Using Virtual Exchange (VE) to Integrate and Develop Global and Cultural Competency for Students in an Economics Curriculum.

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The Team

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What is Virtual Exchange (VE)?

An exciting **interactive teaching** and learning practice that **connects students** with peers at **international universities** to work collaboratively online through the Internet.

- It is an "at-home" international experience.

What is Global Competency?

The skills, knowledge, and awareness that enhance the ability to function in a global environment.

Why do we want this for our students?

- Help students develop 21st-century professional skills, such as global citizenship, digital literacy, and intercultural competence.
- We also provide a digital badge that signals these skills on their digital professional portfolio (LinkedIn, Portfolium)

Virtual Exchange (VE) & The Classroom

- Incorporating global competency-enhancing programs into the higher-education curriculum can help prepare students to be successful global citizens and workers.
  - MacCleoud, 2018; Carroll, et al., 2022; Salomão & Viana da Silva, 2020.

- One way to enhance global competency is through virtual exchange programs, allowing students to interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds and learn about other countries' economic systems.
  - Duffy, et al., 2022; Villar-Onrubia & Rajpal, 2016.

Collaborative learning through coursework

14 teams, 6/7 people in each team, 2 Soton / 4(5) GSU

One objective: to analyse the behavio(u)ral policies in the UK and USA surrounding COVID

4 required online meetings (may have more if needed)

One final piece of individual assessment worth 15% of final grade

Group Meetings & Project Scaffold

Meeting 1: Introduction, group set up, define key concepts

Introduction; Group Name; Define a Nudge; Nudge vs. Incentive

Timeline : October 31 – November 6 (Week 5)

Deadline to submit meeting report : November 6, 2022

Meeting 2: Identify COVID nudges, select 3, compare USA/UK

Give examples of UK & US nudges used for COVID-19 compliance. Discuss these nudges together.

Timeline: November 7 – November 13 (Week 6)

Deadline to submit meeting report : November 13, 2022

Meeting 3: Select a nudge from each country, explain in detail

Narrow down your choice to 1 nudge from each country & state your reasoning for your choice.

Timeline: November 14 – November 20 (Week 7)

Deadline to submit meeting report : November 20, 2022

Meeting 4: Link chosen nudges to behavioural theory

Identify the underlying behavioral theories that motivated the nudges chosen in Meeting 3.

Timeline: November 28 – December 4, 2022 (Week 8)

Deadline to submit meeting report : December 4, 2022 (11:59 PM – GMT)

Submit Coursework: work on this individually, nudges illustrated should be the same as the rest of your group.

Global Competency & Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

- Survey of 24 questions – split into 5 dimensions.

  - Prompt for the students:

"*Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.*"

Source: https://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Cultural_competence/Intercultural_Sensitivity_Scale
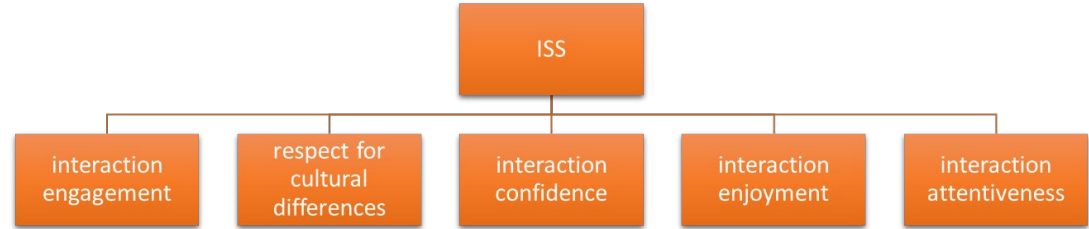
Global Competency & Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.

17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.

18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.

19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.

20. I think my culture is better than other cultures.

21. I often give positive responses to my culturally-different counterpart during our interaction.

22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.

23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.

24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.

Dimensions

- Interaction Engagement: 1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, and 24,
- Respect for Cultural Differences: 2, 7, 8, 16, 18, and 20,
- Interaction Confidence: 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10,
- Interaction Enjoymnent: 9, 12, and 15
- Interaction Attentiveness items: 14, 17, and 19

The Effect of a VE Project on Students' cultural competency
The differences in ISS scores between pre- and post-VE project

	Wilcoxon rank-sum (Mann–Whitney) test	t-test		
	Prob >|Z|	Diff(post-pre)	t	P(T<t)
ISS	0.14	2.82	1.28	0.10
Interaction Engagement	0.12	1.12	1.53*	0.06
Respect for Cultural Differences	0.97	-0.14	-0.20	0.58
Interaction Confidence	**0.08***	**1.12**	**1.72****	**0.04**
Interaction Enjoyment	0.09*	0.37	0.92	0.18
Interaction Attentiveness	0.35	0.35	0.93	0.18
N	51	51		

Notes: *,**,*** indicates significance at 10%, 5% and 1% significance level. Prob and

P(T<t) represents p-values of statistics.

Global Competency & Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.

4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.

5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.

6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures

10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.

Dimensions

- Interaction Engagement: 1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, and 24,
- Respect for Cultural Differences: 2, 7, 8, 16, 18, and 20,
- Interaction Confidence: 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10,
- Interaction Enjoymnent: 9, 12, and 15
- Interaction Attentiveness items: 14, 17, and 19

The Effect of a VE Project on Students' cultural competency Disaggregated by Gender and Language Ability

	Wilcoxon rank-sum (Mann–Whitney) test		t-test				Wilcoxon rank-sum (Mann–Whitney) test		t-test			
	Male	**Female**	**Male**		**Female**		**One**	**Multiple**	**One**		**Multiple**	
Diff(pre-post)	Prob >|Z|	Prob >|Z|	Diff(post-pre)	t	Diff(post-pre)	t	Prob >|Z|	Prob >|Z|	Diff(post-pre)	t	Diff(post-pre)	t
ISS	0.69	**0.09***	0.31	0.11	**5.44**	**1.63***	0.90	**0.04****	-0.48	-0.13	**5.13**	**1.93****
Interaction Engagement	0.61	**0.09***	0.38	0.38	**1.88**	**1.79****	0.85	**0.07***	0.24	0.20	**1.73**	**1.88****
Respect for Cultural Differences	0.62	0.50	-0.54	-0.56	0.28	0.27	0.35	0.36	-1.29	-1.05	0.67	0.81
Interaction Confidence	0.59	**0.07***	0.50	0.57	**1.76**	**1.82****	0.67	**0.05***	0.48	0.41	**1.57**	**2.10****
Interaction Enjoyment	**0.03****	0.73	0.69	1.16	0.04	0.07	0.73	**0.05***	-0.29	-0.42	**0.83**	**1.68***
Interaction Attentiveness	0.14	**0.00*****	-0.73	-1.35	**1.48**	**3.01*****	0.61	0.39	0.38	0.64	0.33	0.67
N	26	25	26		25		21	30	21		30	

Notes: *,**,*** indicates significance at 10%, 5% and 1% significance level. Prob and P(T<t) represents p-values of statistics.

The Effect of a VE Project on Students' cultural competency Disaggregated by Race/Ethnicity

Wilcoxon rank-sum (Mann-Whitney) test

	G1	**G2**	G3	**G4**
ISS	0.63	0.32	0.68	0.09*
Interaction Engagement	0.78	0.42	0.92	0.08*
Respect for Cultural Differences	0.35	0.90	1.00	0.58
Interaction Confidence	0.23	0.32	0.52	0.18
Interaction Enjoyment	0.42	0.27	1.00	0.07
Interaction Attentiveness	0.16	**0.05****	0.52	0.40

t-Test	G1		**G2**		G3		**G4**	
	Diff	t	Diff	t	Diff	t	Diff	t
ISS	-2.56	-0.78	2.90	0.76	-2.00	-0.34	**7.00**	**1.67****
Interaction Engagement	-0.67	-0.50	0.95	0.77	0.00	0.00	**2.59**	**1.89****
Respect for Cultural Differences	-1.56	-1.20	-0.45	-0.36	-0.20	-0.13	1.00	0.81
Interaction Confidence	1.22	1.04	1.10	0.99	-1.00	-0.51	**1.71**	**1.51***
Interaction Enjoyment	-0.67	-1.11	0.15	0.21	0.00	0.00	**1.29**	**1.75****
Interaction Attentiveness	-0.89	-1.19	**1.15**	**1.93****	-0.80	-0.62	0.41	0.58

Notes: *,**,*** indicates significance at 10%, 5% and 1% significance level. P is Prob(T<t) which represents p-values of statistics.

G1: White

G2: Black, Black British, African, America, Caribbean or African

G3: Asian or Asian American/British

G4: Mixed or other ethnic group.

"What I liked about was this was a project which reinforced many soft skills such as time management, communication etc. It felt like this was a good example of how projects may work in real working scenarios." – UoS student

"My group was talkative from the second all the way to the last meeting we had." – UoS student.

"I did not like having to organize meetings because of the time zone difference." – GSU student.

"I liked being able to work with people who I normally wouldn't have ever encountered. It was fun to get to know how their lives were similar and different from mine." – GSU student

"I liked talking to them outside of the class assignments. Mostly with the world cup going on, there was a lot to talk about with many cultures." – GSU student

"It was quite a novel concept - usually university group work is a waste of time" – UoS Student

Student Feedback – from Post-Survey

In Summary

1. The program's effectiveness is evaluated through pre- and post-surveys measuring changes in students' global competency and analyzing their course grades.

2. The virtual exchange program effectively enhanced students' global competency skills, particularly among female and multilingual students, highlighting its potential to promote diversity and inclusion in economics education.

3. The paper contributes to the literature by emphasizing the benefits of virtual exchange programs in enhancing global competencies and fostering diversity in the field.

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

- Increases global competency and engagement
- Promotes digital literacy
- Fosters cultural appreciation and understanding
- Develops professional skills
- Facilitates intercultural collaboration and communication

BENEFITS TO FACULTY

- Offers an economical way to bring in content and practicing experts
- Builds research and teaching networks at international institutions
- Creates professional development opportunities
- Globalizes your curriculum

BENEFITS TO INSTITUTIONS

- Widens access to international experiences for all students
- May serve as a stepping-stone to physical mobility (study abroad)
- Provides an alternative or supplement to study abroad
- Breaks down campus boundaries and disciplinary silos to transform learning
- Facilitates intercultural collaboration and communication

Questions?

Thank you!

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