Intercultural Partnerships that Foster Cultural Competence among Undergraduate Students

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**Background/Introduction**

* Previous analysis suggested students began the course with an ethno-centric minimization orientation toward cultural differences.
* Formative assessments showed that students in general had very few relationships with persons from other cultures.
* So, a major course revision was made to require experience and reflection in a Cultural Partnership.
* When the course went online, the assignment was revised into the Giving Voice Project.

**Methodology**

* Convenience Sample – Undergraduates in 3 semesters of Human Relations in a Multicultural Society at a mid-size Midwest university.
* Four groups:
  (1) on-campus Cultural Partnership with international students;
  (2) virtual Cultural Partnership with international students;
  (3) virtual group Cultural Partnership;
  (4) Giving Voice Project.

* Survey Methodology: Intercultural Development Inventory™ online during class time.

* Score of interest: IDI Developmental Orientation at conclusion of the course.

**Participants & Setting**

* All participants were undergraduate students in enrolled in Human Relations in a Multicultural Society (n=102).
* Participants were 26% male and 74% female, with an average age of 21 years (range, 18 – 24 years old).
* At a mid-sized public university in the Midwest of the United States.

**Data/Results**

* SPSS v.5 was used to compare the IDI scores for students with Cultural Partnerships or with the Giving Voice Project.

* A complex contrast between the mean Developmental Orientation score of the cultural partnership group (comprised of US ethnic difference, international student on-campus, international student on-line, and Alaska Native on-line) (M = 92.24, SD = 16.24) compared the Giving Voice Project group (M = 90.13, SD = 13.66).

* The mean difference was 3.68, 95% CI [-12.23, 4.87], was not a statistically significant difference, p = .40.

**Future Research**

* Examine if similar results occur with undergraduate students from underrepresented groups.
* Examine if similar results occur with different disciplines.
* Examine if similar results occur if the Cultural Partnership is more directed and individually matched.
* Examine if similar results occur with the Giving Voice Project.