Migrant Perceptions of Social Media

Clark Callahan, Thomas Robinson & Kari-Ann Trachmann

Brigham Young University

Abstract

New media are changing the way identities are managed. This is increasingly relevant to global communication (Lévy, 2000). The purpose of this article is to understand how these changes effect individual perceptions of media within a new cultural environment. By applying Q-methodology to cultural migration, this research asked cultural sojourners to rank subjective statements of media. Factor analysis were applied to the rankings, which provided three main perspectives of media.. These three perspectives include Instrumental Adaptors, Social Connectors, and Abiders. These perspectives provide an alternative to traditional categories of culture and allow for a unique understanding of cultural adaptation theory.

Keywords: *Culture, Q-methodology, Media, Intercultural*

Introduction

The global media landscape has undergone significant change during the last 20 years with the emergence of new media technologies. For example, between 2001 and 2015, global Internet penetration increased from 7.9% to 46.4% (Internet World Statistics, 2015). The proportion of Internet access at home increased from 18% in 2005 to 46% in 2015 (ITU, 2016). Additionally, the ITU claims that there were 7 billion global mobile cellular subscriptions at the end of 2015. This corresponds to a penetration rate of 97%, an increase from 738 million in 2000. Global 2G mobile cellular network coverage grew from 58% in 2001 to 95% in 2015 (ITU, 2016). These dramatic changes in global communications are altering the way that cultural sojourners are negotiating their adaptive experiences (Johnson & Callahan, 2015), and approaches investigating intercultural phenomena should reflect those changes.

Current approaches to intercultural communication rely on traditional views of culture. For example, Callahan and Burnett (2011) identified four main categories of cultural identification within intercultural studies. These include nationality, ethnicity, religion, and language. However, scholars are arguing that these designations do not represent individual perspectives (Agboka, 2012). Castells, for example, argued that individuals are using technology to escape the contexts of existence (2010). Other disciplines, such as anthropology, have argued that culture is wholly perception (Appadurai, 1996), and "fractured identities" have received increasing attention in multiple disciplines (see Giddens, 1991). Bauman (2000) introduced the idea of the "rootless nomad" for the modern individual navigating increasingly complex relationships and identities (see also Bradley, 2016). The traditional views of culture are being increasingly challenged.

Another argument for investigating perception within media and global culture is the importance of media during cross cultural migration. In the past 20 years, scholars have identified an increasing role of media in the sojourner experience. Valenzuela and McCombs (2009), for example, have argued that an individual's need to orient him or herself in a new cognitive environment correlates with his or her use of media. They contend that the higher the need for orientation, the more the sojourner tends to rely on the media.

The goal of this research study is to identify the perceptions that individuals have of their media use as they navigate a new culture. For the purpose of this research, this includes individuals who have a primary socialization in one culture who then move to and navigate through a foreign or host culture. This study will attempt to avoid traditional substantialism by employing Q-methodology, a less familiar research approach in intercultural communication. This method allows for the identification of perceptual categories of media upon cultural migration, free from traditional categories of culture.

Review of the Literature

Validation for this research is drawn from four areas of literature that are closely associated to media and perception: (1) migrant perspectives, (2) increased global media use, (3) increased global movement, and (4) the perceptual approach to doing cultural/contextual research. Together, these contexts provide the background and justification for an investigation of this type.

One of the reasons there has been a lack of research into categories of media perceptions within the adaptation process is that researchers tend to favor an approach that by its very nature is behaviorally based (Kramer, 1997). This is because much of the intercultural research focuses on intercultural competence, or the role of the sojourner in adapting to the new social milieu (Kramer, 1997). There are obvious hegemonic implications resulting from the combination of behavioral conformity and communication competency, a problem recognized earlier by Habermas (1973 Ger./1975 Eng.; 1981 Ger./1987 Eng.). In the area of adaptation, the kinematic or behavioral approach looks at the uses or behaviors surrounding a specified element—the outward cultural behaviors—as opposed to the cultural values themselves that cause the behavior. The dynamic approach, on the other hand, investigates the cultural reasons or perspectives inherent within behavioral decisions (Sabra, 1998). Some intercultural researchers, including Croucher (2011), have taken this approach. Because the dynamic approach privileges mindsets and perception, Q-methodology is used here to identify cultural subjectivity.

While research detailing the perceptual categories within culture is limited, research looking at the intersection between media use and culture is not. Furthermore, while there is research investigating how cultures perceive communication, for the most part it falls short in creating

categories of perceptions. Two notable exceptions here are Toennies (1957, 1963) work on *gemeinschaft and gesellschaft* cultures and Ong's (1980) writings on oral and print cultures.

There are hundreds of studies that detail how one culture (e.g. language, geo-political, ethnic, or linguistic group) uses media within a second social context. This includes how culture influences the use of media technologies (Scott, Quinn, Timmerman, & Garrett, 1998), cultural perceptions of technology (Fulk & Boyd, 1991), and the sociocultural fit of technology (Widman, Jasko, & Pilotta, 1988). However, most of these studies focus on media selection within the migrant milieu rather than how sojourners perceive their media choices. This area of research includes correlating demographic variables with adaptation (Khan & Khan, 2007), the globalizing effect of media (Ross Altarac, 2008), and the impact of media use on adaptation (Miglietta & Tartaglia, 2009; Walker, 1999). While valuable, none of these studies addresses the subjective perception of cultural media.

Because media use has increased worldwide, this changing context is a major influence within global psychological structures. Arnett (2002) claimed that the largest psychological consequence of this change is that it results in transformations of identity or "how people think about themselves in relation to the social environment" (p. 777). Increased global participation is more than simple media consumption. Increasingly, global media participants are engaging in message or content creation (Singh, Lenhart, & Bostick, 2010).

Concurrent with increased global media use is an increase in international migration. According to the International Organization for Migration (2015), this movement has increased from 150 million migrants in 2000 to 230 million in 2013. The United States alone had an estimated 46 million migrants in 2015 (IOM, 2015). In 2014, 1.3 million foreign-born people immigrated to the United States, an 11% increase from 2013 (Zong & Batalova, 2016). Middle Eastern countries tend to have the highest percentage of immigrants by percentage of population. The United States is the top receiving country with 45 million immigrants, accounting for 20% of the world's migrant population. This increase in global movement, combined with increased global media use, creates a new type of context for intercultural communication researchers.

Last, with increased movement and media exposure, global information does, or at least can, transcend geography. Because virtual communities are now competing with traditional geographic communities, communication research needs multiple ways to approach intercultural phenomena. As Hall (1976) noted, cultures arise wherever there is human interaction, and virtual communities are becoming an increasingly popular venue for interaction. Face-to-face interaction, while still dominant and vital, no longer holds a monopoly on the marketplace of communication. Individuals are creating meanings (and negotiating those meanings) free from the constraints of geography.

Based on the previous research, including the lack of cultural perceptual research, the changing nature of international identity, increased global movement, and the differences among traditional definitions of culture, the following research questions guide the current study:

> *RQ1: What are sojourner perceptions of media while navigating new cultural contexts?*
> *RQ2: Do sojourner perceptions of media in the new cultural milieu differ?*

Method

Introduced by William Stephenson in 1953, Q methodology provides a "foundation for the systematic study of subjectivity" (Brown, 1993, p. 93). Q methodology is a behavioral research approach that utilizes factor analysis to measure and reveal the subjectivity of any situation. The process involves the use a research tool called a Q sort, which requires an individual to rank-order (e.g., "most agree" to "most disagree") a group of statements that represent a particular domain of subjectivity called a concourse. The concourse is made up of actual statements that individuals have made, at one time or another, while expressing their opinions about a specific topic (Brown, 1980). The Q sorts are then factor-analyzed and groups of individuals who have sorted the statements in nearly the same way are clustered together into factors. Each factor represents a specific group of people who have common attitudes and are likeminded thinkers about the research topic. After the factors are formed the researcher interprets the factors and the beliefs of the individuals in each of the factors are explained in detail. As part of the Q methodology process a personal interview is conducted with each subject after completing the Q sort and the information from these interviews is used to add breadth and depth to the explanation of the factors.

For this study the concourse was a group of statements centered on the idea of "How do I use media to adapt." These statements were gathered from a diverse group of sources that included research findings from cross-cultural media studies, intercultural blogs, and international migrant focus groups. The focus groups helped to validate, clarify, and edit the statements so that they would (1) represent the migrant experience and (2) be understandable to international sojourners. All statements were in English. A sample of 48 statements (see Appendix A) was selected from the population of opinions that best represented how individuals use media within their new cultural experiences. It is this sample of 48 statements that the subjects used to create a Q sort of their own attitudes about media and adaptation.

The subjects for this project consisted of 47 young adults. Q methodology uses a small number of subjects because in Q technique, subjects are treated as variables rather than a sample of the population. Brown (1980) explains that when selecting respondents, "all that is required is enough subjects to establish the existence of a factor for the purposes of comparing one factor with another" (p. 192). He goes on to say

- It is rarely necessary in work of this kind to obtain large numbers of each
- type; five or six persons loaded significantly on a factor are normally
- sufficient to produce highly reliable factor scores, and it is in terms of the relationships among the factor scores that general statements about an attitude
- are made. Increasing the number of persons on a factor merely fills up factor
- space, but has very little impact on the scores (p. 67).

To ensure the results of this study were representative of the typical cultural sojourner, care was taken during the sampling procedure to have both genders represented (25 males and 22 females) and subjects who were in the typical target market age range for cultural movement (18-34). Because the purpose of the study was to determine perceptions of media use within the new cultural milieu, subjects were only selected for participation if they: 1) used media while navigating to a new culture and 2) if they moved into a new culture within the last 5 years. The focus on "media" was a general one. By far, most of the participants in this study referred to online or digital media. If they did use traditional

media, it was without exception accessed through digital devices. We recognize that this may not be typical of all cultural sojourners. However, with 46% of the world currently connected to the Internet (Internet Live Stats, 2016) and an estimated 53% by 2020 (Mahajan, 2016), the future of migrant connectivity will continue to grow. This is especially true when individuals move to locations with higher Internet penetrations.

The next step was to have the subjects conduct their Q sorts by reading through each of the 48 statements and ranking them on an 11-point scale ranging from "most like my feelings" (+5) to "least like my feelings" (-5). After the Q sorts were completed, the researchers conducted individual interviews with each of the participants to probe further into the subjects' decision making process, to allow the subjects to express their thoughts and feelings about why they ranked some statements high and other statements low, and to let them express their thoughts and feelings about media and their host culture. The interviews used a structured questionnaire with the following questions: (1) Why did you select (those) two statements as being most like your experience? (2) Why did you select (those) two statements as being least like your experience? The average time for each person to complete each Q sort and interview was approximately 45 minutes.

In the analysis, researchers used Principle Components Analysis to generate an unrotated factor matrix, which was then subjected to a varimax rotation. To qualify as a reportable factor, the criterion was at least two significant participant factor loadings at the 0.01 significance level. Once the factors were determined, the investigators compared the significant positive and negative z-scores for the statements that accompanied each factor. Those with a z-score greater than +/-1.0 were considered to be significant, and they represent the 'most like' and 'least like' statements for each factor.

Once the factors were determined, investigators compared the significant positive and negative z-scores for the statements that accompanied each factor. Statements for each factor with a z-score greater than +/-1.0 were considered to be significantly "most like my experience" and "least like my experience."

Finally, the composite factor arrays for each factor wee derived from the rank scores assigned to each statement by the participants significantly associated with each factor. Factor scores that differed by +/-3 for each statement on each factor were considered to be significantly different.

Labels and interpretations determined by the investigators for the following factors were predicated on the z-scores calculated and the factor Q sort values provided by the participants in the study. They were also supplemented by the responses recorded from the interviews conducted with the participants.

Results

The factor analysis for this study yielded three significant factors that represented participant perceptions of media while navigating the host culture. These three factors characterize general categories of perception and not necessarily the demographic identifiers of these individuals. The unique value of Q-methodology, as it is used in this study, is that it sidesteps the traditional obstacle of operationalizing culture in order to probe how individuals think about their experiences. This expands the discussion of results past general demographic representations and moves the conversation into how individuals think. Additionally, Q-methodology is not concerned with how many participants fell into a particular factor loading or what the participant demographics are for the factors. The focus is to identify perspectives across these traditional boundaries.

This study found three significant factor loadings (or perceptions) of media while in the new culture. These three factors answer RQ1: *What are sojourner perceptions of media while navigating new cultural contexts?*

Factor 1 (Instrumental Adaptors)

The first factor was defined by 22 perceptual statements (both positive and negative) that were common among responses in the sample (see Table 1). Researchers labeled this perceptual factor "Instrumental Adaptors." The factor loadings for this group indicate that these subjects perceived media as useful for negotiating their new cultural context. Instrumental Adaptors view media as an essential tool to expedite fitting in. As one respondent from Mexico stated: (for the ease of reporting, respondents will be identified by country of origin), "Surrounding yourself with the media from the new country, the quicker you learn the language and it helps to adapt."

To most Instrumental Adaptors, using and understanding the host media is essential to successful functioning within the new culture. This is shown by this group's high agreement with the statement, "I have had to use media here in the new country to be successful in school or business" (z = 1.491), which was significantly different than the other two factors. Additionally, these individual tend to use more media, including host media, than they did back home.

Secondly, these Instrumental Adaptors view media as an important component of their experience. Respondents scored relatively high in the area of using media as an instrument for enhanced functioning. While media are important, new country media use for Instrumental Adaptors scored exceptionally high. While both new media use and the desire to adapt are important to instrumental adaptors, the media found within the new context was far more important than any other social variable measured. Perhaps this characteristic is a result of this group's strong desire to fit in to the new cultural milieu.

Instrumental Adaptors view media as speeding up cultural functioning. Instrumental Adaptors are very positive about living in their new social context and doing it through the media is seen as the best way of functioning. Many sojourners feel that the media was central to their new cultural context, including pop culture programming. One respondent from China stated, "I learned about U.S. from news, Oprah, and TV shows."

This does not indicate, however, that Instrumental Adaptors completely reject all media from their home culture. While they do acknowledge that they use little home culture media, they still indicate using it somewhat. Although minimally connected to home media, they are still connected to the home culture.

Table 1: *Factor 1 Significant Positive and Negative Media Statements*

Statement Number	Statement	z-Scores	Factor Arrays
4	I have had to use media here in the new country to be successful.	1.491	+5
40	I am much more connected through media here than I was back home.	1.42	+5
17	I use much more media now than when I first arrived.	1.194	+4
29	If you're going to adapt to a new context, you have to understand its media.	1.192	+4
26	Media helps me stay updated to the way things are back home.	1.158	+4
9	Knowing that I can access media from home context is comfortable.	1.156	+3
1	Media help me navigate the new context.	1.155	+3
47	I have found that media is much more available here than it was back home.	1.142	+3
34	Media here has helped me learn the new language.	1.061	+3
20	Media have helped me connect with other immigrants.	-1.059	-2
23	There's not a lot of difference between the media here and the media back home.	-1.106	-2
16	Media in this new context are very strange.	-1.125	-2
27	I'm disappointed with the media here--the media back home was much better.	-1.141	-2
8	I'm not very interested in using the media here in the new culture.	-1.211	-3
14	I've never really used much media--either here or in my home.	-1.249	-3
28	Media here have the same values as in my home context.	-1.36	-3
46	I haven't found a good reason to use much media here in the new culture.	-1.392	-3
31	My media use has decreased my contact with people in the new culture.	-1.439	-4
24	I use the same type of media now as I used before I came here.	-1.454	-4
38	Because media connection with friends and family back home, I haven't gotten out to meet friends from the new culture.	-1.513	-4
11	Because I don't feel the need to adapt to this new country, I only use media from back home.	-1.675	-5
6	I don't want to adapt to this new country—I'll just keep in touch with friends and family through personal media.	-2.148	-5

Factor 2 (Social Connectors)

The second factor was defined by 17 statements (both positive and negative) that were common among individuals in the sample (see Table 2). Researchers labeled this factor "Social Connectors" because of how they use the media to connect socially to both their home and new social contexts. Social Connectors view media as an essential tool to maintain and build social networks. As one respondent from Russia stated, "I would be homesick, which is what I use the media for—to stay connected." For Social Connectors, relationships are central within their new cultural functioning, both relationships in the home culture and those in the new.

Fitting in to the new culture is important for Social Connectors, but not as important as maintaining relationships from their previous social context. One respondent noted, "I felt better about coming here because although I wouldn't be able to return to Canada, I could still stay connected to friends." This characteristic is demonstrated by Social Connectors' acknowledgment of continued home media use, as well as their identification of home media as being an aid for navigating the new culture.

For Social Connectors, home media play an important part in their psychological health. They do not feel isolated within their new social context because of the availability of home media. Social Connectors use media, and especially home media, for emotional support. One respondent from Ecuador noted, "I am a social person. The fact that I'm away from home doesn't mean that I want to be anti-social. I decided to be me, so it's not going to prevent me from having new friends, now cultures, and new perspectives."

Perhaps the most important finding for the Social Connectors is that the new-culture media played a very small part in their new cultural experience. This group, for example, had a small interest in using host-culture media, but yet had a high motivation to adapt to the new context. The implication here is that host media, at least for this group, have a very small role in navigating their new cultural context.

Table 2: *Factor 2 Significant Positive and Negative Media Statement*

Statement Number	Statement	z-Scores	Factor Arrays
26	Media helps me stay updated to the way things are back home.	2.01	+5
9	Knowing that I can access media from home context is comfortable.	1.744	+5
1	Media help me navigate the new context.	1.515	+4
24	I use the same type of media now as I used before I came here.	1.476	+4
4	I have had to use media here in the new country to be successful.	1.341	+4
12	I believe that media here in the new country is useful for learning about and attending social events.	1.338	+3
29	If you're going to adapt to a new culture, you have to understand the media in that culture.	1.292	+3
42	My friends and family felt better about my coming here because of the ability to stay connected through the media.	1.179	+3
35	My media use helps me avoid loneliness.	1.125	+3
11	Because I don't feel the need to adapt to this new country, I only use media from back home.	-1.033	-3
43	I don't think I would have come here without the media's information about this country.	-1.188	-3
46	I haven't found a good reason to use much media here in the new culture.	-1.426	-3
37	I don't miss the media from my home country at all.	-1.534	-4
25	My friendships here in the new culture are mostly virtual as opposed to fact-to-face.	-1.534	-4
6	I don't want to adapt to this new country—I'll just keep in touch with friends and family through personal media.	-1.534	-4
38	Because media connection with friends and family back home, I haven't gotten out and met friends in the new culture.	-1.708	-5
48	I've only started to use social media (facebook, skype, etc.) since I got here.	-1.708	-5

Factor 3 (Abiders)

Labeled "Abiders" by the researchers, the Factor 3 group was defined by 18 statements that describe people who tend to use media in the new culture in same way they used media in their home culture (see Table 3). Abiders, while familiar with host culture media, are not highly motivated to either significantly increase their usage or to use the media to navigate the new host culture. The lack of media use may be due, in part, to their overall lack of desire to adapt to the new host culture.

The dominant characteristic of the Abider is the disbelief that media plays a significant role in functioning within the new culture. This disbelief is manifested in two ways. First, Abiders believe that all media, both home and host, are the same. They do not differentiate between home and host media, even while they are navigating a new host culture. One respondent from Mexico stated, "There are the same types of media here and back home. I haven't been surprised at all because there is no difference in the media—it is the same." Second, they feel that media are not able to keep them connected in any significant way. While they may still use the media, there is a distinctive lack of faith in what the media can actually do for them. Another respondent from Mexico observed, "I'm here for a year, and no matter what, it will be hard for me to stay connected." For these individuals, media has little or no effect on new cultural perspectives..

It is not surprising, then, that Abiders demonstrated the highest tendency to use the same types of media that they used before host insertion. Their consistency of media use can be explained by their desire to retain their previous cultural perspective. The Abider sojourner strives to keep his or her previous identity. Another respondent from Brazil summed up this finding succinctly, "I don't want to lose my identity." It should be noted, however, that while these individuals do not want to lose their identity, they do not view media capable of causing that loss. One unique and significant statement for the Abider was, "media consumption has caused me to unlearn my home culture" ($z = -1.534$). The negative z-score indicates a significant disagreement with this statement. Media has little power for the Abider.

For abiders, fitting in to the new culture does not appear to be a goal, and they do not seem perturbed by this perspective. They have a slightly higher propensity to use home media than the Instrumental Adaptors, although it is not as high as the Social Connectors. Perhaps most importantly, the Abiders see little power in the media, and they do not see the media as an important part of the new cultural milieu.

Table 3: *Factor 3 Significant Positive and Negative Media Statement*

Statement Number	Statement	z-Scores	Factor Arrays
26	Media helps me stay updated to the way things are back home.	2.01	+5
9	Knowing that I can access media from home context is comfortable.	1.744	+5
24	I use the same type of media now as I used before I came.	1.515	+4
36	I would be very uncomfortable here without media.	1.476	+4
13	I think that my use of media decreased the context shock that felt when I first came here.	1.341	+4
23	There's not a lot of difference between the media here and the media back home.	1.338	+3
43	I don't think I would have come here without the media's information about this country.	1.292	+3
32	There was a big difference in the way the media back home portrayed this country and the way it really is.	1.179	+3
46	I haven't found a good reason to use much media here in the new country.	1.125	+3
16	Media in this new culture are very strange--I just don't like it.	-1.033	-3
48	I've only started to use social media (facebook, skype, etc.) since I got here.	-1.188	-3
19	Media have helped me connect with other immigrants in my same situation.	-1.426	-3
15	I've been surprised by the different types of media here in the new country.	-1.534	-3
22	My media consumption has caused me to unlearn some of my old culture and replace it with the new culture.	-1.534	-4
14	I've never really used much media--either here or in my home.	-1.534	-4
5	My media use in this new country makes me feel more lonely.	-1.708	-4
11	Because I don't feel the need to adapt to this new country, I only use media from back home.	-1.708	-5
6	I don't want to adapt to this new country.	-1.79	-5

RQ2

The second research question asked about differences between sojourner perceptions. To answer this question, the statements were separated into six media perception categories. The significant z-scores for these statements within all three factors were then tabulated to provide cumulative z-scores for each of categories. Figure 1 provides a visual map of factored participant perceptions along each of these six categories, revealing the variety of media views among the three factor groups.
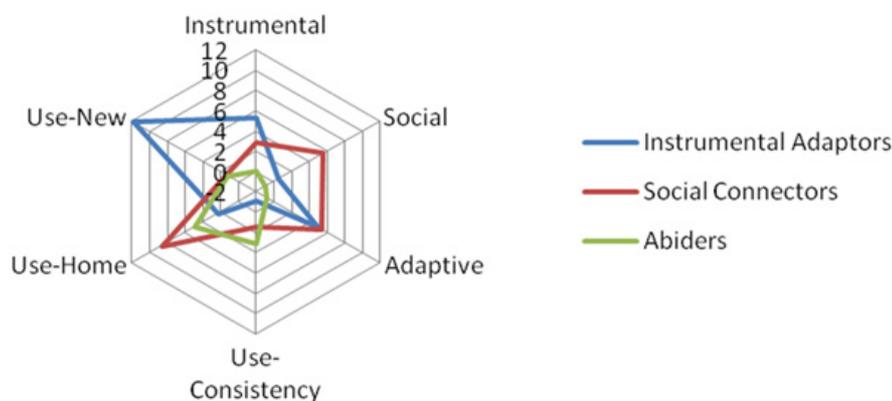

Figure 1: *Factor group z-scores for six media perception categories*

The main findings regarding RQ2 fall into two categories. First, participants perceived that media serve as an instrument while navigating a new culture. Second, motivation to fit in is an important consideration for how media is viewed.

As one might expect, Instrumental Adaptors tend to place a high importance on media while adapting (see Figure 1). Of the three groups, these individuals are the most likely to perceive media for a specific purpose—in this case, fitting in. Perhaps their dependency on new-culture

media is a natural extension of their overall feelings of media importance. While this research does not provide justification to argue that media use equates with using media to adapt, it does raise questions about overall media consumption and cultural nagivation. The lowest cumulative instrumental score was noted by the Abiders ($\Sigma z = 0$). Individuals with this mindset demonstrate little or no propensity to use media in the new cultural context. This in itself is an interesting finding, as it indicates that there is a type of sojourner who does not view media as a useful tool to aid cultural insertion.

In terms of media perception, there was also a stark difference between the Instrumental Adaptors and the Social Connectors. That difference centered on the types of media used to facilitate cultural movement. It should be noted that both of these groups reported higher levels of motivation to fit in. Their divergence occurred in how they saw media's role in this process. The Instrumental Adaptors favored new culture media ($\Sigma z = 11.845$), while the Social Connectors preferred home media ($\Sigma z = 8.607$). This finding both validates and amends Valenzuela and McComb's (2009) argument that individuals use media to orient their adaptation. It validates in that there is a type of cultural sojourner that relies heavily on host media to navigate the host culture, exactly as described. It amends the argument in that the media that sojourners rely upon is not necessarily host media. Individuals can and do rely on home media to orient themselves within the host culture.

Motivation to fit in to the new culture also plays an important role in how sojourners perceive media. The findings for RQ2 demonstrate two perspectives related to motivation. As previously mentioned, Instrumental Adaptors and Social Connectors scored highest on the desire to adapt. This coincides with other research findings on motivation and adaptation. However, what is most enlightening is that Abiders reported little to no motivation to adapt at all. This is a finding that has not received much research attention. The implication is that there is a type of sojourner with little or no motivation to fit in to the new culture, yet seems to be perfectly functional within the host culture. These individuals may avoid pressures to adopt new cultural values and perspectives.

Discussion

The results of this study point to two main implications: (1) perceptions vary within, as well as across, traditional cultural categories, and (2) the perceptual approach allows for theories to be tested and amended in new ways.

Perceptual Categories

A main implication of this study was the finding that perceptions of media varied across geopolitical borders. This is consistent with much of the research on cultural uses of new media. Scholars, such as Lévy (2000), have posited that online communities are creating their own cyberscapes, transcending traditional geographic, ethic, linguistic, or religious single-point definitions of culture. This argument extends to the elimination of spatial identifications for culture, that cultures are not geographically-based anymore (Mitchell, 1995). This research found multiple instances of individuals from the same country falling into differing factor sets. For example, there were four respondents who self-identified their home culture as Japan. Within this group of Japanese respondents, two factored out as Instrumental Adaptors while two others were Social Connectors. While this finding is limited and extremely premature, it at least suggests a question within many intercultural studies. Does country of origin, for example, indicate a cultural perspective?. Again, the findings only indicate that individuals from the same geographic region fell into different perceptual groups. More work needs to be done with different methodologies to understand this finding better.

However, this implication allows researchers to sidestep traditional means of operationalizing "culture" and, in so doing, create perceptual categorizations of culture that can then be tested. This research has demonstrated that local origin or language descriptions do not necessarily identify how individuals perceive their lifeworlds. Additionally, and probably most telling, is that individuals who may have been acculturated within the same geographic region and within the same linguistic system do not necessarily share the same values or behavioral perceptions. While more study needs to be done, it is possible that sojourners from the same countries can have dramatically different perspectives of media in the migrant process.

The above discussion presents an interesting type of research approach, one that expands not only how we operationalize culture, but also the types of research questions that can now be asked. Like Kramer's (2003) concept of endless integration and Hofstede and Bond's (1984) argument for synergy, this approach frees intercultural scholars to move beyond substance designations and into perceptual categories.

For decades, intercultural scholars have struggled with differentiating between multicultural actions in order to identify cultural perspectives and behavioral triggers. Berry (2005), for example, has argued that cultural sojourners can live within multiple cultures at the same time, an idea that has been around since at least Gordon's (1964) work on the assimilation process between minority and dominant populations. This research validates these perspectives. Instead of operationalizing an individual's culture based on where he or she lives, an individual can be identified based on how he or she perceives his or her world.

Different View of Theories

This research has shown that theoretical descriptions of the cross cultural communication process both fit and deviate from mainstream theoretical approaches. This includes, for example, assumptions for cross cultural adaptation. While this study does not address adaptation specifically, the perspectives identified in this research have implications for adaptation research. Each of the three factors (or group perspectives) fit into theoretical models describing adaptation. They also provide evidence for deviation as well. Thus, while intercultural theories are accurate for some cultural perspectives, they are inaccurate for others. For example, because of the Abider perception of low adaptation motivation, these individuals do not fit into the theoretical model of cross-cultural adaptation (see Gudykunst & Kim, 2003), while Instrumental Adaptors and Social Connectors, who express high adaptation motivation, do. Social communication has long been associated with successful cross-cultural adaptation (Ward, Okura, Kennedy & Kojima, 1998). This study validates this argument. Those who have a high adaption motivation also tend to have higher social motivation as well. Reciprocally, those who have the least motivation for adaptation also note the least interest in social communication.

Of all the theoretical implications of this research, perhaps the most intriguing is the way that the Q-method separates the theory of culture from the context of culture. We have labeled this idea poly-theoretical contextualization. A perceptual analysis allows the researcher to test multiple theories or descriptions within the same cultural context. Additionally, it permits the researcher to identify which theories explain which cultural behaviors. Above all, the perceptual typology approach to culture allows researchers to pinpoint which theoretical approaches correspond with which perspective.

An example of the poly-theoretical argument is that the findings within this study both validate and deviate from argument put forth by Valenzuela and McCombs (2009) that the higher the need for cultural orientation, the higher the tendency to rely on media. Instrumental Adaptors expressed a high need for acculturation as well as high media use to attain adaptation. These individuals validate the Valenzuela and McCombs argument in that they self-reported higher reliance on media and the ability of that media to ease the migrant process. On the other hand, Social Connectors demonstrated a high desire for cultural functioning, but a lower use of media to fulfill that desire. Individuals within this perspective typology do not look to media, or at least look to it much less than other typologies, as an instrument of adaptation. So, this research implies that there are multiple perspectives of media and adaptation that both support and conflict with the Valenzuela and McCombs argument.

A second example of poly-theoretical contextual application of this study's findings is again in Kim's (1988, 1991, 2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory. This theory addresses a sojourner's desire to adapt, assuming that most or all migrants want to adapt to the host culture. Cross-cultural adaptation theory also argues that lower adaptation motivation correlates with decreased psychological health (see Gudykunst & Kim, 1997, 2003). This study has identified a type of cultural sojourner that corresponds to cross-cultural adaption theory (Instrumental Adaptors), but there is also a type of cultural sojourner who has little motivation to fit in, stays connected with home through home-culture media, and has a strong desire to retain their previous identity. These participants noted satisfaction and happiness (two of Gudykunst and Kim's psychological health indicators) combined with lower adaptation motivation. This finding is in stark contrast to the theoretical descriptions on cross-cultural adaptation theory. Perhaps newer forms of social media are creating cyber-scapes that are altering the way individuals adapt to the new milieu.

The overriding idea behind the poly-theoretical approach demonstrates the necessity of understanding all types of cultural perspectives. Perhaps more importantly, scholarship must be careful about amalgamating individuals into convenient groupings. Obviously, geographical, linguistic, ethnic, and religious groups (or cultures) tend to have a dominant mindset or perspective. Many would agree, however, that dominance fluctuates according to group. This fluctuation necessitates attention. By identifying all perspectives, a better understanding of culture can be achieved. While more research could be done in this area, this initial finding can have an influence on the way media is approached in future research studies.

Conclusion

The combination of increasing global media use, increased migration, and reliance upon media for adaption can have a dramatic impact on the way scholars approach intercultural issues. This research has attempted to understand these changes by analyzing perspectives embedded within this combined milieu. These perspectives can now be used to understand types of inter-contextual movement free from the traditional labels of geo-political borders, linguistic systems, or racial/ethnic categories.

As with any exploratory study, there are limitations within this research. The current study is restricted to the 18 to 34 year-old demographic, as individuals in this age group are typically heavy users of social media and have the potential to use media the most while adapting. However, most subjects tested were college students with an even higher degree of media use. Furthermore, the sample was composed of mostly students at a large, private, university in the western United States, where students have free wireless Internet access while on campus in the dormitories. This may differentiate them from other types of media users. Additionally, the current study grouped all media together, and with few statement exceptions, asked respondents to do the same. Future research should break out this variable to test for differences between different types of media, both traditional and new, as well as variants of media consumption. Studies could also focus on demographics with varied levels of media use to see if they might differ from the current sample and should survey an individual's general media use and Internet media use to determine where, how often, and for what purpose he or she uses the media. The current study could be easily repeated to other demographics to unveil attitudes about media and adaptation and how they might compare to one another.

A last limitation of this study is the method itself. Although Q-methodology has been around for some time, it has not been used extensively in communication research, and many scholars are unfamiliar with it. Because of this, there is a tendency to evaluate it similarly to R-(or inferential) methodology. This is natural, as a part of the method is factor analysis. However, sampling, reliability, and validity all work differently within Q, and it is more in line with qualitative research than quantitative. This method is essentially a way of understanding how people think. It is not appropriate for any type of cultural inference or predictions of any individual or group.

Mumford (1970) recognized the dilemma of traditional cultural over-representativism of one group over another more than 40 years ago. He argued that there is a never-ending process of contextual perspective, as no one cultural type is "capable of encompassing all the latent potentialities" of human beings (p. 289). Therefore, researchers must break the mold of traditional contextual definitions.

References

Agboka, G. (2012). Liberating intercultural technical writing from "large culture" ideologies: Constructing culture discursively. *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication, 42*(2), 159-181.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Arnett, J. J. (2002). The psychology of globalization. *American Psychologist, 57*, 774-783.

Bauman, Z. (2000*). Liquid modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Blackwell.

Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29,* 697-712.

Bradley, H. (2016). *Fractured identities: Changing patterns of inequality*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Brown, S. (1980). *Political subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Brown, S. R. (1993). A primer on Q methodology. *Operant Subjectivity, 16*(3/4), 91–138.

Callahan, C., & Burnett, K. (2011). *Perceptions of culture by intercultural communication scholars: A Meta-analysis*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association annual convention, New Orleans, LA. November 17-20, 2011.

Castells, M. (2010). *Rise of the network society: The information age: Economy, society, and culture, vol. 1*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Croucher, S. (2011). Social networking and cultural adaptation: A theoretical model. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication, 4*, 259-264.

Fulk, J., & Boyd, B. (1991). Emerging theories of communication in organizations. *Journal of Management, 17,* 407–447.

Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gudykunst, W., & Kim, Y. Y. (1997). *Communicating with strangers (3rd ed.)*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Gudykunst, W., & Kim, Y. Y. (2003). *Communicating with strangers (4th ed.)*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Habermas, J. (1973 Ger./1975 Eng.). *Legitimation crisis*. T. McCarthy, Trans.). Boston: Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. (1981 Ger./1987 Eng.). *Lifeworld and system: A critique of functionalist reason, Vol. 2: The theory of communicative action*. (T. McCarthy, Trans.). Boston: Beacon Press.

Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Hoefern, M., Rytina, N, & Baker, B. (January, 2009). Estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population residing in the United States: January 2008. *Population Estimates, Department of Homeland Security*.

Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hofstede , G., & Bond, M. H. (1984). Hofstede's cultural dimensions: An independent validation using Rokeach's value survey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 15*, 417-433.

International Organization for Migration (2011). Facts and figures: Global estimates and trends. http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/facts-and-figures/lang/en Retrieved November 8, 2011.

International Telecommunications Union. (2016). *The world in 2015: Facts and figures*. Geneva: ITU.

Internet Live Stats. (2016). Internet users. Retrieved from http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users/

Internet World Statistics. (2015). *Internet growth statistics*. http://www.internetgrothstatistics/emarketing.htm Retreived March 30, 2015.

Johnson, J, & Callahan, C. (2015). Media and identity in the margins: The Garifuna response to social media. *The Journal of Media in Society, 4*(2), 3-35.

Kim, Y. Y. (1988). *Communication and cross-cultural adaptation: An integrative theory*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Kim, Y. Y. (1991). Intercultural communication competence. In S. Ting-Toomey & F. Korzenny (Eds.), *Cross-cultural interpersonal communication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Khan, M. A., & Kahn, R. M. (2007). Relationship between demographic characteristics of international students and their mass media use in intercontextual adaptation. *Journal of Development Communication, 18*, 29-40.

Kramer, E. M. (1997). *Modern/postmodern: Off the beaten path of antimodernism*. Westport, CN: Praeger.

Kramer, E. M. (2003). Gaitsu and cultural judo. In E. Kramer (Ed.), *Assimilation and the "Model Minority."* Westport, CT: Praeger, 1-32.

Lévy, P. (2000). *Kyberkultura*.Prague: Karolinum.

Mahajan, A. C. (2016). Internet users worldwide 2016-2020: The growth at decreasing rate. Retrieved from dazeinfo.com/2016/06/13/number-internet-users-worldwide-2-16-2020/

Miglietta, A., & Tartaglia, S. (2009). The influence of length of stay, linguistic competence, and meida exposure in immigrant's adaptation. *Cross-contextual Research, 43*, 46-61.

Mitchell, D. (1995). There's no such thing as culture: Toward a reconceptualization of the idea of culture within geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 20*, 102-116.

Mumford, L. (1970). *The myth of the machine*. New York: Harcourt Brace.

Ong, W. J. (1980). Literacy and orality in our times. *Journal of Communication, 30*(1), 197-204.

Ross Altarac, S. (2008). Globalization of media: What's adaptation got to do with it? Conference paper presented at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, San Diego, CA.

Rytina, N. (February, 2009). Estimates of the legal permanent resident population in 2007. *Population Estimates, Department of Homeland Security.*

Sabra, I. A. (1998). Configuring the universe: Aporetic, problem solving, and kinematic modeling as themes in Arabic astronomy. *Perspectives on Science, 6,* 288-330.

Scott, C.R., Quinn, L., Timmerman, C.E., & Garrett., D.M. (1998). Ironic uses of group communication technology: Evidence from meeting transcripts and interviews with group decision support system users. *Communication Quarterly, 46*, 353–374.

Singh, N., Lehnert, K., & Bostick, K. (2010). *Global social media usage and the language factor.* Lionbridge and Executive Education in Web Globalization, John Cook School of Business, St. Louis University. Waltham, MA: Lionbridge. www.lionbridge.com/kc/global-social-media-usage-whitepaper.htm

Stephen, T. (1985). *Q-methodology in communication science: An introduction. Communication Quarterly, 33,* 193-208.

Toennies, F. (1957). *Community and society: Gemeinschaft und gesellschaft*. East Lansing, MI: The Michigan State University Press.

Toennies, F. (1963). *Community and society*. New York: Harper.

Valenzuela, S., & McCombs, M. (2009). The agenda-setting role of the news media. In D. W. Stacks & M. B. Salwen (Eds.), An integrated approach to communication theory and research (2nd ed., pp. 90-105). New York: Taylor and Francis.

Walker, D. (1999). The media's role in immigrant adaptation: How first-year Haitians in Miami use media. *Journalism & Communication Monographs, 1,* 159-196.

Ward, C., Okura, Y., Kennedy, A., & Kojima, T. (1998). The U-curve on trial. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 22*, 299-291.

Widman, T., Jasko, S.A., & Pilotta, J.J. (1988). Technology transfer: Theory and outline of a research model for managing cultural change. *Howard Journal of Communications, 1*, 88–100.

Zong, J., & Batalova, J. (2016). Frequently requested statistics on immigrants and immigration in the United States. *Migration Policy Institute*. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states Retrieved March 30, 2016.

About the Authors

Loy Clark Callahan (Clark), Associate Professor, School of Communications, Brigham Young University. Ph.D. in Intercultural Communications from the University of Oklahoma, a M.A. in Communications from West Texas A&M University, and a B.S. in Communications from Brigham Young University. Teaches international communication, specializing in research methods and theory. Primary research focuses on media impacts during intercultural adaptation. Additional research interests include new media and culture, new media platforms, intercultural adaptation, and minority uses of social media.

Thomas E. Robinson II (Tom), Professor, School of Communications, Brigham Young University. Ph.D. in Mass Communication from the University of Southern Mississippi, a M.A. in Communications from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and a B.S. in Marketing from Northern Arizona University. Teaches advertising and specializes in advertising principles, advertising campaigns, media buying and planning, account planning, advertising strategy and advertising research. Primary research centers on the portrayal of older individuals in advertising and the media. Additional research interests include advertising and the Internet, effects theories in advertising, and sports advertising

Kari-Ann Trachmann is a Marketing and Public relations specialist living and working near Oxford, England. She has spent the last decade learning, traveling and working across different continents and countries.

Authors' Address

School of Communications
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah 84602
États-Unis