as seventeen interviews conducted with leaders at businesses and organizations in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United States. The interviews covered a range of topics relating to diversity, inclusion, and leadership style.

Similarly, Gundling and Williams (2021) refer to five key dimensions that they view as critical to inclusivity: *learning about bias, building key skills, working across boundaries, becoming a champion,* and *getting results*. *Learning about bias* pertains to how aware one is of their own biases, and how one learns about others who are different. *Building key skills* considers what critical baseline skills one demonstrates for behaving inclusively. *Working across boundaries* considers how successfully one works across various aspects of diversity such as gender, generational, functional, cognitive, or cultural diversity. *Becoming a champion* involves

one's ability to "champion inclusion" (p. 3), and finally, *getting results* considers how well one links inclusion to results in the workplace (Aperian Global, 2021).

While some of the literature in this section refers to competence (Kozai Group, 2022a), and other literature refers to traits or characteristics (Casey & Robinson, 2017; Kincey et al., 2022) or specific behaviors (Gundling & Williams, 2021) of people with inclusion competence, there is consensus that to be more inclusive with those who differ from oneself requires self-exploration and personal development (Chavez et al., 2003). Chavez et al. refer to this form of personal development as diversity development, which they define as "cognitive, affective, and behavioral growth processes toward consciously valuing complex and integrated differences in others and ourselves" (p. 453).

Though not often discussed in the same context, the competence required "to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups" (Kozai Group, 2022a, para. 1), otherwise known as inclusion competence, is similar to that required of intercultural competence, which will be discussed in the following section. There are, however, also some key areas of divergence, as highlighted in Chapter 3. This study explores whether a statistically significant relationship exists between intercultural competence and inclusion competence and the direction of that relationship, positive, negative, or neutral.

Intercultural Competence

As noted in Chapter 1, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of intercultural competence. In addition, multiple terms are often used interchangeably to describe the same concept. Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) offer a comprehensive overview of many of the widely recognized models that have been explored in the literature. While the authors acknowledge that these models are highly diverse in their disciplines, terminologies, and scholarly and practical

objectives, they suggest that there is also “extensive commonality across models” and speak to the suspicion that “conceptual wheels are being reinvented at the expense of legitimate progress” (p. 45). Bennett (2013) concurs, arguing that,

> Whether it is called “intercultural effectiveness” (Vulpe et al., 2001); “cultural intelligence” (Earley & Ang, 2003; Peterson, 2004; Thomas & Inkson, 2004); “global competence” (Bird & Osland, 2004; Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006); “intercultural communication competence” (Byram, 2012; Collier, 1989; Dinges & Baldwin, 1996; Hammer, 1989; Kim, 1991; Spitzberg, 1994; Wiseman, 2002); “culture learning” (Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2002) or “intercultural competence,” (Lustig & Koester, 2009), there is a fair consensus that we are describing the capacity to interact effectively and appropriately across cultures” (Bennett, 2014, p. 4).

Amongst their commonalities, the most widely-used definitions of intercultural competence generally refer to interactive objectives as “effective” and “appropriate.” According to Arasaratnam-Smith (2017), effectiveness refers to “the ability to achieve one’s goals in a particular exchange," and appropriateness indicates “the ability to do so in a manner that is acceptable to the other person" (p. 7). In addition to these similarities, many commonly used definitions of intercultural competence also include reference to cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. The cognitive dimension, or mindset, includes “knowledge of culture-general frameworks, of specific cultures, of identity development patterns, of cultural adaptation processes and of cultural self-awareness” (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 8). The affective dimension, or “heartset, of attitudes and motivation includes first and foremost curiosity, as well as initiative, non-judgmentalness, risk-taking, cognitive flexibility, open-mindedness, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility, and resourcefulness” (p. 9). Finally, the behavioral dimension, also known as the

skillset, includes “the ability to empathize, gather appropriate information, listen, perceive accurately, adapt, build relationships, resolve problems, and manage social interactions and anxiety” (p. 8).

Though there is an artificial bifurcation of intercultural training for global sojourners and DEI training, (J. M. Bennett, 2013; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 2000), there is significant complementarity in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of intercultural competence and inclusion competence. To the extent that these competences allow individuals to interact effectively and appropriately across difference, so too might they enable them to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups. At the same time, the two constructs diverge in the cognitive domain due to the differing sets of knowledge and factual information required of each competence. These areas of complementarity and divergence form the basis of this study’s conceptual framework, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

In summary, an emerging body of literature highlights the shortcomings of current DEI efforts at HEIs in the United States and calls for more effective strategies for creating campus cultures that are truly welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and just. While this need is widely recognized, there is a lack of consensus in terms of how to implement change. Much of the existing literature focuses on governance practices and broad institutional policies and initiatives such as the Inclusive Excellence framework, which have proven difficult to implement. Less research focuses on the role that individuals – specifically faculty – may play and the action that may be taken at the individual level to contribute to the development of inclusive campus cultures. This study contributes to the literature by exploring the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Understanding the nature of the relationship

between the two constructs will help lay a roadmap for creating more effective and comprehensive institutional strategies and will enable stakeholders across HEI campuses to engage more meaningfully in DEI efforts.

Chapter 3 : Conceptual Framework

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework underpinning this study. Based on the literature on competences –specifically intercultural competence and inclusion competence – and the complementarity in each of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of each (see Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3), this study's conceptual framework explores the relationship between these two constructs. The following sections will discuss the complementarity and divergence in each of these dimensions in depth following a brief discussion on the concept of competence.

Competence

Though there is a lack of consensus among scholars on the definition of competence – intercultural or otherwise (Shippmann et al., 2000) – many common definitions refer to a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills held by an individual or team that is associated with high performance. Mirabile (1997), for example, defines competence as "a knowledge, skill, ability, or characteristic associated with high performance on a job" (p. 73). Similarly, Spencer et al. (1994) define the term as "a combination of motives, traits, self-concepts, attitudes or values, content knowledge or cognitive behavior skills; any individual characteristic that can be reliably measured or counted and that can be shown to differentiate superior from average performers" (p. 4). The cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of competence may also be referred to as the *head, heart, and hand concept* (Hayles & Russell, 1997) or as a *mindset, heartset, and skillset* (J. M. Bennett, 2009). The three domains are described as follows:

- Cognitive: knowledge, data, factual information
- Affective: awareness, empathy, values, emotional understanding
- Behavioral: interpersonal interaction and communication skills (Hayles, 2013)

Approaches to effective and appropriate interaction across difference must involve all three components.

Indeed, both intercultural competence, defined as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2008, p. 33), and inclusion competence, or the "ability to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups" (Kozai Group, 2022a, para. 1) complement each other, especially in the affective and behavioral domains. In the affective domain, they both require curiosity, a sense of "initiative, non-judgementalness, risk-taking, cognitive flexibility, open-mindedness, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility and resourcefulness" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97), as well as openness to change and valuing different perspectives (Gundling & Williams, 2021). In the behavioral domain, they require empathy, the ability to "gather appropriate information, listen, perceive accurately, adapt, build relationships, resolve problems, and manage social interactions and anxiety" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97). Though intercultural competence and inclusion competence are quite complementary in the affective and behavioral domains, the different knowledge and factual information required of the two constructs leads to divergence in the cognitive domain. In particular, inclusion competence requires an understanding of different types of unconscious bias, macro and micro-aggressions, and issues related to power and privilege that are often overlooked in the intercultural space, while intercultural competence requires knowledge of culture-general and culture specific frameworks, identity development patterns, and cultural adaptation processes that are generally not discussed in relation to inclusion competence. Each of these competences will be discussed in more depth in the sections that follow.

Cognitive Competence

Areas of Complementarity Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence. Intercultural competence and inclusion competence share one key area of complementarity in the cognitive domain. The most important competence in this domain for each construct is cultural self-awareness, or knowledge of oneself. Cultural self-awareness refers to "our recognition of the cultural patterns that have influenced our identities and that are reflected in the various culture groups to which we belong, always acknowledging the dynamic nature of both culture and identity. This self-awareness of who we are culturally is a prerequisite for the development of intercultural sensitivity" (J. M. Bennett, 2013, p. 5). Knowledge of oneself, including of our interpersonal style, behavioral tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses, are also critical to inclusion competence (Bird et al., 2022).

Areas of Divergence Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence. While intercultural competence and inclusion competence are similar in that they both require self-awareness, there is also significant divergence between the two constructs in the cognitive domain. Both competences require mindsets that facilitate effective and appropriate interaction across difference, however, the specific knowledge, data, and factual information required of each differ. The cognitive domain or *mindset* of intercultural competence includes "*knowledge* of culture-general maps or frameworks, of specific cultures, of identity development patterns, of cultural adaptation processes, and of cultural self-awareness" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97), as well as sociolinguistic awareness (Deardorff, 2008). Culture-general frameworks refer to the patterns that may be used to explore any other culture to understand, for instance, how individualistic or collectivist a group is; how a group thinks about and manages time; how a group organizes and thinks about power; how direct or indirect a group is, etc. (Arasaratnam &

Doerfel, 2005; J. M. Bennett, 2013, 2015; Hammer et al., 1978; Hofstede et al., 2010). Culture-specific, on the other hand, refers to patterns that may exist in any one culture in which we are interested (J. M. Bennett, 2009). Knowledge of cultural patterns, amongst other cognitive abilities, has been recognized "as the first crucial aspect in intercultural competence development because [they] assist an individual to attune appropriate behavioral adjustment to cultural differences" (Malau-Aduli et al., 2019, p. 2).

Promoting a sense of inclusion across cultural groups also requires a specific mindset and knowledge of key concepts. These concepts, however, differ somewhat from those necessary for intercultural competence. The cognitive domain of inclusion competence includes knowledge and understanding of different types of unconscious biases, knowledge of macro- and micro-inequities, knowledge of power dynamics in organizational structures and individual relationships, and an understanding of power and privilege and their impact on inclusion and equity (Gundling & Williams, 2021; Kozai Group, 2022b). According to Gundling and Williams (2021),

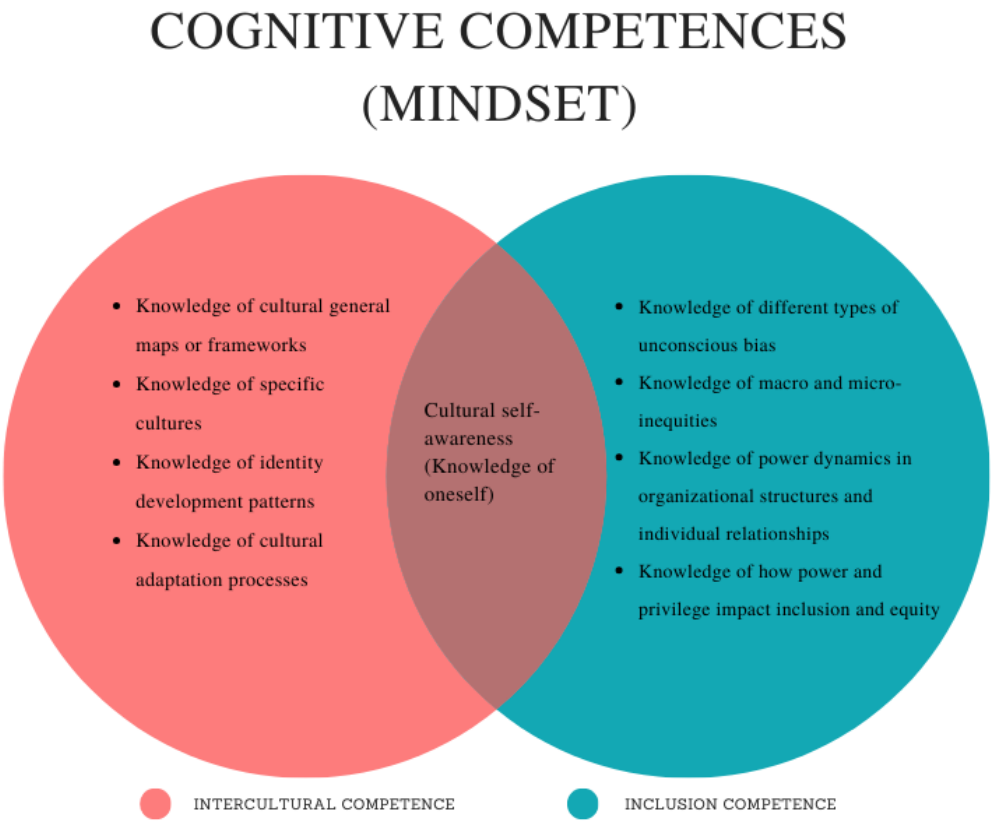
> psychology and anthropology, now augmented by neuroscience and its access to functional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) data, have identified brain-based patterns of human behavior – "fight or flight," for instance – that are linked to survival and tend to reinforce bias. National organizational cultures, which embody shared knowledge and are themselves a collective means of survival, can also support forms of bias that are hard to detect. (p. 62)

Learning about the different types of biases, they argue, is the first step in being able to recognize them, preventing them from inhibiting effective interactions, and allowing us to build bridges across differences.

This understanding of different types of unconscious bias, macro- and micro-aggressions, and issues related to power and privilege is often overlooked in the intercultural space (Gunther, 2020; Harvey, 2021; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009). Scholars including Gorski (2016) have criticized intercultural education for this reason, arguing that no amount of knowledge of different cultures can sufficiently prepare one to "recognize and respond justly to the insidious and often implicit and intersectional inequities experienced by many students—to the racism, xenophobia, heterosexism, ableism, economic injustice, Islamophobia, sexism, and other oppressions they may experience through unjust educational policy and practice" (p. 224). The complementarity and divergence in the cognitive domain of intercultural competence and inclusion competence are shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

Cognitive Domain of Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence



Affective Competence

Areas of Complementarity Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence. As can be seen in Figure 3.2, there is significant complementarity in the affective domain of intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Perhaps the most important area of complementarity between the two competences in this domain is curiosity (Deardorff, 2006; Gregersen et al., 1998; Mendenhall et al., 2013). Opdal (2001) defines curiosity in this context as "the state of mind that signals we have reached the limits of our present understanding, and that things may be different from how they look" (p. 33). Indeed, this would appear essential in accomplishing both intercultural and inclusion goals.

In addition, the affective domain, or *heartset*, of both intercultural competence and inclusion competence includes "initiative, non-judgementalness, risk-taking, cognitive flexibility, open-mindedness, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility and resourcefulness" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97), as well as openness to change and valuing different perspectives (Gundling & Williams, 2021). Scholars including Deardorff (2006) have emphasized the foundational role of attitude in intercultural competence, arguing that it is "a fundamental entry-point for the learning process to occur" (p. 255). Specifically, they argue that "the attitudes of openness, respect (valuing all cultures), and curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity) are viewed as fundamental to intercultural competence" (p. 255). Similarly, an attitude valuing different perspectives is a key component of inclusion competence (Casey & Robinson, 2017; Gundling & Williams, 2021; Kozai Group, 2022a)

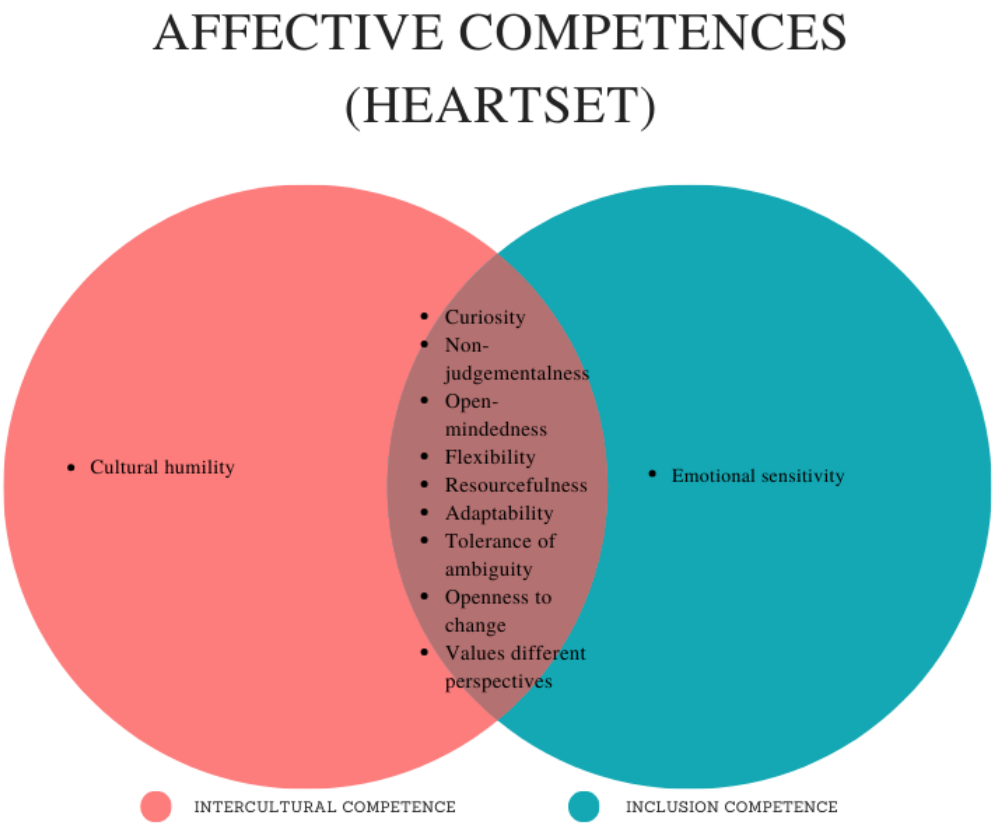
Areas of Divergence Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence. There is much less divergence between intercultural competence and inclusion competence in the affective domain than in the cognitive domain. The main points of difference are that

intercultural competence, in this domain, requires cultural humility, and inclusion competence requires emotional sensitivity. Cultural humility may be described as "a distinctive and desirable way of comprehending cultural differences" (Guskin, 1991, p. 162). Guskin (1991) argued that "successful intercultural communication can only occur by questioning the primacy of our own perspective. Cultural humility refers to respecting the validity of the other person's culture and accepting the creative tension of holding two different perspectives simultaneously" (p. 162). In other words, cultural humility is an acknowledgment that we may not know what is really going on (J. M. Bennett, 2013). While emotional sensitivity may also play a role in intercultural competence, it is much more prominent in the inclusion literature (Casey & Robinson, 2017; Gundling & Williams, 2021; Kozai Group, 2022b).

The core affective component of inclusion competence, on the other hand, is emotional sensitivity. Emotional sensitivity refers to one's interest and ability to read people who might differ from oneself with respect to their thoughts and feelings as well as their verbal and nonverbal communication patterns (Kozai Group, 2022). Emotional sensitivity is necessary for learning about others and developing empathy toward those who are experiencing some form of exclusion, and enables one to apply "key inclusion skills in a targeted and effective manner" (Gundling & Williams, 2021, p. 73).

Figure 3.2

Affective Domain of Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence



Behavioral Competence

Areas of Complementarity Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence. As is shown in Figure 3.3, the behavioral domain, or *skillset*, of intercultural competence, is almost entirely complementary with that of inclusion competence. The behavioral competences required to interact effectively and appropriately across difference are the same behavioral competences required to promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups. These behavioral competences include the ability to empathize, the ability to listen and perceive accurately, the ability to adapt, the ability to resolve problems, the ability to gather appropriate

information, and the ability to manage social interactions and anxiety (M. J. Bennett, 1986; Gundling & Williams, 2021; Kozai Group, 2009, 2022a). The most often cited skill in this dimension of both constructs is empathy. Empathy is defined as "the imaginative intellectual and emotional participation in another person's experience" (Bennett, 1998, p. 207). In other words, empathy is an attempt to understand another person by imagining the individual's perspective. Bennett (2013) is careful to distinguish empathy from sympathy. Sympathy refers to the ability to imagine ourselves in another person's position and is "irrelevant when we find ourselves interacting with someone who does not share our worldview" (p. 8). An intercultural context where worldviews are not shared, language barriers may exist, and values may clash requires empathy rather than sympathy.

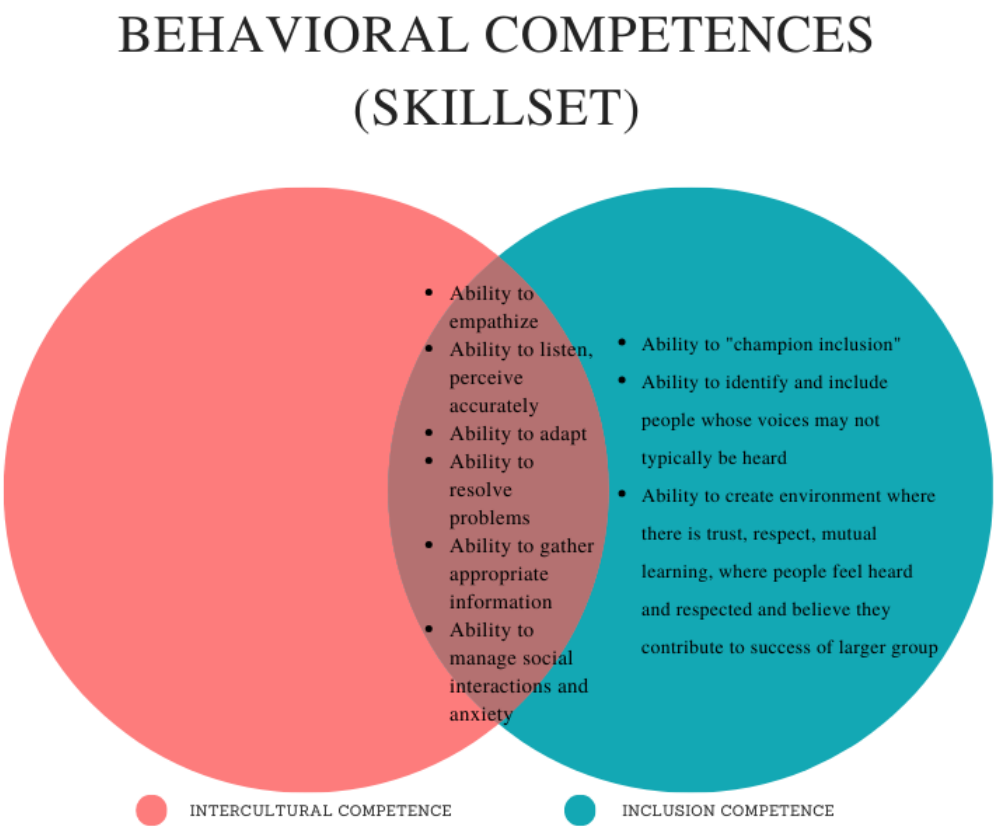
Pettigrew (2008) conducted a meta-analytic study examining numerous studies on how knowledge of other cultural groups affects attitudes. His findings suggested that despite early theorists' beliefs that "intergroup contact led to learning about the outgroup, and this new knowledge in turn reduced prejudice," in fact, "this knowledge mediation does exist but is of minor importance," and that "empathy and perspective taking are far more important" (p. 190). Although this study suggests that empathy may be the most significant mediator of prejudice reduction, it is certainly one of the more challenging competences to develop, whether in global or domestic contexts. In addition to empathy, the behavioral domain of both intercultural competence and inclusion competence includes the ability to "gather appropriate information, listen, perceive accurately, adapt, build relationships, resolve problems, and manage social interactions and anxiety" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97).

Areas of Divergence Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence. While there is significant complementarity in the behavioral domains of intercultural competence

and inclusion competence, there is also some meaningful divergence. This stems from the fact that inclusion competence requires certain competences that are not as critical to intercultural competence. In addition to the behaviors outlined above, for example, inclusion competence also includes the ability to champion inclusion, or "identify means by which inclusive practices can be leveraged to create better performance results" (Gundling & Williams, 2021), the ability to identify and include people whose voices may not typically be heard, the ability to create an environment where there is trust, respect, mutual learning, and where people feel heard and respected and believe they can contribute to the larger group. While these behaviors are certainly critical to engaging effectively across difference, they are not typically associated with intercultural competence. The complementary and diverging competences of both constructs are illustrated in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3

Behavioral Domain of Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence



Conclusion

As discussed throughout this chapter, there is complementarity in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of intercultural competence and inclusion competence – especially the affective and behavioral domains. This complementarity may suggest a positive relationship between the two constructs. In this case, focusing on intentionally developing the intercultural competence of campus community members –especially that of faculty – may be a useful step in addressing some of the common shortcomings of institutional DEI initiatives and promoting more inclusive learning environments at HEIs in the US. Similarly, developing faculty's

inclusion competence may lead to greater competence in intercultural situations, both in and out of the classroom. Either outcome would be a benefit to HEIs and the students they serve.

While there is significant complementarity in the affective and behavioral domains of intercultural competence and inclusion competence, the conceptual framework also highlights notable divergence, particularly in the cognitive domain due to the differing sets of knowledge and factual information required for competence in each area. These areas of divergence between the constructs are important to highlight to show the uniqueness of the two measures. The divergence may suggest a negative relationship or no statistically significant relationship at all between the two constructs in their general sense. In this case, a more holistic approach to educating HEI community members to engage appropriately and effectively across domestic and international diversity may be needed rather than relying on a compartmentalized approach. Those providing opportunities for individuals to develop intercultural competence might consider ways to enhance their programming so as to include learning about unconscious bias, macro and micro-aggressions, and issues related to power and privilege. Similarly, those providing opportunities for community members to develop inclusion competence might include content related to various culture-general and culture-specific frameworks.

Using the research methods discussed in Chapter 4, this study explores the relationship between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence within the context of HEIs in the United States.

Chapter 4 : Research Methodology

Purpose Statement

As discussed throughout the previous chapters, there is a clear need to foster more inclusive learning environments and campus climates at HEIs in the US. An emerging body of literature suggests that the DEI initiatives in place at many institutions are ineffective, however, and highlights the need for more efficient strategies for creating campus cultures that are truly welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and just. This quantitative study explores the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence among faculty members at HEIs in the United States. Studying these two constructs together provides insight into the potential of intercultural education to contribute to institutional DEI efforts. To determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between these two competences, I analyzed data collected using two measurement instruments, the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) and the Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI), which were used to measure participants' intercultural competence and inclusion competence, respectively.

Research Questions

Two primary research questions guided this study:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence?
2. To what extent, if any, do faculty members' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence?

Methodology

This quantitative study used correlational design to explore the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence among faculty at HEIs in the U.S.

Participants were recruited through random sampling of institutions, as outlined below. Faculty were asked to complete an online survey comprising questions from the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES), which was used to assess their intercultural competence, as well as the Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI) which was used to measure their inclusion competence. These psychometric inventories were selected as research instruments because they are accessible, their length is not prohibitive, and they allowed me to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions. While the ICI is still a new instrument and has not yet been used widely in research, both instruments have gone through statistical testing for reliability and validity and have proven reliable and valid (Bird, et al., 2022; Mendenhall et al., 2012).

Sampling Strategy and Method of Data Collection

The sample in the study consisted of faculty at four-year public and not-for-profit private, bachelor's degree-granting HEIs located in the United States.

Institution Sample

Simple random sampling was used to select 50 institutions from over two thousand institutions listed in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) College Navigator portal that meet the study's criteria (four-year, public, or not-for-profit HEIs granting bachelor's degrees). Institutions were selected at random to allow for representation of differences in colleges and universities nationwide on a variety of characteristics, including institutional type and control, size, selectivity, location, and patterns of student residence. Of these fifty institutions, 19 either did not respond to my outreach email or did not have publicly available faculty directories, leaving 31 institutions in the sample. Secondary data on each institution was collected from IPEDS as well. This information included institution type (i.e., research universities, state colleges and universities, private religious institutions, and liberal arts

colleges), size of institution according to the Carnegie size and setting classifications utilized by IPEDS (shown in Appendix A) (*Carnegie Classifications | Size & Setting Classification*, n.d.), percentage of students who are international (visa holders), percentage of students who identify as being from underrepresented racial/ethnic populations (i.e., students who do not identify as white), percentage of faculty or staff who are international, and percentage of faculty or staff who identify as being from underrepresented racial/ethnic populations. This information was collected from IPEDS rather than directly from participants to ensure accuracy, since many participants may not know these statistics about their institutions. These variables were used to control for differences in the institutions where faculty work so as to isolate more robustly the relationship between individual faculty's intercultural competence and inclusion competence.

Participant Sample

The participant sample included 353 faculty at the 31 randomly selected institutions who opted to take the survey. I sent the survey link via email to all faculty at the sample institutions. Sending the surveys electronically was advantageous in that it was cost-effective, quick to administer, and allowed access to a wide population, lending to the generalizability of a study (Cohen et al., 2018). In addition, using an online survey contributed to the accuracy of the data since human error is reduced in entering and processing data digitally. Finally, the data collected could be easily exported or imported into software for processing and subsequent analysis (Cohen et al., 2018).

Participant recruitment took a three-pronged approach. First, I reached out to the institutions' Office of Institutional Research or equivalent seeking assistance in sharing the survey across campus. Of the thirty-one institutions in my sample, only one offered to send the survey to faculty on my behalf. To reach faculty at the other thirty institutions, I wrote web

scraping scripts using Python and Beautiful soup –a Python package for parsing HTML and XML documents – to help me collect email addresses from the institutions' online faculty directories. Again, to maintain high ethical standards, I only collected email addresses from institutions' whose directories were publicly available. I downloaded the email addresses into an Excel spreadsheet and then used Mail Merge to email faculty directly inviting them to participate in the survey. Where I was unable to develop a web scraping program for a website due to my limited coding abilities, I copied and pasted faculty email addresses from institutions' online directories into Excel spreadsheets and then used Mail Merge to send the invitations. While this method was extremely time-consuming, it offered several benefits important to this study. First, this strategy allowed me to calculate a response rate, which would not have been possible through other methods such as convenience sampling, in which I might have used social media or professional networks to recruit participants. Second, this method allowed me to compare participant demographics with data on institutional faculty demographics, which offered a sense of how representative the sample is of faculty at participating institutions. Finally, as mentioned above, while no sampling strategy is perfect, simple random sampling minimized selection bias to the extent possible and contributed to the generalizability of the results as they pertain broadly to faculty at HEIs in the US.

Instruments

Myriad instruments may be used as assessment tools. These instruments are used in a variety of contexts within and outside of higher education, and for different purposes, such as program assessment and analysis, pre- and post- measurement of program impact, personal development for individuals and teams, career and academic advising, and research, to name a few (Lombardi, 2010; Sinicrope et al., 2007). In selecting an instrument, it is important to

consider for what purpose it will be used, as some instruments are better suited for certain purposes, such as for assessment versus personal development. Other important considerations include whether the administrator needs to be certified/qualified to use the instrument, what knowledge, skills, and attitudes are necessary to use the instrument effectively, the amount of time required for participants to take the inventory, the cost involved in administering the instrument – including the cost of materials and training for certification, the languages in which the inventory is available, the method of administration (i.e., online vs. in print), and how the results are processed (Morris, 2017). In addition, one must consider the quality of the instrument, including its reliability and validity.

Instruments commonly used to measure intercultural competence within the educational context include the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI); the Beliefs, Events and Values Inventory (BEVI); the Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI); the Cultural Intelligence Inventory (CQI); and the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES). These five inventories each present unique benefits and drawbacks, and they were thus initially considered for use in this study. Ultimately, the IES, an instrument developed by the Kozai Group, was chosen as it suits the purpose of this study –to assess faculty members' ability to interact effectively across cultural difference. As importantly, the instrument was chosen for its accessibility, both to the researcher in that it is cost-effective and doesn't require that the administrator is certified, and to participants in that the length of the instrument is not prohibitive. In addition, the instrument has been widely used in educational research and has undergone rigorous statistical testing for reliability and validity (Mendenhall et al., 2012).

In terms of instruments used to measure inclusion competence, there were very few available at the time of writing. The Inclusive Behaviors Inventory (IBI), a proprietary

instrument developed by Aperian Global meant to identify inclusion gaps and provide strategies to work more inclusively (Aperian Global, 2021), and the Inclusion Competencies Inventory (ICI) developed by the Kozai Group were both considered for use in this study. Because the IBI involved significant cost to administer, the ICI was selected to measure inclusion competence in this study. While this instrument is still new and has not yet been used widely in research, it is well-suited for this study and has gone through statistical testing for reliability and validity (Bird et al., 2022). In addition to the reliability tests conducted on both instruments by the Kozai Group, I performed reliability analysis for each instrument in my specific research context and with my specific data alongside discriminant validation to determine the extent to which each instrument measures a distinct underlying construct.

The IES

The IES, developed by Mendenhall et al. (2012), is a psychometric inventory designed to assess individuals' ability to interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds. It focuses on three critical dimensions: Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement, and Hardiness. Continuous Learning looks at "how people cognitively approach cultural differences, and the degree to which individuals engage the world by continually seeking to understand themselves and also learn about the activities, behavior, and events that occur in the cross-cultural environment" (p. 7). Interpersonal Engagement focuses on how participants develop and manage relationships with people from other cultures. Finally, Hardiness examines how participants manage the challenges and stress that may arise in navigating cultural differences.

The instrument includes 60 items using a 5-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The dimension *Continuous Learning* contains 19 items, including statements such as "I'm aware of my interpersonal style and can easily describe it to

others" (Kozai Group, 2009, p. 1). The dimension *Intercultural Engagement* has 15 items, including statements such as "I like to figure out why people do the things they do" (p. 1). The final dimension, *Hardiness*, comprises 18 items, such as "It takes me a long time to get over a particularly stressful experience" (p. 1). An overall IES score is generated by calculating the mean of participants' scores in the three main dimensions of the construct. This score ranges between 52 and 250, with higher scores indicating greater intercultural competence. In addition, the instrument contains eight social desirability (SD) items meant to measure the degree to which participants have claimed "unlikely (though not impossible) virtues" in their response pattern. According to the Kozai Group, "this scale provides critically useful insights when interpreting a profile since elevated scores may indicate an overly generous self-portrayal, while very low scores may indicate the respondent was too hard on themselves" (Bird et al., 2022, slide 2). These items proved to be unnecessary in the current study and were dropped from analyses. However, if an individual were to score particularly high or low on the SD items, they may be removed from the analyses so as to avoid bias in the results.

The IES has undergone rigorous reliability and validity testing and has been proven a reliable and valid instrument for predicting the effectiveness of participants' experiences in intercultural encounters (Mendenhall et al., 2012). Statistical analysis indicates the instrument's content validity, criterion-related validity, convergent/divergent validity, differential validity, and face validity (Mendenhall et al., 2012). The overall alpha coefficient reliabilities of the three main dimensions are all above .84 in prior instrument reliability work, as is the alpha coefficient for the instrument as a whole, see the values bolded in Table 4.1 (Mendenhall et al., 2012).

Table 4.1

Reliability of IES Factors as reported by the Kozai Group (Mendenhall et al., 2012)

IES Dimensions	Reliability (coefficient alpha)
Continuous Learning	**0.85**
Self-Awareness	0.76
Exploration	0.82
Interpersonal Engagement	**0.86**
Global Mindset	0.84
Relationship Interest	0.80
Hardiness	**0.84**
Positive Regard	0.79
Emotional Resilience	0.81
IES Total Composite	**0.86**

Participants for the validation study summarized in Table 4.1 were recruited by the researchers from as many professional backgrounds, ethnic groups, and nationalities as possible. The study included 2,308 participants with the following characteristics:

- Age: 8% under age 20, 64% between 20 and 29 years, and 28% age 30 years and older;
- Work position: 2% self-identified as "top-level executives," 12% as "middle management," 16% as "entry-level or supervisory management," 38% as "hourly/non-supervisory," and 32% as "other" (including students).
- Gender: 57% self-identified as male, with the remaining 43% female.
- Nationalities of origin: participants indicated 69 different nationalities of origin, but only 16 countries provided more than 10 unique participants. When grouped by world regions, North America (i.e., Canada and the U.S.) provided 56% of participants,

> Asian countries provided 26%, and Europe provided 11%, with the remaining 7% coming from countries across Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East (Mendenhall et al., 2012).

The reliability analysis I conducted confirmed the validity of the instrument in the context of this study, with an overall coefficient alpha reliability of 0.86. Alpha coefficient reliabilities of the three main dimensions were all at or above 0.86, as may be seen in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Reliability of IES Factors as Determined by My Analyses

IES Dimensions	Reliability (coefficient alpha)
Continuous Learning	**0.88**
Self-Awareness	0.78
Exploration	0.87
Interpersonal Engagement	**0.87**
Global Mindset	0.87
Relationship Interest	0.78
Hardiness	**0.86**
Positive Regard	0.84
Emotional Resilience	0.88
IES Total Composite	**0.86**

The ICI

To measure faculty members' levels of inclusion competence, this study used the ICI. Developed by the Kozai Group in 2021, the ICI is a psychometric instrument designed to measure and evaluate competencies within three different areas that they view as "critical for effective performance related to inclusive behavior and interaction with people who are different from themselves" (Kozai Group, 2021). The ICI measures three Inclusive Engagement factors to

assess inclusion competencies: Knowing Yourself, Knowing Others, and Bridging Differences. Knowing Yourself refers to an "awareness of "who you are" and the inclination to change and develop over time, as well as the likelihood to be adaptive and resilient in challenging situations" (Kozai Group, 2022b). This factor includes two sub-dimensions, Openness to Change and Adaptability. The second dimension, Knowing Others looks at the "interest in and actions to develop relationships with people who differ from you and the ability to better understand them" (p. 1). This dimension includes Connecting with Others and Reading Others as sub-domains. The final dimension, Bridging Differences concerns one's "interest in and ability to see and understand multiple perspectives, and the sensitivity to the inequity in power differences that are present in many scenarios" (Kozai Group, 2022, p. 1). This dimension includes the following sub-dimensions: Valuing Different Perspectives and Power Sensitivity.

The instrument includes 50 items using a 7-point Likert format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The dimension *Knowing Yourself* contains 16 items, including statements such as "I can adapt my behavior to new situations without threatening my identity as a person" and "I can accommodate on things that are important to others without giving up my own core values" (Kozai Group, 2022, p. 1). The dimension *Knowing Others* includes 13 items, including statements such as "If the occasion arose, I would tend to avoid speaking at any length with someone who is not fluent in my native language" (p. 1). The final dimension, *Bridging Differences*, comprises 16 items, such as "I can be comfortable with nearly all kinds of people" and "Once people get some authority, they begin to see themselves as better than others" (p. 1). An overall ICI score is generated by calculating the mean of participants' scores in the three main dimensions of the construct. The instrument also includes five social desirability questions, including "I have never deceived someone to get what I want" and "I can honestly say there's

never been a time when I was really mean to someone else" (p. 1). As with the IES, these question items proved unnecessary and were removed from analyses.

In a recent validation study, all ICI scales were shown to have alpha coefficient reliabilities values ranging from .77 to .91. (Reliability for each factor is shown in Table 4.3, with scale reliability coefficients bolded). The alpha coefficient reliability of the social desirability scale is .83 (Kozai Group, 2022).

Table 4.3

Reliability of ICI Factors as Reported by the Kozai Group (Bird et al., 2022)

ICI Factor	Reliability (coefficient alpha)
Knowing Yourself	**0.79**
Openness to Change	0.85
Adaptability	0.86
Knowing Others	**0.84**
Connecting with Others	0.76
Reading Others	0.90
Bridging Differences	**0.78**
Valuing Different Perspectives	0.81
Power Sensitivity	0.82
ICI Total Composite	**0.88**

While, at the time of writing, the ICI is a new instrument and has not been used in previous research, it was tested with over 500 beta users and has been piloted in various sectors, including higher education (Kozai Group, 2022). The reliability analysis I conducted confirmed the validity of the instrument in this context, with an overall alpha coefficient reliability of 0.88. Alpha coefficient reliabilities of the three main dimensions are displayed in Table 4.4 and range from 0.78 (*Bridging Differences*) to 0.84 (*Knowing Others*).

Table 4.4

Reliability of ICI Factors as Determined by My Analyses

ICI Factor	Reliability (coefficient alpha)
Knowing Yourself	**0.79**
Openness to Change	0.85
Adaptability	0.86
Knowing Others	**0.84**
Connecting with Others	0.76
Reading Others	0.90
Bridging Differences	**0.78**
Valuing Different Perspectives	0.81
Power Sensitivity	0.82
ICI Total Composite	**0.86**

Adapted Instrument

For the purpose of this study, question items from the IES and ICI were combined into a single instrument using a 7-point Likert format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Nine question items overlapped between the IES and ICI and were removed from the merged instrument since it is difficult to argue that two constructs are distinct when the same indicator is used to measure them (Cheung et al., 2023). To further ensure the instruments measure two different underlying constructs, I conducted divergent validity analyses by comparing a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model that assumed a single factor with the two instruments combined (i.e., a one-factor model) with a model assuming separate IES and the ICI constructs, which left the two instruments disaggregated (i.e., a two-factor model). The two-

factor model had an AIC[1] of 86726.896 and BIC[2] of 87647.115, which fit the data significantly better than the one-factor model, with an AIC of 87444.465 and BIC of 88360.818. Both AIC and BIC were lower for the two-factor solution, offering evidence that the IES and ICI measure empirically distinct constructs (χ^2 (1)=719.57, p<0.001) (Whatley et al., 2023).

Variables

The conceptual framework informing this study, prior research on intercultural competence and inclusion competence, and the data collection instruments themselves guided variable selection. Specifically, the outcome variable was inclusion competence, as represented by Overall ICI score. Based on previous work on the construct validity of the instrument, the predictor variable of interest is intercultural competence, as represented by Overall IES score. In addition, control variables for participant background characteristics and institutional characteristics were used, as summarized in Table 4.5.

Control variables were selected based on prior literature, including Kohli Bagwe and Haskollar's (2020) systemic literature review examining variables impacting intercultural competence. Their review found relationships between many of the variables employed in this study and intercultural competence. It was reasonable, therefore, to assume that they may also impact inclusion competence. For example, the studies Kohli Bagwe and Haskollar (2020) reviewed also examined the relationship between intercultural competence and other participant demographics including gender (n = 25 studies), age (n = 17), education (n = 14), geography (n = 14), and race/ethnicity (n = 11) (Kohli Bagwe & Haskollar, 2020). The results of the studies

[1] Akaike information criterion (AIC) is a fined technique based on in-sample fit to estimate the likelihood of a model to predict/estimate the future values.
[2] Bayesian information criterion (BIC) is another criteria for model selection that measures the trade-off between model fit and complexity of the model. A lower AIC or BIC value indicates a better fit (*Akaike Information Criterion - an Overview | ScienceDirect Topics*, n.d.)

varied widely enough that it was difficult to draw conclusions regarding the relationship between these variables and intercultural competence. Therefore, this study took the view that these characteristics may relate to inclusive competence and included them as control variables. Similarly, institutional characteristics including size, type, location, and demographic make-up may also impact educators' levels of inclusion competence as they likely impact the extent and type of interactions faculty have with diversity in their day-to-day lives. Therefore, these characteristics were included as control variables as well.

Table 4.5

Predictor and Control Variables used in Analyses

Intercultural Competence (IES) (Predictor)	**Demographic Characteristics (DEMS) (Control)**	**Institutional Characteristics (INST) (Control)**
Overall IES Score	Race/ethnicity	Type of HEI
	Country of Citizenship	Size of HEI
	Age	Pct International Students
	Gender	Pct Minoritized Students
	Sexual Orientation	Pct International Faculty/Staff
	Job Position	Pct Minority Faculty/Staff
	Job Level	Region

Analysis

To answer this study's first research question (What is the relationship, if any, between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence?), I utilized ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. OLS is useful in capturing a linear relationship between predictor variables and continuous outcome variables, such as the ICI score that is the focus of this study. The overall ICI score (ICI_i) served as the dependent variable, while the overall IES score (IES_i),

served as the predictor variable of interest. Participant demographics ($DEMS_i$) and institutional characteristics ($INST_i$) were also included as predictor variables. This regression model in equation form is as follows:

$$ICI_i = a + b_1 IES_i + DEMS_i\, b_2 + INST_i\, b_3 + e. \quad (1)$$

The remaining terms in (1) represent the following: a = the intercept, b_1, b_2, and b_3 = vectors of regression coefficients corresponding to the overall IES score (IES), demographic (DEMS), and institutional (INST) characteristics, and an error term, which is represented by e.

To answer RQ2 (To what extent, if any, do faculty members' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence?), I ran an additional regression model including interaction terms (the overall IES score and participants' demographic characteristics). The interaction terms helped explore whether the relationship between the predictor variable (the Overall IES score) and the outcome variable (the Overall ICI score) changes depending on the value of another predictor variable (participants' demographic characteristics). To create these variables, I multiplied the predictor variable of interest (the overall IES score) by dummy variables representing participants' demographic characteristics. The regression model with this interaction term in equation form is as follows:

$$ICI_i = a + b_1 IES_i + DEMS_i\, b_2 + INST_i b_3 + IES_i * DEMS_i\, b_4 + e. \quad (2)$$

All terms in (2) are defined as before, with the exception of the interaction term, which is represented by $IES_1 * DEMS_1$, and b_4, which is a corresponding vector of regression coefficients.

Ethics of Research

I conducted this study using an anonymous survey as its primary data collection instrument. Although an email address was collected as a part of the survey, I anonymized the

data by assigning participant numbers and deleting the email addresses. The sample included only faculty at institutions with publicly available faculty directories. Participants voluntarily opted into the study and were provided a written informed consent form highlighting that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time. The study did not involve the collection of sensitive information, and the research did not involve children or other vulnerable populations. Participants, rather, were all faculty at HEIs in the United States who had no relationship with the researcher. Therefore, researcher-participant power dynamics posed no significant challenge. While participants were offered no compensation for participation in the study, the hope is that they will benefit from the results of the study, which will be shared at their request. The findings of this study may help shed light on action that could be taken at the individual level to contribute to fostering more inclusive and equitable campus environments in higher education, which would benefit participants, their institutions, and society more broadly.

Generalizability of Findings

This study sought to maximize the generalizability of its findings by utilizing random sampling and a large sample size. According to Cohen et al. (2018), this method of probability sampling "is useful if the researcher wishes to be able to make generalizations because it seeks representativeness of the wider population" (p. 214). The wider population, in this case, is faculty at HEIs in the US. Selecting institutions randomly allowed for the representation of differences in colleges and universities nationwide on a variety of characteristics, including institutional type and control, size, selectivity, location, and patterns of student residence. While it is impossible to ensure that a representative group of individuals at each institution will respond to a survey, sending surveys out to all faculty at these institutions may have helped to

increase the likelihood of representation of differences in personal and professional characteristics in the participant sample.

Limitations

While I hope this study will make a considerable contribution toward a better understanding of the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusive behavior, it does, of course, have its limitations. One limitation involves the sampling method. Although I used simple random sampling to select institutions in an attempt to recruit a diverse group of participants, it is possible that because participants voluntarily opted into the study, participants may disproportionately comprise faculty who have an interest in developing intercultural competence or inclusive behavior and may not accurately represent the entire population.

Another limitation of this study is the inability to control for certain participant demographics and institutional characteristics that may have impacted participants' levels of intercultural competence and inclusion competence. For instance, significant research has examined the impact of participants' previous intercultural experiences on intercultural competence development and has found a positive correlation between the two (Kohli Bagwe & Haskollar, 2020). While I had hoped to collect information from participants regarding their previous intercultural experiences, the organization that collected the data on my behalf did not include these items in the survey that participants received. Similarly, institutional characteristics were collected from IPEDS and did not include more detailed information about institutional interventions such as DEI-related programming or professional development opportunities aimed at increasing educators' intercultural competence or inclusion competence. Though outside the scope of this study, an exploration of the impact of such professional efforts could make for interesting future research.

Finally, this study is correlational in nature and was designed to provide conclusive evidence of a correlation between the two constructs. The results do not provide evidence of a causal relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence. While the causal direction of the relationship between the two competences (if there is one) is unclear, understanding whether a relationship exists at all helps consider ways in which faculty training and professional development opportunities may contribute to creating inclusive learning environments at HEIs in the US. For those who would like to establish a causal relationship or to delve into the directionality of how one construct might affect the other, a different study would be merited. It is my intention that the findings presented here provide preliminary evidence of the relationship. Future research designed to test for a causal relationship could build on these findings.

Chapter 5: Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analysis of the data collected in this quantitative study. The chapter begins with descriptive statistics of the characteristics of the institutional sample as well as the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. It then reports the results of the analyses using two regression models. Finally, I discuss what these results tell us about the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence among faculty members at HEIs in the United States.

Descriptive Statistics

Institutional Characteristics

Descriptive statistics that summarize the institutional characteristics of all sample institutions (n=31) included in the dataset are presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. These data were obtained from the Education Department's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), as reported in the fall of 2021, the most recently available data at the time of writing. Institutional characteristics include institution type, control, and size as defined by the Carnegie size and setting classifications utilized by IPEDS (shown in Appendix A), as well as the percentage of faculty and students who identify as minoritized or international[3]. Sample institutions were located across the country and included institutions of various sizes and types (see Table 5.1). Regarding region, 23% of the institutions in the sample were located in the Southeast, while 19% were located in the Far West. Other regions represented include New

[3] According to IPEDS, "minority" refers to people who are nonwhite and whose race is known. This includes those who are two or more races; it does not include "nonresident aliens," as their ethnicity or race is unknown. "International," in this study, refers to the IPEDS category "Nonresident / foreign" – those of all racial and ethnic groups who are in the United States on a visa or temporary basis and do not have the right to remain indefinitely (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022) For more detailed information on how IPEDS defines race and ethnicity, see Appendix B.

England (16%), the Mid East (16%), Great Lakes (16%) and the Plains (10%). Regions not represented in this random selection of institutions include the Southwest, the Rocky Mountains, US Service Schools, and Outlying Areas. In terms of control, 61% of the institutions in the sample were private and 39% were public. As for size, 42% of the institutions in the sample were classified as medium-sized, with between 3,000 to 9,999 degree-seeking students, 26% were classified as small, with between 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students, and the remaining institutions were classified as very small, with fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students, or large, with at least 10,000 degree-seeking students (16% each). The majority (55%) of all institutions were classified as highly residential, while the remaining 45% were considered primarily residential.

Table 5.1

Sample Institution Characteristics

Variable	N	Percentage
Region		
New England	5	16%
Mid East	5	16%
Great Lakes	5	16%
Plains	3	10%
Southeast	7	23%
Far West	6	19%
Classification		
Doctoral	8	26%
Master's	11	35%
Baccalaureate	8	26%
Baccalaureate/Associate's	4	13%
Associate's	0	0%
Control		
Public	12	39%
Private	19	61%
Size and Setting		
Very Small (fewer than 1,000)	5	16%
Primarily nonresidential	0	0%
Primarily residential	1	3%
Highly residential	4	13%
Small (1,000–2,999)	8	26%
Primarily nonresidential	0	0%
Primarily residential	4	13%
Highly residential	4	13%
Medium (3,000–9,999)	13	42%
Primarily nonresidential	0	0%
Primarily residential	4	13%
Highly residential	9	29%
Large (at least 10,000)	5	16%
Primarily nonresidential	0	0%
Primarily residential	5	16%
Highly residential	0	0%

Note: Information about the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education Size & Setting Classifications may be found in Appendix A.

Table 5.2 displays the percentage of minoritized and international students and faculty at institutions included in the dataset. Institutions reported that an average of 41.4% of their student body identifies as minoritized, and 5.6% as international students (of any race). Regarding faculty, an average of 31.8% of faculty at the institutions identify as minoritized and 2.6% as international.

Table 5.2

Average Percentage of Minoritized and International Students and Faculty at Sample Institutions

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Percent Minoritized Students	41.1	0.1	0	52.8
Percent International Students	5.6	0.26	4.3	98.7
Percent Minoritized Faculty	31.8	0.03	0	13
Percent International Faculty	2.6	0.26	4.2	100

The make-up of the student body in the institutional sample reflects that of the average HEI in the US where, on average, 45 percent of students identify as minorities and international students account for 4.7% of total college student enrollment (IIE Open Doors, 2022). The faculty make-up of the institutional sample was fairly similar to that of the average HEI in the US where, on average, 3.1% of the faculty are international, though the average percentage of faculty in the sample who identify as minoritized was higher than the national average of 21.1 percent (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022).

Participant Demographic Characteristics

Five hundred thirty-three faculty of all levels (Instructors, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, and Professors) from the 31 sample institutions participated in this study by responding to the survey (response rate = 3.9% [533/13,543]). One hundred eighty-one of the

responses were incomplete and were not included in the dataset, leaving 353 valid survey responses.

Table 5.3 presents a full summary of the characteristics of the faculty who participated in the study. Participants indicated a number of countries of citizenship, with the majority of participants (91.5%) reporting the United States as their only country of citizenship[4]. The majority of participants were white (81%) females (56.7%) who held a doctoral degree (71%). Regarding level of education, other participants included those who had completed a bachelor's degree (n=7), some graduate coursework (n=2), one or more master's degrees (n=64), or a post-doctoral degree (n=26), as well as some current doctoral candidates (n=4). Participants were mostly straight (79.3%) and ranged in age from under 39 years old (24.4%) to over 70 (6.5%), with nearly equal representation in the 39 and under age group (24.4%), 40-49 age group (24.6%) 50-59 age group (22.9%), and 60-69 group (21.5%). In comparison to the faculty make-up at institutions nationally, the percentage of faculty members in the participant sample who identify as white was slightly higher than the national average where, in the fall of 2021, 73 percent identified as white. The percentage of participants in the sample who identified as female, however, is close to the national average where women account for 54 percent of full-time faculty members (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022).

[4] Other countries represented in the participant sample included Canada (n=2), France (n=1), Germany (n=2), Ghana (n=1), India (n=2), Iran (n=1), Netherlands (n=1), South Africa (n=1), Tonga (n=1), UK (n=1), US and Argentina (n=1), US and Brazil (n=1), US and Canada (n=2), US and China (n=1), US and Croatia (n=1), US and Egypt (n=1), US and Germany (n=2), US and Ghana (n=1), US and Italy (n=2), US and Mexico (n=1), US, France and UK (n=1), US, Uruguay and Italy (n=1).

Table 5.3

Participant Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	**N**	**Percent**
Education		
Completed doctoral/terminal degree (e.g., PhD, JD, MD)	250	70.8%
Other	103	29.2%
Job Level	N	Percent
Professional employee or self- employed	233	66.0%
Other	120	34.0%
Age	N	Percent
39 and under	86	24.0%
40 to 49	87	24.6%
50 to 59	81	22.9%
60 to 69	76	21.5%
70 and above	23	6.5%
Gender Identity	N	Percent
Female	200	56.7%
Male	142	40.2%
Other	11	3.1%
Sexual Orientation	N	Percent
Straight	280	79.3%
Not Straight	73	20.7%
Ethnicity	N	Percent
White / Caucasian	286	81.0%
Other	67	19.0%
Country of Citizenship		
USA	323	91.5%
Other	30	8.5%

Participants' Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence

The mean Overall IES score of the participant sample is 5.26 (standard deviation [sd] = 0.554), and the mean Overall ICI score is 5.14 (sd=0.511). The skewness of the Overall IES scores was found to be -0.12, indicating a fairly symmetrical distribution, and the kurtosis was 2.56, indicating that there were fewer and less extreme outliers than the normal distribution. Regarding the distribution of the Overall ICI scores, the skewness was found to be 0.10 and the kurtosis was 2.74, again suggesting a normal and fairly flat distribution. Table 5.4 presents the

mean Overall IES and ICI scores as well as mean scores for the sub-dimensions of each construct.

Table 5.4

Mean IES and ICI Scores Grouped by Each Construct's Main Dimensions and Sub-dimensions (n=353)

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
IES				
Continuous Learning	5.774	0.545	3.833	7.000
Self-Awareness	5.429	0.697	3.111	7.000
Exploration	6.119	0.603	3.667	7.000
Interpersonal Engagement	5.217	0.954	2.643	7.000
World Orientation	4.722	1.355	1.000	7.000
Relationship Interest	5.711	0.834	3.143	7.000
Hardiness	4.804	0.748	2.984	7.000
Positive Regard	4.986	0.880	2.778	7.000
Emotional Resilience	4.621	1.045	2.000	7.000
Overall IES	5.265	0.554	3.683	6.524
ICI				
Knowing Yourself	4.906	0.725	3.133	7.000
Openness to Change	6.080	0.652	3.667	7.000
Adaptability	3.732	1.181	1.000	7.000
Knowing Others	5.234	0.725	3.417	7.000
Connecting with Others	6.042	0.665	3.667	7.000
Reading Others	4.426	1.095	1.167	7.000
Bridging Difference	5.280	0.608	2.667	6.619
Valuing Different Perspectives	5.733	0.682	3.333	7.000
Power Sensitivity	4.826	0.941	2.000	6.857
Overall ICI	5.140	0.511	3.856	6.692

Regression Results

Given the relatively small sample size (N=353) and few degrees of freedom available for this study, I conducted initial statistical tests to determine which participant demographic characteristics and institutional characteristics appeared significantly related to the predictor variable of interest (Overall IES score) or the outcome variable (Overall ICI score) to limit the

number of control variables in the regression analyses. In terms of participant demographics, *t*-tests comparing the mean Overall IES and Overall ICI scores of participants who identified themselves as white to those who self-identified as another race or ethnicity revealed significant differences in both their Overall IES scores (t= 2.06, df = 351, $p < 0.05$) and their Overall ICI scores (t=1.96, df = 351, $p < 0.05$). One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) also revealed a significant relationship between participants' age and their Overall IES scores [F(4, 348) =3.31, $p < 0.05$]. Both race/ethnicity and age, therefore, were included in the multiple linear regression models as control variables. Tests revealed no significant relationship between their other demographic characteristics, nor any of the institutional characteristics, and Overall IES or Overall ICI scores. Nonetheless, I did include the percentage of international and minority faculty and staff in the regression as control variables since, according to the literature, they are the institutional characteristics most likely to impact the results, even if at statistically insignificant levels (Kohli Bagwe & Haskollar, 2020).

Table 5.5 summarizes OLS regression results that provide an answer to this study's first research question ("What is the relationship, if any, between faculty members' level of intercultural competence and their inclusion competence?). As can be seen, the results show a positive and significant relationship between Overall IES and Overall ICI scores (β = 0.573, $p < .001$), indicating that participants with higher levels of intercultural competence are expected to have higher levels of inclusion competence, even after controlling for the other variables in the model. Specifically, a one-point increase in Overall IES score is related to an increase of over a half-point (0.573) in Overall ICI score. While the previously mentioned statistical tests indicated that some participant demographic characteristics correlated with participants' Overall IES or Overall ICI scores, their age, gender, and race/ethnicity did not contribute to the multiple

regression model at a standard level of significance. The regression produced an $R^2 = 0.377$, $F(10, 337) = 20.35$, $p < .001$).

Table 5.5

OLS Estimates of the Relationship Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence (Outcome=Overall ICI)

	Coefficient	Standard Error
Overall IES	0.573 ***	(0.041)
Ethnicity (Non-white)	0.060	(0.057)
Age (39 and under)	-0.115	(0.063)
Age (50-59)	-0.087	(0.064)
Age (60-69)	0.002	(0.065)
Age (70 and over)	0.011	(0.102)
Pct International Faculty	-0.418	(0.552)
Pct International Students	-0.468	(0.240)
Pct Minority Faculty	0.079	(0.256)
Pct Minority Students	-0.120	(0.180)
Constant	2.286	(0.285)

Note: ***p<.001. Reference groups include: Female (for gender identity), White (for racial/ethnic identity), and 40-49 (for age group).

Table 5.6 summarizes OLS regression results that provide an answer to this study's second research question ("To what extent, if any, do faculty members' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence?"). Results indicate that participants' intercultural competence does not predict their

level of inclusion competence differently by age, ethnicity, or country of citizenship in any significant way. The regression produced an $R^2 = 0.392$, $F(15, 332) = 14.28$, $p < .001$.

Table 5.6

OLS Estimates of the Relationship Between Intercultural Competence and Inclusion Competence with Interaction Terms Included (Outcome=Overall ICI)

	Coefficient	Standard Error
Overall IES	0.733*	(0.341)
Ethnicity (Nonwhite)	0.948	(0.549)
Ethnicity interaction	-0.173	(0.106)
Age (30-39)	0.738	(0.604)
Age interaction (30-39)	-0.176	(0.115)
Age (50-59)	-0.677	(0.643)
Age interaction (50-59)	0.113	(0.122)
Age (60-69)	-0.131	(0.637)
Age interaction (60-69)	0.023	(0.118)
Age (70 and above)	0.026	(1.01)
Age interaction (70 and above)	0.003	(0.185)
Pct International Faculty	-0.469	(0.550)
Pct International Students	-0.394	(0.241)
Pct Minority Faculty	0.081	(0.258)
Pct Minority Students	-0.172	(0.182)
Constant	-1.49	(1.82)

Note. *p<.05. Reference groups include: Female (for gender identity), White (for racial/ethnic identity), and 40-49 (for age group).

Summary

As discussed in depth in Chapter 3, the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of intercultural competence and inclusion competence are quite complementary – especially in the affective and behavioral domains. This study explored whether this complementarity points to a positive relationship between the two constructs or if, by contrast, the notable divergence in the cognitive domain of each construct indicates a negative relationship (or a lack of any statistically significant relationship). The results of the analyses suggest first, that the IES and ICI are, in fact measuring two different constructs, as confirmed by the divergent validity test conducted; and second, that despite areas of divergence in the cognitive domain of each construct, faculty's levels of intercultural competence and inclusion competence are, in fact, positively and significantly related. That is to say that the higher their level of intercultural competence, the higher their level of inclusion is predicted to be, and vice versa.

These results do not provide evidence of a causal relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Indeed, the direction of this relationship is unclear. However, understanding the relationship between the two competences may help institutions consider which types of faculty training and professional development opportunities are likely to contribute to creating inclusive learning environments at HEIs in the US. Given the nature of the positive relationship, focusing on intentionally developing the intercultural competence of campus community members –especially that of faculty – may be a concrete way that institutions can address some of the common shortcomings of institutional DEI initiatives. Similarly, expanding the work that many campus DEI offices are doing to educate community members about unconscious bias, macro- and micro-aggressions, and issues related to power and privilege,

for example, is also likely to help community members engage appropriately and effectively across domestic *and* international diversity.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

This dissertation examined the relationship between faculty's intercultural competence and their inclusion competence within the context of HEIs in the United States. To my knowledge, it is the first study to examine the link between the two constructs empirically, especially in the HEI context. Existing literature presumes a positive relationship between the two but has been theoretical or speculative in nature, providing no empirical evidence to support this assumption. This study contributes empirical evidence to help us understand with more certainty the validity of these assumptions. The theoretical framework that informed this dissertation suggested that the significant complementarity in the affective and behavioral domains of intercultural competence and inclusion competence may suggest a positive relationship between the two constructs. At the same time, the framework pointed to significant divergence in the constructs' cognitive domains that may imply a negative relationship or no statistically significant relationship.

This chapter summarizes the study's results and offers a discussion of the findings. It then provides implications for policy and practice, as well as recommendations for future inquiry in this line of research.

Discussion of Findings

Drawing from data collected using two psychometric assessments – the IES, which was used to measure intercultural competence, and the ICI, which measured inclusion competence – this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence?

2. To what extent, if any, do faculty members' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence?

The study's results indicated that there is a positive relationship between faculty members' intercultural competence and their inclusion competence. In other words, the higher the faculty member's level of intercultural competence, the higher their inclusion competence is likely to be, and vice versa. This finding is important as it provides empirical evidence to support the assumption many scholars (e.g., Bennett, 2009; Harvey, 2021) have made that increasing faculty's intercultural competence – that is, their ability to interact effectively and appropriately across difference – will also serve to facilitate the goal of inclusion, "which is to respect and encourage the full participation of all individuals and groups" (Bennett, 2014, p. 11).

As this study's theoretical framework suggests, this positive relationship likely results from the significant complementarity in the affective and behavioral domains, and to a lesser extent, the cognitive domain of each construct. In the affective domain, both intercultural competence and inclusion competence require curiosity, a sense of "initiative, non-judgementalness, risk-taking, cognitive flexibility, open-mindedness, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility, and resourcefulness" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97), as well as openness to change and valuing different perspectives (Gundling & Williams, 2021). In the behavioral domain, both competences require empathy, the ability to "gather appropriate information, listen, perceive accurately, adapt, build relationships, resolve problems, and manage social interactions and anxiety" (J. M. Bennett, 2009, p. 97). While there is less complementarity in the cognitive domains of each construct, both intercultural competence and inclusion competence require cultural self-awareness, or knowledge of oneself. This includes a "recognition of the cultural patterns that have influenced our identities" (J. M. Bennett, 2013, p. 5), as well as a knowledge

of our own interpersonal style, behavioral tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses (Bird et al., 2022). Though the two constructs diverge in the cognitive domain, the positive relationship between the construct implies that participants who demonstrated high levels of competence in each of the above-mentioned areas are able to "think and act in interculturally appropriate ways" (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 422) and to "promote a sense of belonging across cultural groups" (Kozai Group, 2022a, para. 1) – showing both intercultural competence and inclusion competence.

There are many factors, including participants' demographic characteristics and the characteristics of their institutions, that may have played a role in their levels of intercultural competence or inclusion competence. This study examined the relationship between both constructs and participants' age, race/ethnicity, country of citizenship, gender identity, sexual orientation, job position, and job level, as well as characteristics of their institutions such as the size, location, and type of institution, and the percentage of faculty, staff, and students who identify as international or members of minoritized groups. Of these factors, only participants' age and race/ethnicity were shown to have a significant relationship to their level of intercultural competence or inclusion competence. There was no significant relationship between any other demographic characteristics, nor any of the institutional characteristics, and participants' Overall IES or Overall ICI scores.

Regarding age, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a significant relationship between participants' age and their Overall IES scores [$F(4, 348) = 3.31$, $p < 0.05$]. It is possible that age is related to intercultural competence as it is often assumed to be associated with exposure to intercultural experiences (Genkova et al., 2021). Older individuals, for example, may have had more opportunities for cultural exposure and experience over their

lifetime. This may be especially true of faculty in higher education, who may travel frequently for work reasons. They might have lived or worked in various cultural contexts, fostering a deeper understanding of different cultural norms, values, and communication styles.

Regarding the link between participants' race/ethnicity and their intercultural competence, prior research has been inconsistent, with some studies finding the intercultural competence of minoritized participants to be higher than that of non-minoritized participants (Castles, 2012; Kruse et al., 2014; Mahon, 2009) and others finding no significant relationship at all (Groll, 2013; Lai, 2006; Pierson, 2010; Raabo, 2011). In this study, *t*-tests comparing the mean Overall IES and Overall ICI scores of participants who identified themselves as white to those who self-identified as another race or ethnicity revealed significant differences in both their Overall IES scores ($t = 2.06$, df = 351, $p < 0.05$) and their Overall ICI scores ($t = 1.96$, df = 351, $p < 0.05$). Interestingly, the mean IES and ICI scores of participants who identified themselves as white were slightly higher than those of those who self-identified as another race or ethnicity. One potential explanation for this is that white participants may have had more exposure to interventions aimed at developing intercultural competence or inclusion competence than other participants. Though the reasons for these relationships are unclear, because these differences were observed, this study included both age and race/ethnicity as control variables in the regression analyses conducted, thus partialling out the relationship observed between intercultural competence and inclusion competence and these demographic characteristics.

In examining how participants' demographic characteristics interact with their intercultural competence to predict their level of inclusion competence, this study's results indicated that intercultural competence did not predict their level of inclusion competence differently by age, race/ethnicity, or country of citizenship in any significant way. This is

somewhat surprising, especially given the positive relationship between age and white racial/ethnic identity with intercultural competence and inclusion competence just discussed. However, as previously discussed, the results of studies looking at the correlation between these variables and intercultural competence have varied enough to make it difficult to draw concrete conclusions (Kohli Bagwe & Haskollar, 2020). For example, in their comprehensive literature review looking at variables impacting intercultural competence, (Kohli Bagwe & Haskollar, 2020) highlight the discrepancies in studies looking at the relationship between age and intercultural competence:

> Steuernagel (2014) proved the positive correlation between age and intercultural competence increased, while Lai (2006), Chen (2008), Pierson (2010), Palsa (2010), Raabo (2011), Rasmussen (2012), and Kruse et al. (2014) did not find a significant connection between these variables. In research that used multiple points of assessments to measure change in intercultural competence, Kobayashi (2009) revealed that older participants made greater strides in intercultural competence, while Warell (2009) concluded the same for younger participants. Conversely, studies with a large age gap among participants, including Pierson (2010), Tinkham (2011), and El Ganzoury (2012), found no association between age and intercultural competence development. (pp. 357-358)

The results of studies exploring the relationship between race/ethnicity and intercultural competence have also varied significantly, making this relationship equally difficult to predict. It is plausible that faculty with higher intercultural competence have also developed skills in the process that help them work across demographic differences, allowing them to contribute equally to inclusive practices.

It is also possible that this finding reflects the impact of increased diversity on HEI campuses on faculty members' intercultural and inclusion competences. On increasingly diverse campuses where cross-cultural interactions are becoming more prevalent, faculty may be exposed to a broad array of cultural influences regardless of their demographic characteristics. Some might argue that this increased exposure to diversity may contribute to a more uniform development of intercultural competence, leading to a consistent prediction of inclusion competence across demographic categories. Further research is needed to examine the factors that predict or drive the development of intercultural competence or inclusion competence among diverse faculty.

Though this study did not find significant interactions between age, ethnicity, or country of citizenship and intercultural competence in predicting inclusion competence, it is important to interpret these findings within the specific context of the study and consider potential limitations. As mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the notable limitations of this study is that the survey participants received did not include questions about their previous intercultural experiences. It is possible that the relationships between these variables may be influenced by additional factors, such as time spent in another country or linguistic capabilities, that were not explicitly examined in the study. Similarly, the study did not account for institutional policies and practices that may influence faculty's intercultural or inclusion competence. It is possible participation in campus-wide initiatives aimed at developing these competences may minimize differences in predictive patterns across various demographic backgrounds. As discussed below, more research is needed to identify these key factors influencing intercultural and inclusion competence development.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The results of this study have important implications for policy and practice for different stakeholders at HEIs in the US, including institutional leaders, DEI practitioners, international educators, faculty, and ultimately, students, who are the primary beneficiary of inclusive practices.

Implications for Institutional Leaders

Institutional leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the culture and climate of an academic institution. As was discussed in Chapter 2, many leaders are currently struggling to implement effective DEI policies and practices and are in need of more effective strategies for creating campus cultures that are welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and just (Barnett, 2020; Tuitt, 2016). This study's findings may be used to help inform the development of such policies and practices, including the creation of professional development programming for faculty. The positive relationship found between participants' intercultural competence and inclusion competence suggests that providing opportunities for faculty to develop their intercultural learning may also increase their inclusion competence, thereby contributing to the creation of more inclusive learning environments where students of differing backgrounds and abilities can thrive.

Based on this study's findings, institutional leaders should, first and foremost, allocate resources for programs, initiatives, and support services aimed at enhancing the intercultural competence and inclusion competence of their campus community members. Specifically, they should prioritize and invest in professional development initiatives for faculty that focus on developing their intercultural competence, looking to programs such as Purdue's Growing Institutional Leaders program, "a professional development opportunity for faculty and staff designed to cultivate the intercultural leadership skills that will move Purdue-West Lafayette toward more inclusion, equity and belonging" (Purdue University, 2022, para. 1), as an example.

In addition, they must work to create a supportive environment that encourages faculty to engage in continuous learning and skill development in these areas.

To gauge their progress in working toward these goals, institutional leaders should implement regular assessments to measure faculty members' intercultural competence and inclusion competence. These assessments can be used to inform targeted interventions and support strategies to enhance the overall competence of the faculty in these areas. Furthermore, conducting regular assessments of the institutional climate – with a focus on intercultural dynamics and inclusion – can help leaders identify key areas for improvement. Finally, institutional leaders themselves should undergo training aimed at developing their own intercultural competence and inclusion competence in order to demonstrate a top-down commitment to fostering a culture of inclusivity throughout their institution. This is a critical step toward addressing the common critique that DEI initiatives often lack authenticity or higher-level institutional commitment.

Implications for DEI Practitioners

The identification of a strong positive relationship between faculty members' intercultural competence and inclusion competence carries profound implications for DEI practitioners within academic institutions. These practitioners are at the forefront of fostering a culture of diversity and inclusivity, and the study's findings provide valuable insights that can inform their strategies and initiatives.

As discussed at length in Chapter 2, current DEI initiatives have been criticized in scholarly literature for their siloed approach, their lack of authenticity, their deficit approach, and their US-centric focus (Olson et al., 2007, Smith, 2020, Tuitt, 2016, Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2014). This study's findings shed light on various opportunities to address some of these

shortcomings. For example, regarding the siloed approach where diversity work is often isolated to a specific person or unit on campus, the significant positive relationship found in this study between intercultural competence and inclusion competence highlights the need for DEI practitioners to collaborate with stakeholders across their institutions to implement more holistic and effective practices. DEI practitioners should, for example, work with institutional leaders to develop integrated DEI initiatives that bridge the gap between intercultural awareness and inclusive practices. This integrated approach can create a more cohesive and synergistic DEI strategy, aligning with the evolving needs of diverse campus communities.

Though there is often an artificial bifurcation of intercultural training for global sojourners and DEI training, (J. M. Bennett, 2013; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 2000), the study's findings also highlight the potential benefits of a more collaborative working relationship between DEI practitioners and international educators. International educators play a critical role in shaping the educational experiences that contribute to the development of intercultural competence among students, whether in the context of international education programs, study abroad experiences, or multicultural learning environments. A more collaborative working relationship between DEI practitioners and international educators would not only address the siloed approach to diversity work currently in place on many college campuses, but it would also address the criticism that many DEI initiatives tend to take a US-centric approach, overlooking global perspectives. As was discussed in Chapter 2, this is a source of frustration for "those who desire to bring in non-US perspectives and to consider issues such as race and ethnicity, power, and privilege, equality, gender, social justice, oppression, and a host of other issues in a broader, global context" (Olson et al., 2007, p. 25). Collaboratively developing joint training programs for faculty and other campus community members would help DEI practitioners and international

educators alike to address the potential shortcomings of current institutional initiatives and would help participants of these programs develop a holistic skill set to navigate diverse cultural landscapes and foster inclusive environments within the HEI community. Furthermore, taking a holistic approach involving many campus stakeholders will help address the lack of authenticity often perceived of institutional leaders, demonstrating a commitment to increasing diversity, promoting equity, and enhancing inclusion across campus.

Implications for International Educators

This study's findings have similar implications for international educators, who would benefit equally from a more collaborative working relationship with DEI practitioners. While the results of the study suggest a strong positive relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence, the conceptual framework of this dissertation highlights the differing sets of knowledge and factual information required for competence in each area. As was discussed in Chapter 3, intercultural education is often criticized for overlooking different types of unconscious bias, macro and micro-aggressions, and issues related to power and privilege (Gunther, 2020; Harvey, 2021; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009). Working collaboratively, international educators and DEI practitioners could address this shortcoming, ensuring that programming for the campus community helps participants learn about these important factors while simultaneously familiarizing them with the culture-general and culture-specific frameworks often taught in international education programming. Whether a student-facing program or a professional development opportunity for faculty and staff, stakeholders across the institution would benefit from this more comprehensive approach. As Cunningham et al. (2020) argue, "intercultural skills and competencies must be infused with a social justice lens in order to have a full understanding of ourselves and others and ultimately produce change for those in our

backyards and around the world who continue to suffer from racism, inequality, inequity, and oppression" (Cunningham et al., 2020, p. 9).

The positive relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence revealed in this study also justifies the need for more widespread, intentional intercultural learning across HEI campuses. Though intercultural learning opportunities are typically associated with the study abroad space, in light of this study's findings, international educators should consider expanding their work beyond the study abroad or international programs office to promote intercultural understanding across their HEI campuses. In particular, developing faculty-facing intercultural learning opportunities will equip them to create classrooms that are culturally responsive and inclusive of diverse perspectives, benefiting both international and domestic students alike. These opportunities might include workshops, reading groups, or communities of practice designed to facilitate intercultural learning and provide a space to practice inclusive pedagogies. In addition to their work with campus partners, international educators should actively engage in ongoing training to enhance their own intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Programming such as that offered through True North Intercultural is designed specifically to help "faculty and staff navigate cultural differences and facilitate intercultural learning—at home and abroad—to create more inclusive classrooms, campuses, and communities" (True North Intercultural, 2023). Similarly, the World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence "connects researchers and practitioners across disciplines, languages, and countries to advance knowledge, research, and praxis of intercultural competence globally" and "to foster a foundation for intercultural understanding across individual and societal differences in pursuit of a more peaceful world" (World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence, 2022, para. 1). Participation in these opportunities will facilitate

international educators' continuous development, ensuring that they remain effective facilitators of intercultural understanding and inclusion, serving as role models for faculty and students alike.

As is recommended of institutional leaders and DEI practitioners, international educators should monitor and evaluate the impact of their initiatives. Establishing key performance indicators related to intercultural and inclusion competence and regularly assessing the effectiveness of related programming will help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the institution remains committed to continuous improvement in creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus environment.

Implications for Faculty

As was discussed in Chapter 2, substantial empirical evidence highlights the importance of faculty members' role in advancing DEI efforts on HEI campuses (Dessel et al., 2017; (Gasman et al., 2017; Muller & Miles, 2017; Ryder et al., 2016). In addition to their influence on student learning and development through developing and delivering the curriculum, advancing knowledge through research and scholarship, and engaging the campus and community through service, faculty also play a critical role in shaping how students perceive the campus learning climate. Faculty members influence the learning environment through multiple mechanisms at many different levels: "setting institutional academic policies, structuring curricula, and decid[ing] what to teach and how to design opportunities for learning in the classroom" (Ryder et al., 2016, p. 348). Though their involvement in DEI efforts is essential to the success of these initiatives, many faculty are unsure of how to behave or which actions to take to foster inclusive learning environments, and frequently used frameworks such as Inclusive Excellence often lack clear guidance.

This study's findings make a compelling case for faculty to prioritize participation in professional development initiatives that specifically target the improvement of intercultural competence. While professional development opportunities aimed at building inclusion competence may be difficult to find, intercultural learning opportunities are well-established on most campuses, though they are usually associated with international education and seen to be "owned" by study abroad or international program offices (Harvey, 2021a). The results of this study, showing a statistically significant positive relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence, suggest that by taking advantage of these existing intercultural learning resources, workshops, and training programs, faculty are also likely to develop their inclusion competence. Not only will this enhance their ability to engage effectively in diverse cultural contexts, but also their ability to create inclusive learning environments and engage more meaningfully in campus DEI efforts. Faculty at institutions that don't offer these types of opportunities internally might seek opportunities offered outside their institutions such as those offered through True North Intercultural or the World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence, as discussed above. These opportunities range in terms of cost – some, such as the World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence have programming offered at no cost -- and time commitment, so as to be accessible to faculty with busy schedules and limited resources.

Finally, faculty are in a unique position to address the siloed approach to current DEI initiatives by involving students in these efforts. Faculty should be intentional about integrating diverse perspectives, experiences, and voices into their courses, and explicit in sharing the lessons learned through their participation in the above-mentioned professional development

programming. This will not only enrich the learning experience for students but will also reinforce the message that diversity is valued within the academic community.

Global Implications

While this study specifically examined the relationship between faculty's intercultural competence and inclusion competence within the context of HEIs in the US, its findings could have broader implications globally. As higher education becomes increasingly internationalized, with growing numbers of international students and faculty members crossing borders, the importance of intercultural competence and inclusion becomes even more pronounced. Institutions globally may benefit from understanding how faculty members' intercultural competence influences their ability to create inclusive spaces for diverse student populations. By recognizing the relevance of intercultural competence and inclusion competence in diverse cultural contexts and educational settings, the study contributes to a broader conversation about promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education globally.

Future Research

The findings of the dissertation, showing a robust positive relationship between faculty members' intercultural competence and inclusion competence, present several interesting opportunities for future research. As was noted in the limitations section in Chapter 4, this study is correlational in nature and was designed to provide conclusive evidence of a correlation between the two constructs. The results do not provide evidence of a causal relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence. To establish a causal relationship between faculty's intercultural competence and inclusion competence, as well as to determine the directionality of this relationship, several future study designs could be considered. For example, experimental and quasi-experimental designs would provide opportunity to test the effects of

specific interventions aimed at improving either intercultural or inclusion competence among faculty members. Similarly, longitudinal studies would offer a method to track changes in both competences over time, allowing researchers to observe whether fluctuations in one competence precede changes in the other. Studies designed to approach causal inference would provide more robust insights into the causal relationship and directionality between these two constructs, thereby informing effective strategies for faculty training and professional development aimed at fostering inclusive learning environments at higher education institutions in the US.

As was also noted in the limitations, the current study did not delve into the impact of existing institutional interventions such as DEI-related programming or professional development opportunities. This study's findings, therefore, present an opportune area for exploration. Future research examining the effectiveness of targeted programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing faculty members' intercultural competence and inclusion competence would provide valuable insights into the tangible outcomes of these institutional interventions. This exploration could involve future quantitative work using pre- and post-tests to measure possible gains in faculty's inclusion competence, or qualitative research designed to assess changes in their attitudes, behaviors, and practices in response to specific DEI and intercultural initiatives. This research would offer valuable insights for institutions seeking to implement new initiatives aimed at creating more inclusive learning environments.

In addition, future research endeavors could extend the inquiry to explore other demographic factors or contextual variables that might influence the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence. Understanding how factors such as previous intercultural experience, linguistic capabilities, or academic discipline interact with and potentially moderate the observed relationship may provide a more nuanced understanding of the

relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence. This deeper exploration may contribute to tailoring interventions and strategies to address the specific needs and challenges associated with different demographic or social contexts. For instance, researchers could investigate whether the relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence varies across different academic disciplines. This exploration could shed light on discipline-specific considerations and inform targeted interventions that align with the unique characteristics of diverse academic fields.

Finally, future research might explore the long-term effects of initiatives aimed at enhancing faculty members' levels of intercultural and inclusion competences. Conducting longitudinal studies to track the development of intercultural competence and inclusion competence over an extended period may offer insights into the long-term impact of institutional interventions, and may guide institutions in designing comprehensive, ongoing professional development programs.

In summary, this dissertation serves as a springboard for a range of potential future research endeavors. Exploring the impact of institutional interventions on educators' intercultural competence and inclusion competence, along with investigating the influence of additional demographic or contextual factors, will enrich our understanding of the complex interplay between these two constructs. Such research will be invaluable in informing evidence-based practices that promote a more inclusive educational landscape at HEIs across the US.

Conclusion

As discussed throughout this dissertation, there is a clear need to cultivate more inclusive and equitable learning environments and campus climates at HEIs in the US. Our campuses and classrooms are currently more diverse now than ever (Taylor et al., 2020), with campus

populations comprising students of differing racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, religions, ages, socio-economic statuses, gender identities, and levels of (dis)ability, as well as increasing numbers of international students (IIE Open Doors, 2023). Research shows, however, persistent educational inequities across racial and ethnic groups, including differing access and completion rates, student experiences, debt burdens, and (un)employment rates (Taylor et al., 2020). These inequalities are pervasive across many domains of US society and have been highlighted in recent years by a series of tragedies and crises, including the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery by law enforcement (or, in the case of Arbery, civilians acting as law enforcement), as well as the Covid-19 global pandemic which disproportionately affected black, brown, and indigenous communities. With these inequities ever more visible in the public eye, campus leaders are grappling with how to effectively address racial and social injustice and create more inclusive campus communities.

HEIs across the country have increasingly implemented formalized Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, or DEI, initiatives meant to support students from historically and racially minoritized populations while enhancing campus diversity. However, researchers have critiqued these initiatives and policies for their lack of authenticity, their siloed approach, or for being overly US-centric (Sengupta et al., 2019a, p. 13, Tuitt, 2016, Von Robertson et al., 2016). While the need for more effective strategies is widely recognized, there is a lack of consensus in terms of how to implement change.

This study's compelling findings, which reveal a statistically significant positive relationship between intercultural competence and inclusion competence, present a unique opportunity for campus stakeholders – including institutional leaders, DEI practitioners, international educators, and faculty members – to collaborate strategically to champion equity

and inclusivity on campuses. This dissertation provides empirical evidence to support the idea that intercultural learning can be a useful tool in facilitating the goals of inclusion (J. M. Bennett, 2013). Though DEI initiatives have proven difficult to implement at HEIs in the US (Barnett, 2020; Tuitt, 2016), this study offers a roadmap for creating more effective and comprehensive strategies. Intentionally focusing on developing the intercultural competence and inclusion competence of campus stakeholders will not only foster more inclusive campus environments but will prepare faculty and students alike for success in an interconnected and multicultural world.

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Appendix A: The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education Size & Setting Classification Description

Four-year

- **Very small**
  - Primarily nonresidential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. Fewer than 25 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and/or fewer than 50 % attend full-time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

  - Primarily residential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. 25-49 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 50 % attend full-time.

  - Highly residential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of fewer than 1,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 80 % attend full-time.

- **Small**
  - Primarily nonresidential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. Fewer than 25 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and/or fewer than 50 % attend full-time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

  - Primarily residential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. 25-49 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 50 % attend full-time.

  - Highly residential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of 1,000–2,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 80 % attend full-time.

- **Medium**
  - Primarily nonresidential

Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of 3,000–9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. Fewer than 25 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and/or fewer than 50 % attend full-time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

- Primarily residential
  Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of 3,000–9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. 25-49 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 50 % attend full-time.

- Highly residential
  Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of 3,000–9,999 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 80 % attend full-time.

- **Large**
  - Primarily nonresidential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. Fewer than 25 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and/or fewer than 50 % attend full-time (includes exclusively distance education institutions).

  - Primarily residential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. 25-49 % of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 50 % attend full-time.

  - Highly residential
    Fall enrollment data indicate FTE* enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's or higher degree-granting institutions. At least half of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus** and at least 80 % attend full-time (*Carnegie Classifications | Size & Setting Classification*, n.d.).

Appendix B: Definitions For New Race and Ethnicity Categories

Categories developed in 1997 by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that are used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The categories do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. The designations are used to categorize U.S. citizens, U.S. residents, and other eligible non-citizens. Eligible noncitizens include all students who completed high school or a GED equivalency within the United States (including DACA and undocumented students) and who were not on an F-1 nonimmigrant student visa at the time of high school graduation. Find more information about other eligible (for financial aid purposes) noncitizens.

Individuals are asked to first designate ethnicity as:

- Hispanic or Latino or
- Not Hispanic or Latino

Second, individuals are asked to indicate one or more races that apply among the following:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

Hispanic or Latino: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

American Indian or Alaska Native: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

U.S. Nonresident: A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely. Note:

U.S. Nonresidents are to be reported separately in the places provided, rather than in any of the racial/ethnic categories described above.

U.S. Resident (and other eligible non-citizens): A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States but who has been admitted as a legal immigrant for the purpose of obtaining permanent U.S. resident status (and who holds either a registration card (Form I-551 or I-151), a Temporary Resident Card (Form I-688), or an Arrival-Departure Record (Form I-94) with a notation that conveys legal immigrant status such as Section 207 Refugee, Section 208 Asylee, Conditional Entrant Parolee or Cuban-Haitian). Note: U.S. residents are to be reported in the appropriate racial/ethnic categories along with United States citizens.

Race/ethnicity unknown: The category used to report students or employees whose race and ethnicity are not known.