

doi:10.5191/jiaee.2015.22104

Examining the Motivations and Barriers Influencing the Decisions of Louisiana State University College of Agriculture Freshmen to Participate in International Experiences

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Abstract

Over the past decade, universities in the United States (U.S) have increased time and financial investments put toward internationalizing their curricula, particularly in efforts to increase students' participation in international experiences (IEs). Despite efforts, only 10% of U.S students participated in an IE in the 2011/2012 academic year, of which only 1.3% included students in agriculturally-related majors. The purpose of the study was to examine the motivations and barriers influencing the decisions of College of Agriculture (CoA) freshmen to participate in an international experience (IE). The majority of freshmen were interested in an IE, and they perceived their participation would be at least somewhat important to their education and future career. Overall life experience gained and looks good on a résumé were perceived as the most important motivations. Cost and lack of information were the greatest barriers perceived by freshman students. Freshmen who perceived the most motivations also had greater interest in an IE and viewed an IE as very important, while freshmen who perceived the fewest motivations were those who did not perceive an IE as important. It can be recommended that students who have participated previously in an IE deliver presentations during first year experience courses. These presentations should highlight global components of the curriculum using practical, job-oriented instructional methods that focus on the overall life experiences, career benefits, and résumé strength. To eliminate cost barriers and increase student participation in IEs, CoA administrators and faculty members should work with freshmen to help them locate scholarship opportunities early on in their college career.

Keywords: motivations, barriers, international experiences, undergraduate education

Introduction

Today's world is home to diverse societies that are participating in a global economy, where future generations of students must be prepared to enter a culturally integrated workplace (Schnusenbergh, de Jong, & Goel, 2012). Over the past decade, universities in the United States (U.S.) have increased time and financial investments put toward internationalizing their curricula, particularly in efforts to increase students' participation in international experiences (IEs) (Childress, 2009; Parsons, 2010; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). As suggested in the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (2005), participation in an international experience (IE) should become the norm for college students, rather than the exception. This campaign to encourage involvement in IEs among U.S. college students is based on the postulation that participation assists students in developing the skills necessary to succeed in today's global workplace (Childress, 2009; Parsons, 2010; Schnusenbergh et al., 2012). In previous research studies, students who participated in an IE demonstrated (a) greater global awareness and a more developed global mindset (Parsons, 2010), (b) increased cultural awareness and higher acceptance of diverse culture groups (Childress, 2009; Parsons, 2010), (c) increased skills in communicating and working with people of cultures different from their own (Ludwig, 2007; Parsons, 2010), (d) higher levels of confidence and self-efficacy when working in unfamiliar situations, and (e) international networking that was beneficial to their careers (Childress, 2009; Parsons, 2010).

Despite efforts, only 10% of U.S. students participated in an IE in the 2011/2012 academic year, of which only 1.3% included students in agriculture related majors (Institute of International Education,

2013). However, prior research has indicated that agriculture undergraduate students held positive perceptions regarding participation in an IE (Bunch, Lamm, Israel, & Edwards, 2013), and they perceived them to be relevant and beneficial to their future careers (Stroud, 2010; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). When evaluating students' perceptions of IEs regarding their level of competitiveness, Briers, Shinn, and Nguyen (2010) reported that over 70% of students who had participated in an IE believed that the experience would improve their competitiveness in today's global job market. This is consistent with other research findings, in which more than 50% of the students believed their participation in an IE was relevant to their future job opportunities, as well as to their academic track at home (Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005).

Additionally, students perceived the opportunity to live in and experience another culture as a motivator to participate in an IE (Kim & Goldstein, 2005; Stroud, 2010). Students also believed that participating in an IE would enhance their overall life experience (Briers et al., 2010), and rated their participation in an IE as extremely or very relevant to their personal development, stating that they would participate in an IE again if given the opportunity (Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). Lastly, Van Hoof and Verbeeten (2005) reported that students were more likely to participate in an IE if they favored the location of the IE. Europe and Australia have been the most popular locations for students participating in IEs, although recent trends revealed greater student interest in IEs held in less traditional locations, such as South American countries (Institute of International Education, 2013).

Research is needed to explain why students' perceptions of participating in an IE are positive but participation is low. Examining the characteristics of university freshmen and their perceptions of barriers

associated with participating in an IE may assist in explaining students' intent to participate in an IE during their undergraduate education (Stroud, 2010; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). According to Stroud (2010), understanding students' intent to participate in an IE will help university faculty increase the number of students who actually participate.

Contradictions in research regarding demographic characteristics and IE participation do exist, and students' likelihood of participating in an IE cannot be entirely predicted by identifying select personal characteristics. However, relationships between college students' personal characteristics and their likelihood of participating in an IE have been consistent across prior research studies. Research has shown that (a) males, (b) students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and (c) students of racial or ethnic minorities make up the minority of the students who participates in an IE (Institute of International Education, 2013; Kim & Goldstein, 2005; Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009; Stroud, 2010). Irani, Place, and Friedel (2006) suggested that growing up in a rural hometown, where there are fewer opportunities for intercultural experiences, may be related to the low IE participation rates among agriculture students. Similarly, Ludwig (2007) reported that students from rural areas were less likely to participate in an IE. However, relationships between geographic characteristics of students' hometowns and students' decision to participate in an IE have also varied in previous research findings. In a study comparing the IEs of undergraduate students at two land-grant universities, Bunch et al. (2013) reported that undergraduate students at the University of Florida who grew up in an urban setting perceived more barriers to IE participation.

Students' decisions to participate in an IE can be further examined by identifying perceived barriers that influence students' intent to participate. Barriers include those factors students believe will hinder their ability to participate in an IE. Of the barriers identified in prior studies, time and financial costs were reported most frequently (Briers et al., 2010; Irani et al., 2006; Salisbury et al., 2009; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). While limited financial capital can negatively impact students' intent to participate in an IE, the actual decision to not participate in an IE cannot be predicted by students' financial means (Ludwig, 2007; Salisbury et al., 2009). Low cultural capital and lack of family or administrative support can also influence students' intent to participate in an IE (Salisbury et al., 2009; Schnusenberg et al., 2012; Stroud, 2010).

According to Norris and Gillespie (2009), students' intentions to participate in an IE can differ significantly based on their first-year experiences. Therefore, providing freshman students with intercultural experiences may increase the likelihood they will participate in an IE at some point in their college career. First year experience (FYE) courses are completed by freshman students and are designed to help students achieve academic and career success. The format of FYE courses typically includes (a) presentations by guest speakers, (b) class excursions to various departments around the university, and (c) faculty members dedicated to helping students locate the tools and resources they need (Padgett, Keup, & Pascarella, 2013).

FYE courses in colleges of agriculture can be designed to (a) increase students' knowledge of international agriculture, (b) the role U.S. agriculture plays in the global market, and (c) the international competencies required for various careers (Redmann, Schupp, & Richardson, 1998). To help students

actualize their plans to participate in an IE, Briers et al. (2010) recommended that university faculty and advisors communicate with students early and consistently, as well as organize experiences within traditional courses to promote global thinking among students. In FYE courses, administrators and faculty can work closely with first year students to inform them of IE opportunities early in their college career, as well as help them connect the benefits of participating in an IE to their academic and career goals.

Theoretical Framework

Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) served as the theoretical framework for this study. According to Ajzen (1991), behavior can be predicted by an individual's intentions and is guided by their behavioral, normative, and control beliefs.

According to Ajzen (1991), behavioral beliefs pertain to an individual's perception of whether or not his or her actions will result in a favorable outcome, and determine the general attitude held toward the behavior. An individual is more likely to perform a behavior if he or she perceives favorable outcomes to outweigh possible unfavorable outcomes (Ajzen, 1991).

Normative beliefs represent an individual's perception of a particular behavior in regard to what they perceive to be socially expected of them. Normative beliefs are influenced by the beliefs and opinions of persons the individual deems valuable and important (Ajzen, 1991). Individuals are more likely to perform a behavior if it is perceived to be the norm and if they believe others support the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Control beliefs include an individual's perception of how much control they have over any factors that may help or hinder their performance of a behavior

(Ajzen, 1991). Regardless of their perceptions of the benefits of studying abroad or desires to participate, an individual will be less likely to participate if they perceive they have little control over factors that hinder their performance (Ajzen, 1991).

Manipulating any of these beliefs can impact an individual's intentions and, therefore, modify their behavior (Ajzen 1991). To modify existing programs and design future programs effectively, it is important to evaluate students' perceptions and preferences of international experiences and predict their intention to participate in an IE (Schnusenberg et al., 2012; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005).

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the study was to examine the motivations and barriers influencing the decisions of College of Agriculture (CoA) freshmen to participate in an IE. The research objectives were to (a) describe students' personal characteristics, (b) describe students' interest in participating in an IE, (c) describe students' desired locations for participating in an IE, (d) describe students' desired activities while participating in an IE, (e) describe students' perceived motivations and barriers influencing their decisions to participate in an IE, and (f) determine if students' selected personal characteristics explain a statistically significant proportion of the variance in their perceived motivations and barriers.

Methods

Data Collection

The population for this research study consisted of all Louisiana State University (LSU) freshmen enrolled in the CoA FYE course ($N = 239$) during the 2013–2014 academic year. All freshmen are required by the CoA to enroll in the course.

The researchers targeted this specific course because FYE courses are designed to expose first year students to an array of opportunities provided by the university such as IE participation. A hard copy questionnaire (Bunch et al., 2013; Lamm & Harder, 2010; Rieger, n.d.), modified by the researchers to reflect the target population, was used to collect data face-to-face during the course's regular scheduled time. Instruments were collected from 198 of the 239 CoA freshmen for a response rate of 83%. To control for non-response, personal characteristics were compared to all freshman students in the COA. No differences were found.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire consisted of 66 items divided into six sections: (a) potential interest in participating in an IE, (b) desired locations for participating in an IE, (c) desired activities while participating in an IE, (d) perceived motivations to participating in an IE, (e) perceived barriers to participating in an IE, and (f) personal and professional characteristics of CoA freshmen. A panel of experts composed of three faculty and three doctoral level students with international experience at LSU reviewed the questionnaire to establish face and content validity. The panel of experts deemed the questionnaire to be acceptable.

The first section consisted of nine items designed to measure freshmen interest in IE participation. Examples of interest items included in the instrument were (a) are you personally interested in participating in an IE while attending LSU? (b) how important is an IE? and (c) how much time would you prefer to spend on an IE? In the second section of the instrument, freshmen were asked to rate the appeal of nine locations for participation in an IE using a four-point anchored scale (1 = *Not appealing*, 2 = *Not very appealing*, 3 =

Somewhat appealing, and 4 = *Very appealing*). Locations for this study were determined by utilizing location sections in existing instruments (Lamm & Harder, 2010; Rieger, n.d.).

Section three of the instrument contained 13 items to measure desired activities during an IE. Freshmen were asked to rate how important each activity was using a four-point anchored scale (1 = *Not important*, 2 = *Not very important*, 3 = *Somewhat important*, and 4 = *Very important*). The fourth section of the instrument asked students to indicate their level of agreement with 15 items used to determine perceived barriers concerning IE participation. To determine level of agreement, a four-point anchored scale was used (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Agree*, and 4 = *Strongly agree*).

The fifth section of the instrument consisted of 10 motivation items in which freshmen were asked to indicate how important each item was in determining whether or not they would participate in an IE. To determine level of importance, a four-point anchored scale was used (1 = *Not important*, 2 = *Not very important*, 3 = *Somewhat important*, and 4 = *Very important*). The central purpose of this study was to examine the motivations and barriers influencing the decisions of CoA freshmen to participate in an IE. Therefore, reliability estimates were calculated on the two variables of interest, motivations and barriers. The reliability of the scales for the constructs motivations and barriers were analyzed *post hoc* using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The reliability analysis yielded Cronbach alpha coefficients of .88 for both constructs.

Data Analysis

Data analyses for research objectives one through five consisted of computing descriptive statistics (e.g., means,

percentages, frequencies, and standard deviations). Research objective six was analyzed using stepwise multiple regression analysis. A statistical significance level of .05 was established *a priori* for all statistical test used in this study.

Findings

Research Objective 1: Selected Personal and Professional Characteristics

Of the 198 CoA freshmen who participated in this study, the majority were female ($f = 161$, 81.3%) and Caucasian ($f = 148$, 74.7%). The academic majors reported most frequently by freshmen were Animal, Dairy, and Poultry Sciences ($f = 80$, 40.4%); Natural Resource Management ($f = 30$, 20.7%); Nutrition and Food Sciences ($f = 41$, 15.2%); and Textiles, Apparel, and Merchandising ($f = 27$, 13.6%). To assist with college expenses, 116 (58.6%) of the freshmen reported they received federal financial aid and 103 (52.8%) freshmen indicated they received other scholarships. Regarding hometown residence, 121 freshmen (61%) lived outside city limits. Lastly, 30 (15.2%) of the freshmen indicated being fluent in another language, and 16 (8.1%) of the freshmen had previously participated in an IE.

Research Objective 2: Students' Interest in Participating in International Experiences

Regarding student interest in participating in an IE, 151 freshmen (76.3%) indicated an interest to participate in an IE as part of their undergraduate education, and 143 (72.3%) freshmen perceived participating in an IE as either *Somewhat important* or *Very important*. Freshmen reported having used word of mouth ($f = 83$, 41.9%) and academic programs abroad

websites ($f = 42$, 21.2%) to inquire about IE opportunities. If CoA freshmen were to participate in an IE, 105 (53%) selected their junior year as the most suitable academic level for participating, 136 (68.7%) selected spring or summer semesters as the preferred time of year to participate, and 115 (58%) selected 4-6 weeks or a full semester as the preferred length of time to participate.

Freshmen reported willingness to pay different amounts toward the significant costs associated with participating in an IE. Forty-two (21.2%) freshmen indicated they were willing to pay \$0-\$999, 43 (21.7%) were willing to pay \$1,000-\$1,999, 38 (19.2%) were willing to pay \$2,000-\$2,999, 45 (22.7%) were willing to pay \$3,000-\$3,999, 16 (8.1%), were willing to pay \$4,000-\$4,999, and 10 (5.1%) were willing to pay \$5,000 or more to participate in an IE. Additionally, 105 (53.1%) of the freshmen reported that they needed scholarships to offset 26-75% of the costs associated with IE participation.

Research Objective 3: Desired Locations for an IE

As shown in Table 1, Europe and Australia or New Zealand were rated highest in appeal for students to participate in an IE. North America and India held the least appeal.

Research Objective 4: Desired Activities to be Included in an IE

At least half of the students believed acquiring hands-on experience, taking courses related to their major, learning about a different culture, traveling in country, sightseeing, free time to do what you want, socializing with citizens of host country, and working one-on-one with professors and students were very important aspects to participating in an IE (see Table 2).

Table 1

Frequency Count of the Appeal of Selected Locations for Participation in an IE by CoA Freshmen (N = 198)

Locations	Not Appealing	Not Very Appealing	Somewhat Appealing	Very Appealing
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>
Europe	7	8	27	153
Australia or New Zealand	6	4	39	145
South Pacific	13	34	86	58
South America	23	42	73	55
Africa	34	35	66	61
Central America	23	51	73	48
Russia	27	48	74	45
India	34	53	63	41
North America	49	67	48	31

Table 2

Perceived Importance of Activities in which to Participate during an IE by CoA Freshmen (N = 198)

Locations	Not Important	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>
Acquiring hands-on experience	6	4	32	155
Taking courses related to their major	6	3	34	154
Learning about a different culture	6	7	57	125
Traveling in country	8	14	50	125
Sightseeing	8	12	54	117
Free time to do what you want	7	15	54	119
Socializing with citizens of host country	6	14	59	117
Working one-on-one with professors and students	6	19	70	99
Participating in field research	8	27	74	85
Speaking and learning host country language	10	34	73	77
In-field lectures and labs	16	20	84	72
Staying with a host family	20	45	80	51
Attending non-credit courses at foreign universities	39	54	79	22

Research Objective 5: Perceptions of Motivators and Barriers Influencing Decision to Participate in an IE

CoA freshmen were asked to rate the level of importance for 10 motivation items and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with 15 barrier items, regarding their decision to participate in an IE. The construct mean for perceived motivations was 3.27 (*SD* = .57). The items with the

highest means were *overall life experience* (*M* = 3.62, *SD* = .67) and *looks good on a résumé* (*M* = 3.51, *SD* = .69).

The motivation items with the lowest means were *learn another language while participating* (*M* = 3.02, *SD* = .86) and *importance placed by academic advisor or department* (*M* = 3.04, *SD* = .84; see Table 3).

Table 3

Perceived Motivations Influencing CoA Freshmen Decision to Participate in an IE (N = 198)

Motivations	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Interpretation
Overall life experience	3.62	.67	Very important
Looks good on a résumé	3.51	.69	Very important
Increased employability	3.39	.79	Somewhat important
Get a graduate degree	3.38	.82	Somewhat important
Opportunity to live in another country or culture	3.25	.83	Somewhat important
Learn more about my academic specialization	3.25	.84	Somewhat important
Important stage in my personal development	3.21	.84	Somewhat important
Importance placed by academic advisor or department	3.04	.84	Somewhat important
Opportunity to work in another country after completing current degree	3.03	.86	Somewhat important
Learn another language	3.02	.86	Somewhat important
Construct	3.27	.57	Somewhat important

Note. Real Limits: 1.00 to 1.49 = *Not important at all*, 1.50 to 2.49 = *Not very important*, 2.50 to 3.49 = *Somewhat important*, 3.50 to 4.00 = *Very important*.

Regarding perceived barriers, the construct mean was 2.01 (*SD* = .49). The barriers with the highest means were *I cannot afford to participate in study abroad opportunities* (*M* = 2.58, *SD* = .80), *I am not aware of study abroad opportunities* (*M* = 2.50, *SD* = .81), and *I am too busy with*

school (*M* = 2.48, *SD* = .77). The barriers with the lowest means were *I am satisfied with the world I live in and do not see a need to travel* (*M* = 1.58, *SD* = .74) and *I am not interested in learning about other cultures* (*M* = 1.79, *SD* = .79; see Table 4).

Table 4

Perceived Barriers Influencing CoA Freshmen Decision to Participate in an IE (N = 198)

Barriers	M	SD	Interpretation
I cannot afford to participate in study abroad opportunities	2.58	.69	Agree
I am not aware of study abroad opportunities	2.50	.81	Agree
I am too busy with school	2.48	.77	Disagree
Academic departments do not encourage me to participate in study abroad opportunities	2.16	.76	Disagree
I am too busy with work	2.11	.81	Disagree
I am concerned that a study abroad opportunity will impact my personal relationships	2.10	.92	Disagree
I am intimidated by the thought of engaging in a study abroad opportunity	2.01	.49	Disagree
I do not see the need to study abroad	1.97	.87	Disagree
A study abroad opportunity will not have a impact on my future career	1.84	.81	Disagree
A study abroad opportunity will not have an impact on my future career	1.84	.81	Disagree
Studying abroad will not help me academically	1.83	.74	Disagree
The culture of the university does not support me in study abroad opportunities	1.82	.65	Disagree
My parents do not approve of study abroad opportunities	1.81	.76	Disagree
I am not self-motivated to participate in study abroad opportunities	1.79	.79	Disagree
I am not interested in learning about other cultures	1.58	.73	Disagree
I am satisfied with the world I live in and do not see a need to travel	1.58	.74	Disagree
Construct	2.01	.49	Disagree

Note. Real Limits: 1.00 to 1.49 = *Strongly disagree*, 1.50 to 2.49 = *Disagree*, 2.50 to 3.49 = *Agree*, 3.50 to 4.00 = *Strongly agree*.

Research Objective 6: Motivations and Barriers Influencing Decision to Participate in an IE Based on Selected Personal Characteristics

Multiple linear regression using the stepwise entry method was used to develop predictive models. Personal and professional characteristics including current academic major or track, academic status, gender, ethnicity, where the student lived growing

up, fluency in a language other than English, financial aid received, scholarships received, and previous participation in an IE were dummy coded and used as independent variables in the stepwise regression model.

For the first model, the construct mean score for freshmen perceived motivations was used as the dependent variable. The model explained 33% of the variance in perceived motivations (see Table

7). Freshmen that perceived participating in an IE to be very important ($\beta = .23$, p -value = $< .001$), and freshmen that were personally interested in participating in an IE ($\beta = .18$, p -value = $.010$) were found to perceive more motivations to IE participation. Further, freshmen that perceived participating in an

IE to be not important ($\beta = -.33$, p -value = $< .001$), and freshmen that perceived participating in an IE to be not very important ($\beta = -.14$, p -value = $.027$) were found to perceive fewer motivations to participate in an IE (see Table 5).

Table 5

Perceived Motivations Influencing CoA Freshmen Decision to Participate in an IE Based on Selected Personal Characteristics

Variables in the Regression Model	β	p -value
Very important	.23	$< .001$
Interested in participating	.18	.010
Not important	-.33	$< .001$
Not very important	-.14	.027

Note. * $p < .05$.

For the second model, the construct mean score for freshmen perceived barriers was used as the dependent variable. The model explained 48% of the variance in perceived barriers (see Table 8). Freshmen who perceived participating in an IE as not important ($\beta = .13$, p -value = $.026$) were found to perceive more barriers to participation in an IE. Freshmen who perceived participating in an IE to be very

important were those majoring in textiles, apparel and merchandising ($\beta = -.18$, p -value = $.002$), and natural resource ecology management ($\beta = -.13$, p -value = $.023$). Additionally, those freshmen who were African American ($\beta = -.12$, p -value = $.029$), female ($\beta = -.14$, p -value = $.010$), and were personally interested in participating in an IE ($\beta = -.27$, p -value = $< .001$) perceived fewer barriers (see Table 6).

Table 6

Perceived Barriers Influencing CoA Freshmen Decision to Participate in an IE Based on Selected Personal Characteristics

Variables in the Regression Model	β	p -value
Not important	.13	.026
Very important	-.35	$< .001$
Textile apparel academic major	-.18	.002
Natural resource ecology management academic major	-.13	.023
African American	-.12	.029
Female	-.14	.010
Interested in participating	-.27	$< .001$

Note. * $p < .05$.

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

The typical CoA freshman student was a white female who majored in Animal, Dairy, and Poultry Sciences and received federal financial aid and other scholarships. Further, this student grew up in a residence outside of city limits, was not fluent in another language, and had not previously participated in an IE. The characteristics of the CoA freshmen are similar to students who studied abroad in the 2011/2012 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2013), which could suggest these CoA students may be more likely to participate in an IE. The majority of the freshmen were interested in completing an IE as an undergraduate, and they believed their participation in an IE would be at least somewhat important to their education and future career. Students were most likely to seek information regarding IEs from their friends or the academic programs study abroad website. However, these students were unlikely to seek any additional information.

Freshman students indicated they would be willing to pay up to \$4,000 for a 4-6 week or full semester experience, if they received a scholarship to help pay between 26% and 75% of the total cost. Consistent with findings from Van Hoof and Verbeeten (2005), CoA freshmen preferred to participate in an IE in a developed country, such as Australia or Europe, and desired hands on experiences and opportunities to learn information related to their major. Further, they perceived spring or summer semester of their junior year as the ideal time to participate.

Consistent with prior studies (Briers et al., 2010; Bunch et al., 2013), freshman students perceived all motivation items as at least somewhat important. However, freshmen who perceived the most motivations were those with greater interest

in an IE and those who viewed an IE as very important, while freshmen who did not perceive an IE as important perceived the fewest motivations. The items overall life experience and looks good on the résumé were perceived as the most important motivations. This is consistent with previous research that students are motivated to participate in an IE because they perceive IEs to be relevant and beneficial to their future careers (Briers, Shinn & Nguyen, 2010; Kim & Goldstein, 2005; Stroud, 2010; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005). These findings indicate students have formed positive attitudes toward IEs and, according to TPB, should have a greater intent to participate in an IE (Ajzen, 1991).

Cost and lack of information were the greatest barriers perceived by the students, although students did not perceive any of the barrier items to be more than a minor reason not to participate. Cost is a common barrier reported throughout the literature (Briers et al., 2010; Irani et al., 2006; Salisbury et al., 2009; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005), however, it is important to note that the financial obligations associated with an IE have not been reported as a strong predictor of participation (Ludwig, 2007; Salisbury et al., 2009). Freshmen who perceived the fewest barriers were female, African-American, and those in textile and apparel management or natural resource majors. However, freshman students who perceived the greatest barriers were those who perceived IEs as not important.

Recommendations for Practice

According to Ajzen's (1991) TPB, an individual is more likely to perform a behavior if he or she has formed a positive attitude toward that behavior and has the opportunities and resources required to perform that behavior. The majority of freshmen in this course have formed a

favorable attitude toward IEs, indicating they should be more likely to participate in an IE (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, instructors of FYE courses should use the course to introduce IE opportunities to CoA freshmen, and CoA administrators and faculty should work closely with these students to help them locate scholarship opportunities early on in their college career. Kim and Goldstein (2005) found that a significant relationship existed between students' expectations of IEs and their participation in an IE. As such, lead faculty of IE programs should attempt to offer IEs that are located in developed countries, take place during the spring or summer semesters, and are designed to provide hands-on experiences related to specific majors. CoA administrators and faculty members could promote IE programs by focusing recruitment of their programs during the fall semester through the FYE course, as well as a college-wide fair. Additionally, CoA educators should include an international dimension into their existing curriculum.

CoA students who have previously participated in an IE should be recruited to promote future IE programs and deliver presentations to freshmen in FYE courses. TPB indicates that an individual is more likely to perform a behavior if he or she perceives a specific behavior as a norm within his or her social group (Ajzen, 1991), therefore, a student-led effort of this nature could have a positive impact on freshman students' participation decision. To appeal to a wider range of interest among freshmen, the students recruited to help promote IEs should vary in terms of their academic major and the IE programs they participated in. The presentations delivered should highlight global components of the curriculum using practical, job-oriented instructional methods that focus on the overall life experiences, career benefits, and résumé strength as a result of IE participation (Schusenberg et al.,

2012). It may also be beneficial to have the experienced students discuss the fears and hesitations they experienced prior to participating in their IE, and how they overcame those barriers.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future analysis and interpretation regarding the impact that students' personal characteristics had on perceived motivations and barriers is warranted. This study should be replicated with upperclassmen in the CoA, at other peer and regional universities, and at other universities outside of the U.S. Results should then be compared across studies. Because information sought from academic advisors was so low, researchers should investigate IE awareness and perceptions of IEs among academic advisors. This may help examine why students are not seeking information from advisors. Future research should also inquire into why nearly one-quarter of the students had no personal interest in IE participation, yet no items were perceived as barriers. Future studies should include cultural capital as a variable of interest to determine if more variance in intent to participate in an IE can be explained. Finally, qualitative studies should be conducted to understand why students with selected characteristics perceived fewer barriers than others.

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