Introduction

Our work and life decisions are global in nature. Increasingly, modern work forces require employees that function effectively in an interdependent web that stretches across the globe. This creates an interdependent web of freedom of thought, environmentally, and economically.

- Global Transportation - Migration
- Global Communication - Commerce

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• (Olson & Kroeger, 2001).
• In an effort to meet the demands of globalization, the education sector is increasingly promoting study abroad programs to encourage students to experience the world firsthand and prepare them with intercultural knowledge (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillan, 2009).
• According to Brooks, Frick, & Bruening (2006), study abroad experiences are the most effective way to teach undergraduate students about international agriculture.
• Authorities in agricultural academia consider study abroad an important tool to internationalize students’ curriculum (Brooks, et al. 2006).
• Anderson and Lawton (2011) said that “The number of study abroad programs offered by colleges and universities has grown consistently over the past decade and future growth is forecast at eight percent annually”.

Purpose

To assess international students’ inter-cultural sensitivity as a result of their study-abroad experience in the United States, aiming to evaluate the efficacy of short-term study programs and the impacts on students’ cultural sensitivity.

Methods

- The instrument used for data collection was the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) (Olson & Kroeger, 2001).
- The research methodology for the study is a one-group pretest-posttest design.
- Analysis: dependent t-test to compare two means (pretest and posttest). Alpha level of 0.05 to measure significance.

Findings/ Results

Independent t-test and Descriptive Statistics for Attitude Intercultural Sensitivity Index (N = 34).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Pre Test M (SD)</th>
<th>Post Test M (SD)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>2.44 (.65)</td>
<td>2.31 (.69)</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>2.21 (.68)</td>
<td>2.24 (.54)</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.73</td>
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<td>Minimization</td>
<td>3.77 (.42)</td>
<td>3.74 (.50)</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>4.14 (.41)</td>
<td>4.17 (.79)</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>3.47 (.68)</td>
<td>3.41 (.83)</td>
<td>-.46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>3.77 (.56)</td>
<td>3.81 (.67)</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substantive Knowledge</td>
<td>2.85 (.64)</td>
<td>2.99 (.69)</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceptual Understanding</td>
<td>3.70 (.56)</td>
<td>3.56 (.72)</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intercultural Communications</td>
<td>3.28 (.64)</td>
<td>3.51 (.70)</td>
<td>-2.76</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.01*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A p < 0.05

Conclusions / Recommendations

- Short-term study abroad programs are an instrument for the flow of knowledge, technology, and culture.
- Short-term study abroad programs don’t have a strong impact on students’ cultural attitudes and behaviors.
- The results indicate that after a Short-term study abroad program students improve their skills in intercultural communications: that means they improve their ability to socialize with people from other cultures.
- Academic institutions should promote study abroad programs as an integral part of student learning, so students will understand the global impact of their decisions.
- For more significant results in students’ intercultural sensitivity a long-term study abroad program with on- and off-campus experiences is recommended in order to expose students to a variety of cultural scenarios.

References


