Factors Impacting Intercultural Development in Study Abroad

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The process of identifying impact factors included:

• Reviewing the broader theoretical and conceptual literatures on intercultural development

• Reviewing the study abroad research literature on intercultural development

• Focusing on studies that used a valid and reliable measure of ICC development, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).

• Comparing results of those studies
Impact Factors

(1) Cultural immersion
(2) Cultural reflection
(3) Cultural mentoring
(4) Cultural content
(5) Culture learning strategies
(6) Comprehensive intercultural facilitation

Cultural immersion means providing opportunities for students to become involved and engaged with the host culture. Examples include:

1. Living with homestay families
2. Taking regular courses alongside host country students
3. Participating in internships in host country organizations
Cultural reflection means providing structured and systematic examinations of intercultural experiences. Examples include:

1. Intercultural coursework, seminars
2. Maintaining journals
3. Writing reflection papers about specific intercultural events.
Cultural mentoring is defined as an intercultural pedagogy in which the mentor provides ongoing support for and facilitation of intercultural learning and development.

1. Can be effective both on line and on site

2. The cultural mentor needs to be interculturally competent and knowledgable about key culture concepts, intercultural development theory, and the intercultural development continuum

3. The cultural mentor uses learner IDI results to support learners in a manner specific to their intercultural developmental level.
Impact Factor: Cultural Content

Cultural content includes:

1. the definition of culture
2. the elements of culture
3. culture general concepts (e.g. non-verbal communication, cultural values, communication styles, intercultural development, culture shock, cultural adaptation),
4. culture specific information (the manifestations of culture general characteristics in a specific cultural context).
Culture learning strategies refer to the ways in which we can learn about another culture. Examples of culture learning strategies include:

1. Learning from host culture resource persons
2. Interacting with persons in the host culture
3. Observing the ways people interact and communicate
4. Keeping a journal of cultural experiences

Comprehensive intercultural facilitation means using multiple approaches for supporting intercultural competence development, including:

1. Pre-departure and re-entry programs
2. On site intercultural coursework
3. Cultural mentoring
4. Language study
5. Intercultural learning in academic programs
6. IDI Guided Development in study abroad
Interpreting Results from the Intercultural Development Inventory

IDI Scale Range = 90 points (55 – 145)

55       70       85       115       130       145

Denial    Polarization: Minimization Acceptance Adaptation
Defense/
Reversal
## Research Findings:
### Impact Factors in Study Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the Intervention</th>
<th>Average IDI Point Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No intercultural facilitation at program site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Georgetown Consortium Study (60 progs.):</td>
<td>+1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line course intercultural intervention, student self-directed learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- University of Minnesota</td>
<td>+3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-facilitated on-line intercultural intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bellarmine University and Willamette University</td>
<td>+8.19</td>
</tr>
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## Research Findings: Impact Factors in Study Abroad

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<tr>
<th>Nature of the Intervention</th>
<th>Average IDI Gain</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-line pre-departure program, on-site intercultural course and instructor, cultural mentoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE)</td>
<td>+9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrival orientation, on-site intercultural course and instructor, wide array of immersion activities, intensive cultural mentoring</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- American University Center of Provence (AUCP)</td>
<td>+12.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-departure and re-entry courses in the context of an internationalized academic program (2-3 years)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- University of the Pacific</td>
<td>+17.5</td>
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Research on Short Term Study Abroad

- Nam, Kyoung-Ah (2011)

Compared three-week program in Southeast Asia and the Netherlands

56% of the students made intercultural gains (as assessed by the Intercultural Development Inventory – Hammer, 2009)

The Southeast Asia program had a great impact (4.5 vs 2.1 points) on the IDI The reasons were:

- More contact with locals
- Greater amount of cultural distance and intensity (per Paige’s intensity factors)
References


