

An Analysis Of Initial Global Citizenship In A Liberal Arts College In Northeastern Pennsylvania

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ABSTRACT

There are an increasing number of organizations conducting business in the global environment (Hill, 2011). Expatriate employees are frequently used and are critical for success in these assignments (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2000). Adjusting to a foreign culture is one reason for high failure rates of expatriates (Garonzik, Brockner & Siegel, 2000). According to Morais and Ogden (2010), there is a need to measure global citizenship in a way that can validate the outcomes of a study abroad experience, specifically, and the development of a global citizen, generally. College and University Study Abroad programs introduce students to global cultures and citizenship; however, college graduates are not prepared to enter the global workforce (Hunter, 2011). This article analyzes and measures initial global citizenship in a liberal arts college in Northeastern Pennsylvania. This study utilizes the Global Citizenship Scale to explore the initial levels of social responsibility, global competence and global civic engagement (Morais & Ogden, 2010). The researchers will discuss the implications for educators, administrators, and researchers. Findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be presented.

Keywords: Global Citizenship; Expatriates; Students

INTRODUCTION

A survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) revealed that globalization will have the biggest impact on organizations over the next ten years (SHRM, 2010). Hill (2011) acknowledges that there are an increasing number of organizations conducting business in the global environment. Expatriate employees are frequently used and are critical for success in these global assignments (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2000).

While there appears to be a growing number of organizations involved in international and global business, there is a high failure rate of expatriates. Adjusting to a foreign culture is one reason for high failure rates of expatriates (Garonzik, Brockner & Siegel, 2000). Stahl (2005) found that expatriates in countries more culturally similar to their own were more inclined to remain in their international assignment. A survey conducted by Olson and Kroeger (2001) indicated that a globally competent person will possess intercultural communication skills, perceptual understanding of the culture, and enough extensive knowledge to be effective.

Students can fill international positions at a variety of organizations located around the globe. In support, some colleges and universities are offering students the opportunity to study abroad. According to a new report from Institute of International Education (IIE), international student enrollment is at a record high - up nearly 6 percent in the past academic year - and 1 percent more U.S. students are studying abroad (Open Doors, 2012). College and university study abroad programs introduce students to global cultures and citizenship; however, college graduates are not prepared to enter the global workforce (Hunter, 2011).

Wright (2010) explains that after taking students on numerous study abroad experiences, it is important to continually repeat the trip's purpose and remind them that it is a learning experience. Cultural immersion and cultural understanding is helped when students learn the foreign host's language (Yu, 2008).

“A major goal of the short-term study abroad experience is to generate citizenship of and enthusiasm for the international mission and a willingness to participate in international activities” (Gray, Murdock & Stebbins, 2002, p. 47); however, in order to assess a study abroad program, it is helpful to identify and measure specific learning objectives (Gray et al.).

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Annual report (2012) shows that study abroad experiences are more likely to occur at private baccalaureate colleges and that they provide life-changing experiences. They also report that students living with host nationals related to more integrative and reflective learning, and personal and social gains, but that the length of time spent abroad did not make a difference.

Kostovich and Bermele (2011) share tips with those faculty members planning to travel with students on a study abroad project. Their tips include choosing the destination and working closely with the travel agent, determining outcomes of the trip, allowing time for classmate interaction, and evaluating the experience.

Today, academic competence alone is insufficient; other competencies are also needed – abilities that transcend both professional and vocational work. Some have labeled these abilities “global” or “international” competence (Fantini, 2000). In order for students to be successful in new global environments, they need to possess ethnographic and observation skills when studying abroad (Edwards, 2000).

While students are participating in increasing numbers in study abroad programs, assessment of their learning is important for determining student growth, both intellectually and personally, and that they are better prepared for careers in the global environment (Tucker, Gullekson & McCambridge, 2011). Chieffo & Griffiths (2004) concluded that even short periods of time students spend abroad are educationally beneficial to them, both personally and intellectually. Keeping a field journal, reporting subjective responses to observations and then documenting reflections are useful study abroad assignments (Brewer, 2011).

While the term Global Citizenship is widely used and seen as helpful to students in becoming global citizens, the international education profession and related academic fields have not adopted one specific definition of global citizenship; however, there are three scopes of global citizenship that are consistently mentioned in the literature - global civic engagement, global competence and social responsibility (Morais & Ogden, 2010).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to analyze and measure initial global citizenship in a liberal arts college in Northeastern Pennsylvania. According to Morais and Ogden (2010), there is a need to measure global citizenship in a way that can validate the outcomes of a study abroad experience, specifically, and the development of a global citizen, generally. This study will utilize the Global Citizenship Scale to obtain a “Global Citizenship Score” which will be used to explore the initial levels of Social Responsibility, Global Competence and Global Civic Engagement of the students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- RQ1:** Is there a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score of males versus females?
- RQ2:** Is there a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score among college majors?
- RQ3:** Is there a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score among students with different GPAs?

PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study were students enrolled in The First Year Seminar classes of a small, liberal arts college in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Instructors from various divisions taught the classes, which met one day per

week for 50 minutes, with additional requirements/meetings outside of the typical classroom time. According to the College Catalog, The First-Year Seminar college course is “designed to help first-year students understand the new challenges, unique values, and opportunities of the college. Emphasis will be placed on introducing students to the institutional learning goals; service learning perspective, writing intensive perspective, diversity perspective, global perspective, environmental sustainability perspective, and independent and self-directed learning perspective” (Catalog, 2011-2013, p. 230). For this particular study, the intended population was college freshmen; however, some non-freshmen were enrolled, either due to transfer into the institution or repeat of the course. All students present in class when the survey was administered were given the survey. However, any survey indicating that the subject was an international student was removed from the list. It was felt that international students were already experiencing global citizenship by the fact that they came from another country. Therefore, this survey was being used to determine global “readiness” for those who were not considered “international.” After removing those who identified themselves as an international student, a sample size of 260 (n = 260) was obtained. Of this sample, 61.5% were female and 37.7% were male. The majority of students (95.8%) were of what one may view as a typical college freshmen (ages 18 to 23), and 95% identified themselves as freshmen. Seven majors were identified: (1) Undeclared; (2) Business Management and Technology; (3) Communications, Arts, and Humanities; (4) Education; (5) Fine Arts; (6) Natural Sciences and Mathematics; and (7) Social and Behavioral Sciences. Participants were asked to self-report their current GPA with given options of below 2.00, 2.00-2.49, 2.50-2.99, 3.00-3.49, and 3.5-4.99.

PROCEDURES

All First-Year Seminar instructors were asked to administer the survey to their classes sometime during the last three weeks of classes. Instructors were informed of the project and were asked to collect the surveys (with no names written on them) and return them via email to one of the researchers. The survey requested information for descriptive statistics (such as gender, major, and age) as well as asked participants to rate their agreement to thirty statements dealing with various aspects of global citizenship. The rating scale for each item was from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data collected from the surveys was entered into SPSS 20. A Global Citizenship Score was determined by adding the responses of the thirty statements. Descriptive statistics were run to create a description of the sample. T-tests and ANOVAs were run to test the hypotheses.

FINDINGS

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score of males versus females?

The average Global Citizenship Scores of female and males were quite similar. A mean score of 89.84 was obtained for males and 91.79 for females. When an independent sample t-test was run to test this hypothesis, no significant difference was found at the .05 level, $t(244) = -1.137, p = .257$ (see Table 1). Therefore, there is not enough evidence to state that gender makes a difference in global citizenship.

Table 1: Independent Samples Test

		Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
globalcitizenship	Equal variances assumed	.526	.469	-1.137	244	.257	-1.94905	1.71404
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.125	190.496	.262	-1.94905	1.73207

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score among college majors?

To test this hypothesis, participants were divided into groups according to their indicated majors. An ANOVA was run to determine if a significant difference existed among majors. The results of the ANOVA

indicated a significant difference at the .05 level, $F(6,241) = 4.686, p = .000$. A Bonferoni Post hoc test was run to identify significant differences. Significant differences were found between the following three pairs: Undeclared and Communications, Arts and Humanities (CAH); Undeclared and Fine Arts (FA); and Communications Arts and Humanities (CAH); and Business, Management, and Technology (BMT) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Citizenship Score with Majors

Major1	Major2	* Mean Differences	Std. Error	Sig.
Undeclared	CAH	16.97101	3.92488	.000
Undeclared	FA	11.75262	3.48236	.018
CAH	BMT	13.15000	3.35174	.002

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

RQ3: Is there a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score among students with different GPAs?

Since most of the participants were freshmen, the only GPA they had encountered at that point in time was a mid-term estimate of the GPA. Therefore, their self-reported GPA was either based on what they had seen at mid-term, the GPA they were hoping to obtain by the end of the semester, or a complete guess. The question on GPA asked students to choose the range in which their GPA fell. The choices were: below 2.00, 2.00-2.49, 2.50-2.99, 3.00-3.49, and 3.5-4.00. To test this hypothesis, an ANOVA was run to see if there was a significant difference in the average Global Citizenship Score among the various GPAs. The results indicated no significant difference at the .05 level, $F(4,239) = 2.211, p = .068$ (see Table 3). Therefore, there was not enough evidence to state a significant difference in Global Citizenship scores among the various GPA levels.

Table 3: Citizenship Score with GPA

ANOVA

globalcitizenship					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1459.570	4	364.892	2.211	.068
Within Groups	39439.131	239	165.017		
Total	40898.701	243			

To further analyze this area, the GPA categories were split into two groups: high (GPA of 3.0 and higher) and low (GPA below 3.0). An independent t-test was run and, once again, no significant difference at a .05 level was found, $t(242) = .072, p = .943$.

IMPLICATIONS

Study abroad opportunities exist at many colleges and universities today, but, are students prepared for this opportunity? College administration may have valid concerns regarding faulty-led trips abroad and study abroad opportunities. Exploration in elements, such as a students’ major, their gender, or their GPA which may affect one’s preparedness for international experience, was done in this study. However, what other characteristics, or even experiences, better prepares one for international study or work?

It appears that gender should not be a concern. According to Vance and Paik (2001), there should be no bias against females being hired as expatriates. Bhatti, Sundram, and Hoe (2012) concur, indicating in their study that female expatriates performed better than males in a multicultural setting. Both of these support the finding in this study in which gender did not play a role in initial levels of global citizenship.

GPA has been shown to relate to achievement striving, personality, and motivation (Bacon & Bean, 2006) which may be considered desirable qualities in international opportunities. However, based on findings in this study, the freshmen year may not be the desirable time to look for a relationship between GPA and initial levels of global citizenship since freshmen have not had the opportunity to really experience the college setting and responsibilities as an upperclassman does. The impact of a GPA may not even be considered by one at the freshmen level.

Research has been done on various majors with study abroad. For example, in the 2011 Open Doors Survey conducted by The Institute of International Education, the leading fields for American studying abroad were: Social Sciences (22%); Business and Management (21%); Physical, Life and Health Sciences (13%); Humanities (12%); Fine Arts (8%), and Education (4%). Undecided, as a major choice, was not included in the Open Doors report. In the current study, a significant difference in global citizenship was noted. Students indicating that they were undecided in a major scored significantly different on the Global Citizenship Scale when compared to two other majors. Additional study in this area is needed.

LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation of this study is that it is restricted to a small, liberal arts college in northeastern Pennsylvania. The findings of this study provide a springboard for discussions needed at any institution prior to sending its students off to another country. This study was limited to the fact that not only were GPAs self-reported, but the majority of these participants were freshmen, some of whom knew little about the composition of a semester's GPA. It is recommended that additional study using upper classmen, preferably Sophomores or Juniors, is warranted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As institutions continue to promote study abroad and other global opportunities, more research, in terms of student readiness and global citizenship, is needed. Additionally, study into various majors and what plays a role in preparing students for global learning and employment may provide valuable information to faculty and administrators who are interested in study abroad and/or faculty-led trips abroad. Helping students choose course work designed to improve workforce entry is crucial in obtaining higher level positions in companies that value expatriate experience.

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