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Intercultural Competencies among Undergraduates in the College of Arts & Humanities at Minnesota State University, Mankato

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Intercultural Competencies among Undergraduates in the College of Arts & Humanities

Jonathon Arndt and Olivia Thomas
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Minnesota, USA

May, 2019
World Congress on Undergraduate Research
Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg, Germany

IRB #: 13498123
Our location: Mankato, Minnesota, USA

- 85 miles southwest of Minneapolis, MN
- Greater Mankato area has over 50,000 people
Minnesota State University, Mankato

- > 15,000 students
- > 2,200 underrepresented students
- > 2,000 faculty and staff
- > 1,300 international students from > 90 countries
  - #12 nationally in international student population
  - 11 students from Germany in 2018-2019 academic year
  - Partner universities in Germany (2)
    - Friedrich Alexander Universitat Erlangen Nuremberg, Erlangen, Germany
    - Hochschule Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences, Karlsruhe
University & College Missions

MSU Vision: “We believe that a diverse campus is critical in order for our students, faculty and staff to be engaged and productive members of a global society.”

College of Arts & Humanities: “We are a community of learners committed to seeing, understanding, negotiating, and ultimately embracing difference.”
Importance of Cultural Competence

Communication is key to understanding others. Intercultural communication creates a bridge between groups of people to develop and expand on intercultural competency.
Key Terms

**Culture:** “the pattern of beliefs, behaviors, and values maintained by groups of interacting people, and passed to future generations” (Hammer & Bennett, 2010).

**Intercultural Competency:** "the capability to accurately understand and adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonality" (Hammer & Bennett, 2010).
Past Research

Students who completed a one-semester human relations course showed statistically significant positive gains in their orientation to cultures different than their own.

Investigators attributed these gains to:
- Cultural partnerships
- Service learning experiences
- Mentor guidance
- Reflective practice

(Sandell and Tupy, 2016)
Research Questions

What is the starting level of intercultural competency among undergraduate students in an Intercultural Communications course in the College of Arts & Humanities at MSU, Mankato?

Are there any differences in the starting levels of intercultural competency of undergraduate students in the College of Arts & Humanities compared to the students in other colleges at MSU, Mankato?
Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Theory)

- Monocultural Mindset
- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance
- Adaptation
- Intercultural Mindset
Hypotheses

The starting level for undergraduate students will be early in the stage of Minimization on the Intercultural Development Continuum.

There will be no statistically significant differences in the starting levels of intercultural competency among the students in different colleges at MSU, Mankato.
Methodology

Population: undergraduate students in A&H
Subjects: 20 students in an Intercultural Communications course
Setting: mid-size, mid-western, public university
Instrument: Intercultural Development Inventory
Procedures: on-line survey at start of the semester
Analysis: SPSS - descriptive statistics and tests of significance (t-tests)
## Sample of 20 Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Demographic Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
<td>18 – 30 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>US citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>Ethnic minority in home country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>Childhood in North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>Never lived out of US</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Developmental Orientation (DO)

Denial | Polarization: Defense/Reversal | Minimization | Acceptance | Adaptation

55 | 70 | 85 | 100 | 115 | 130 | 145

88.23
Participants’ Beginning Developmental Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Adaptation</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusp of Adaptation</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusp of Acceptance</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimization</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusp of Minimization</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polarization</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusp of Polarization</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Comparing Results between Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Developmental Orientation (mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMST 203 (Arts &amp; Humanities)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>88.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEC 222 (Education)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>86.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRKT 210 (Business)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>84.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHYG 100 (Allied Health &amp; Nursing)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>88.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 212 (Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>93.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 100 (Science, Engineering, &amp; Tech)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>82.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Statistics for Cross-College Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Orientation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>202</td>
<td>48.32</td>
<td>123.57</td>
<td>86.9876</td>
<td>15.50187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Data Analysis: Results of Multivariate Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.883</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>15.000</td>
<td>535.950</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

The starting level of intercultural competency among undergraduate students in an intercultural communications course at MSU, Mankato is ethno-centric minimization.

There is no statistically significant difference in the starting values of intercultural competency among undergraduate students in the 6 different colleges at MSU, Mankato.
Recommendations

We suggest further studies be conducted with larger samples to understand the relationship between instructional strategies that will foster intercultural competence.

- Experience
- Knowledge
- Reflection
- Mentorships
References

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Undergraduate Research Center at MSU
2019 Undergraduate Research Symposium, Mankato, Minnesota
Center for Excellence in Scholarship and Research
2019 World Congress of Undergraduate Research, Oldenburg, Germany
Questions?