

International Service Learning's Effects on Global Citizenship

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International Service Learning's Effects on Global Citizenship

Introduction

The world has shifted towards and more multinational, global society. A growing understanding of the importance of global citizenship, global mindedness, and civic engagement are now ever-present. Universities can be at the forefront of fostering global citizenry within their populations (Green, 2013). University's goals often include the promotion of students' global citizenship through the interconnectedness of learning, service, and an international mindset (Olds, 2012). Higher education has long understood the value of study abroad programs and internationalization (Chakravarty et al., 2020; Horn & Fry, 2013; Mitic, 2020). However, recent research suggests the positive impacts on students' global citizenship are modest at best (Aktas et al., 2017; Horn & Fry, 2012; Patel & Lynch, 2013). Although these programs are fruitful, in recent years, international service-learning (ISL) has grown in popularity. Research has shown that lessons learned during ISL can provide the foundations for a better understanding of one's global citizenship, one's role in the world, and one's interconnectedness (Davies, 2006; Limoncelli, 2017; Zhang & Gibson, 2021). This research, therefore, aims to consider the impacts ISL has on undergraduate students' global citizenship.

Literature Review

In the mid-1970's the idea of global citizenship was being advocated in UK schools and universities (Davies, 2006). The discussions on merits, values, and definitions of global citizenship evolved over the following decades. Morais and Ogden (2011) state, "no one particular definition of global citizenship had been adopted in the international education profession and related academic fields" (p. 3). Lagos (2001) adds that attempting to develop a definition of global citizenship is the right step towards a better understanding of the impacts and influence global citizens can have. Universities valued this idea of global citizenship and quickly expanded their offerings of international programs and study abroad opportunities (Bennett, 2010; Tillman, 2008; Walker, 1999).

Service-learning connects students and institutions directly to surrounding communities for larger social good, while instilling values of equity, responsibility, and community value (Mitchell, 2008). The National Council for Social Studies (2020) adds that service-learning links service in communities or schools to academic learning and civic responsibility. Educators quickly saw the value in adding an international component to service-learning hence, the creation of international service-learning (ISL). After the birth of ISL, universities and researchers noticed these programs seemed to have a larger impact on students' global citizenship. (Horn & Fry, 2012).

By adding international components to service-learning, universities further enhanced their role in creating a more valued asset since ISL combines academic instruction and community-based service with an international framework (Crabtree, 2008). With the addition of an international component, service-learning can generate a better opportunity to create global citizenry in undergraduate students than internationalization or study abroad programs (Chan et al., 2020; Morais & Ogden, 2011; Niehaus & Crain, 2013; Roberts & Wilson, 2016).

Sklad et al. (2016) tried to examine the benefits of ISL on the undergraduate population's global citizenship. The authors used both a qualitative and quantitative approach to pretest/posttest

Dutch students participating in an ISL trip. Sklad et al. concluded that students who participated in the ISL gained a stronger understanding of the local society and social perspectives, creating a more open-minded demeanor to cultural differences while examining cultural differences more aptly. Sklad et al. did not use a singular scale and instead borrowed from various inventories. One of the subscales they used was the Morais and Ogden (2011) global competence subscale. This subscale is part of the larger Morais and Ogden Global Citizenship Scale (GCS) that has become the standard-bearer of global citizenship inventories.

The Morais and Ogden (2011) GCS is a 30 question, 5-point Likert scale consisting of seven sub-scales. The initial GCS pool of questions was pulled from 12 operational inventories. While the authors felt many of these inventories were satisfactory, they were not all-encompassing. Morais and Ogden removed “exceptionally lengthy items, double-barreled items, and items with ambiguous pronoun references” (p.7). An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to examine scale validity. Questions found to be negatively worded or cross-loaded with other factors were removed from the scale. All remaining items had acceptable factor loadings and carried a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .70 or higher. Morais and Ogden further validated the scale by using the Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficient which demonstrated a reliability value of .91. The GCS is the most complete inventory created to date and has been cross-validated (Cho & Chi, 2014, Nguyen, 2021; Roberts & Wilson, 2016). In Roberts and Wilson, the authors cross-validated the GCS by examining a diverse pool of engineering students in a large research university in the Pacific Northwest. The authors concluded that social responsibility and global civic engagement sub scales of Morais and Ogden are valid across diverse undergraduate populations.

In Cho and Chi (2014), the authors further cross-validated the scale using Korean students at two major metropolitan universities, one in Seoul, Korea and the other in Seattle, Washington finding a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.92, which supported reliability of the scale. Cho and Chi wanted to examine the same nationality of students in different social environments to observe global citizenship. Cho and Chi performed a latent means analysis (LMA) using the maximum likelihood (ML) estimation method to measure group differences. The authors found support that the scale functioned across both groups in a parallel manner, concluding that scale validity was supported in their sample.

Given the evidence of validity and reliability of the GCS, the current study will use Morais and Ogden’s (2011) GCS to determine if participants partaking on an ISL trip abroad will see an across the board rise in GCS scores across the seven subsets: social responsibility, global competence (GC) self-awareness, GC interpersonal communication, GC global knowledge, global civic engagement (GCE) involvement in civic organizations, GCE political voice, and GCE global civic activism.

Methodology

The purpose of this quasi-experimental, pre-test/post-test design study is to compare global citizenship in an undergraduate population. Participants will complete an intervention (ISL trip) between the pre-test and post-test. The authors will use a comparison group not participating in the ISL trip to compare GCS scores against the ISL group. The ISL group should see a larger rise in GCS scores compared to the comparison group.

Planned Analysis and Results

Data collection is planned for the spring semester of 2022 with analysis planned for late spring/early summer. A total of 48 students from two Pacific Northwest universities will complete the pre-test and post-test surveys. Once the data has been collected OLS assumptions will be examined. Next, the pre-test and post-test scores will be compared within and between groups. Results will be used to determine whether the ISL students have significantly higher GCS scores than the comparison group of students.

Conclusion

There is limited use of the Morais & Ogden (2011) GCS. This research will add to the literature to fill gaps in GCS knowledge. This way universities and ISL providers will have a clearer picture of what undergraduate students' needs are for global citizenship, how universities can better prepare undergraduates for the global future, and best practices within the ISL discipline.

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