Assessment of Student Success in Study Abroad: The Intercultural Student Attitude Scale

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Purpose of the Study

- To evaluate the sensitivity of the ISAS
- To compare control students in the US with study abroad students in Italy
- To measure changes within the control and study abroad student groups

Results

- Reliability was .90 at pre-test and .92 at post-test.
- The international study group scored higher on all factors except Foreign Language and the Total at pre-test and on all factors and the Total at post-test.
- Students who choose to study internationally are different from students who stay home.

Sex and Ethnicity

- Males (n=440) rated themselves significantly higher on Stress Management and Self-Confidence at both times.
- Females (n=490) rated themselves higher on New Experiences, Open-Mindedness, and Foreign Language at both times.
- Total scores did not differ by sex.
- Minority students (n=222; African American, Native American, Hispanic, Asian, and Multiple or Other Ethnicities) scored significantly higher than White students (n=934) on Open-Mindedness at pre-test and on International Career, Foreign Language, and Total score at both pre-test and post-test.
- There were no interactions of group (control or study abroad) with sex or ethnicity.

Previous Travel Experience and Encouragement

- Students who had previously travelled outside their native country for one week or more scored significantly higher on all factors except Stress Management at pre-test.
- Students with previous travel experience scored higher on International Career and Total score at post-test.
- There was no interaction of group (control or study abroad) with previous travel.
- Encouragement by friends had an effect on scores by interacting with group.
- Among students who were not encouraged by friends, study abroad students scored higher than controls on Open-Mindedness, International Career, Foreign Language, and Total.
- Among students who reported receiving encouragement from no one, study abroad students scored higher than controls on Open-Mindedness, International Career, Foreign Language, and Total.

Grade Point Average and Length of Term

- Students with higher GPAs (3.0 or above) scored themselves significantly higher on Self-Confidence at pre-test.
- Students who travelled for the summer session scored lower on International Career and Foreign Language at pre-test and higher on Open-Mindedness at post-test than those who travelled for the spring or fall semester.

Six Intercultural Attitude Factors

- New Experiences: adventurousness, risk taking, willingness to try new things
- International Career: interest in working internationally after college
- Foreign Language: interest in learning a foreign language
- Stress Management: ability to handle unfamiliar situations calmly
- Open-Mindedness: interest in and open-mindedness about cultural differences
- Self-Confidence: being outgoing, ability to manage oneself in many situations

Concurrent Validity

- Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (Kelley & Meyers, 1992)
- Six Factor Personality Questionnaire (SFPQ, Jackson, Paunonen, & Tremblay, 2000)

Participants

- Control students enrolled at four major US universities: 701
- Study abroad students from over 30 US universities who studied in Italy for a 1-month summer term or a 4-month fall or spring semester: 457
- Data collection: spring, summer, and fall 2010

Group Differences
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>New Experiences</th>
<th>International Career</th>
<th>Open-Mindedness</th>
<th>Stress Management</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
<th>Self-Confidence</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>5.01 (.65)</td>
<td>3.80 (1.01)</td>
<td>4.76 (.62)</td>
<td>4.39 (.69)</td>
<td>4.75 (1.05)</td>
<td>3.62 (.87)</td>
<td>4.43 (.52)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>4.95 (.65)</td>
<td>3.81 (1.02)</td>
<td>4.73 (.60)</td>
<td>4.38 (.77)</td>
<td>*4.66 (1.04)</td>
<td>3.69 (.83)</td>
<td>4.41 (.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohen's d</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad</td>
<td>5.25 (.53)</td>
<td>3.96 (0.85)</td>
<td>4.86 (0.51)</td>
<td>4.51 (.63)</td>
<td>4.79 (0.89)</td>
<td>3.85 (0.86)</td>
<td>4.58 (0.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>5.24 (.65)</td>
<td>*4.07 (.90)</td>
<td>*4.90 (.60)</td>
<td>*4.63 (.74)</td>
<td>*4.88 (.90)</td>
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<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.20</td>
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