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Abstract

This paper reports the results of a study that examined the impact of a culture-based entrepreneurship study abroad program on interest in business ownership. Forty-three students were asked to complete a pre and post program questionnaire that asked about their understanding of a variety of program activities and to gauge their interest in starting a business. Almost no similar research has been reported in the literature. Pre- and postprogram mean rankings of the variables are reported. The results indicated that post-program mean rankings tend to be higher than pre-program mean rankings. Twelve of the post-program mean values are significantly different from pre-program mean values. Logit regression analysis indicated that the culture variable was positively associated with interest in starting a business while the Spanish business and entrepreneurial skills, and program structure variables were negatively associated with business ownership. The results of this study may be of interest to educators involved in developing entrepreneurship and study abroad courses and programs. The study may be of special interest to those involved in developing integrative entrepreneurship programs.

Keywords

Management

Disciplines

Business Administration, Management, and Operations | Entrepreneurial and Small Business Operations | Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature

Comments

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A CULTURE-BASED ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM: IMPACT ON STUDENT INTEREST IN BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

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Abstract

This paper reports the results of a study that examined the impact of a culture-based entrepreneurship study abroad program on interest in business ownership. Forty-three students were asked to complete a pre and post program questionnaire that asked about their understanding of a variety of program activities and to gauge their interest in starting a business. Almost no similar research has been reported in the literature. Pre- and post-program mean rankings of the variables are reported. The results indicated that post-program mean rankings tend to be higher than pre-program mean rankings. Twelve of the post-program mean values are significantly different from pre-program mean values. Logit regression analysis indicated that the culture variable was positively associated with interest in starting a business while the Spanish business and entrepreneurial skills, and program structure variables were negatively associated with business ownership. The results of this study may be of interest to educators involved in developing entrepreneurship and study abroad courses and programs. The study may be of special interest to those involved in developing integrative entrepreneurship programs.

A goal of entrepreneurship education is to encourage students to consider business ownership. The educational process often requires students to change their perceptions about careers opportunities and develop critical thinking skills that will enable them to recognize, screen, and pursue opportunities. Educational and skill development that occurs in a dynamic environment provides students with new experiences and insight. Individual openness to change and willingness to adapt facilitates innovation. Facilitating this type of change, which is at the core of entrepreneurship education, can lead to economic dynamics that invigorate an economy (Schramm, 2005). Entrepreneurship education has been shown to increase propensity to launch new businesses (Charney and Libecap, 2005). DeTiennne and Chandler (2004) and Audet (2000) suggested that course pedagogy can affect the desirability and feasibility of business ownership.

Interest in starting a business may result from a number of factors. Boyd and Vozikis (1994) believed that a variety of factors, including economic, political, personal history, personality, and abilities factors, to affect intentions. They proposed that self-efficacy affects intentions and is derived from experiences, observational learning, social persuasion, and self-perceived abilities. Bandura (1982) contended that the most effective method of achieving self-efficacy is through repeated performance accomplishments. Krueger et al. (2000) asserted that perceived desirability and feasibility affect intentions. Lent et al. (1994) introduced the concept of

learning experiences as affecting intentions. A culture-based entrepreneurship that is integrated into study abroad program may positively impact self-efficacy and self-confidence. This, coupled with the demonstrated ability to adapt to a new environment, may lead students to develop attributes associated with interest in owning a business.

An increasingly globalized world has intensified the need to integrate entrepreneurship skills with foreign language proficiency and cultural awareness (Hartman, Fok, Li, and Fok, 2004).

Study abroad programs provide students the opportunity to learn language and cultural literacy while helping to internationalize university curricula. Lambert (1994) reported that one of every three U.S. universities operates study abroad programs. During the 2003-04 academic year, 191,000 students in U.S. institutions of higher education participated in programs abroad (International Institute of Education, 2005). University curricula also require students to become more focused in their primary major area of study. The challenge is to enable students to develop foreign language and cultural proficiency through study abroad and complete their degree programs in a timely fashion. Traditional foreign language and culture instruction through study abroad have been revised to include professional course-work taught in English. Huebner (1998) advocated placing a greater emphasis on integrating study abroad and foreign language models in the field of second language acquisition. The growing popularity of study abroad programs and increased emphasis on skill development beyond language and culture (e.g., knowledge of business practices and etiquette), suggests that study abroad programs should combine language pedagogy with professional areas.

This paper reports the results of a study that assessed undergraduate students' interest in starting a business as a result of a six week culture-based entrepreneurship study abroad program in Spain. Few, if any, culture-based entrepreneurship programs have been reported in the literature. Honig (2005) specifically cites that lack of research of the impact of program structure and content on entrepreneurial activity. This program was designed to introduce students to a variety of entrepreneurship, language, and cultural experiences. The purpose of exposing students to a new, perhaps radical (from the students' perspective), set of experiences was to affect a change in their paradigms and impact how they viewed their abilities and future opportunities. This objective is consistent with Suutari (2003), who found that international experiences can change career orientations. An international program that combines language, culture, and entrepreneurship would help students become more confident in their abilities and interested in starting a new business. The uniqueness of this program may be evident from the lack of reported research and information on similar programs.

Brief Program Description

The program was designed to incorporate a variety of language, cultural, and entrepreneurship student experiences. Students had the opportunity to learn Spanish in at least three settings. First, students were required to enroll in a three credit Spanish course. Students' existing knowledge of Spanish through a placement exam determined the level of Spanish course in which they enrolled. All students lived with host Spanish families who did not speak English. Students thus needed to speak Spanish in their living environment. Finally, since minimal English was spoken in the community where the program was held, students needed to speak Spanish as part of their daily living experiences.

A number of Spanish cultural activities were integrated into the program. In many ways, the design of the program forced students to learn about Spanish culture. Living with host families integrated students directly into the Spanish culture. The arrangement required students

to independently use the local transportation system and experience the routine of daily living in Spain. Students also learned about Spanish culture through program activities such as guided excursions to historic locations, participation in university-sponsored events, and classroom discussions.

The entrepreneurship component of the program was divided into three distinct segments. First, students received lectures on (1) core entrepreneurship topics and (2) entrepreneurship issues related to Spain and the European Union (e.g. entrepreneurship in Spain and marketing in Spain). Additionally, visits to small Spanish firms (e.g. winery, pub, toy factory) allowed students to view business operations and talk directly with business owners. Finally, students completed several independent projects. These projects required students to explore, observe, and report on small businesses in the local community. These projects asked students to compare small firms in Spain with those in the US in various ways.

Study Abroad Learning Context

The goals of study abroad programs vary based on the location, primary language spoken, and academic field under study. Brecht and Walton (1994) contended that study abroad programs are either broadly educational (e.g. focused on the cultural experience, an increase in international understanding, and an improved knowledge of a particular academic discipline) or educationally focused (e.g. directed at foreign language proficiency and culture). Brecht, Davidson, and Ginsberg (1995) noted that study abroad learners highly rank the importance of classroom learning. Informal information exchanges outside of class further reinforce in-class learning abroad. Exchanges with native speakers at local establishments, on the street, at the university, etc., for example, play an important role in student development not only through knowledge gained regarding the target culture but also by increasing student confidence.

New learning experiences help students enjoy a comfort level that makes them more creative and self-confident. Meldenson (2004) found that students experienced emotional changes that included increased independence, self-sufficiency, maturity, and willingness to think with an open mind. The resulting new-formed sense of individual independence contributes not only to improved communication skills and a heightened awareness of the culture, but also to comfort in a foreign setting which might include the willingness to take risk and, eventually, open a business. Orahod, Kruse, and Pearson (2004) found that the vast majority of students who studied abroad indicated that the experience impacted their future career plans, listed the experience on resumes, and had specific questions or conversations concerning their international experience during job interviews. Additionally, most students expressed an interest in working abroad and were actively marketing themselves for an international career.

Interest in Business Ownership

Figure 1 depicts a process through which interest in business ownership may be stimulated. Factors impacting interest in business ownership are segmented into educational and environmental experiences. Educational factors encompass, for example, entrepreneurship courses as well as other life experiences that affect self-efficacy (Honig, 2005; Charney and Libecap, 2005; DeTiennne and Chandler, 2004; and Audet, 2000). Environmental factors consist of variables that are external to potential venture, such as family history (including impact of culture), mentoring, and economic issues (Timmons and Spinelli, 2004; Kuratcko and Hodgetts, 2004). The relative influences of education and environment result in the degree of interest in

business ownership. Positive net influences from educational and environmental factors would lead to interest in business ownership while negative net influences would lead to the lack of interest in starting a business. Crocitto, Sullivan, and Carraher (2005) found that foreign assignments impact perceptions of career opportunities and believed that a foreign experience impacts knowledge, skills, and confidence in abilities. These, in turn, can positively affect attributes associated with interest in business ownership. Honig (2005) pointed-out that business launch activities do not occur in a linear manner. Similarly, factors impacting interest in business ownership may not occur in a linear manner over time. Interest in business ownership may ebb and flow depending on which factors are dominant at any point in time.

Methodology

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed and administered to students participating in the study abroad program. Students were asked to complete the questionnaire prior to the program and after the program had ended. The questionnaire was designed to collect a variety of information about students' experience in the study abroad program. The first section collected demographic information about the student (gender, age, and whether they had previously participated in a study abroad program). The next section asked students to rank their understanding of different aspects of the study abroad program and life in Spain. Question in this section included (1) cultural aspects of life in Spain (culture, faith, film, music); (2) ability to communicate in Spanish (informal and formal situations); and (3) understanding of business in Spanish (stock market, economic system, banking system, laws, protocols, day-to-day operations, negotiations, and organizational structure). The next section of the questionnaire required students to rank their ability to perform entrepreneurship related activities (analyze information, work in teams, problem solve, recognize opportunities, take risks, and adapt to new situations). The last section asked students to rank the degree to which various program structural activities stimulated interest in starting a business (business tours, lectures, discussions, independent "exploring", living with host family). A total of 73 students completed the survey before the program began and 46 completed the survey at the end of the program.

Analysis

The data was initially summarized using univariate statistics (means and frequencies) to provide a better understanding of the respondents and characteristics of the data. The initial summary statistics included those relating to demographic information and the means rankings of importance of the variables.

Logit regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the change in the students' ranking of interest in starting a business (dependent variable) and students change in rating of various aspect of the program (independent variables). The logit model is particularly suited for the analysis as the dependent variable is an indicator variable. The technique estimates a cumulative logistic probability function based on the data and transforms the dependent variable from a single binary variable to an ordinal variable, transforming the problem of predicting probability within a (0,1) interval to one of predicting the probability of an event occurring within an entire range of values (see Pindyck and Rubinfeld 1981). Consequently, the interest in starting a

business variable can be regressed on independent variables without the problems associated with truncated dependent variables including bias and a loss of efficiency. By interpreting the regression coefficients we can analyze the association between a series of independent demographic variables and bankruptcy.

The logit model included three control and five independent variables. The control variables were gender (male = 1 and female = 2), age (years), and whether the student had previously participated in a study abroad program (1 = yes and 2 = no) were used as control variables. The independent variables were: (1) Cultural Aspects: Students were asked to rate (1 – 7 Likert scale, 1 = weak understanding and 7 = excellent understanding) their understanding of four aspects of contemporary Spanish culture (culture, faith, film, and music). The Cultural Aspects variable was constructed as a summation of the change in students' ratings of these four variables. (2) Spanish Language Ability: Students were asked to rate (1 – 7 Likert scale, 1 = weak understanding and 7 = excellent understanding) their ability to speak Spanish in formal and informal situations. The Spanish Language Ability variable was constructed as a summation of the change in students' ratings of their perceived ability to speak Spanish in these situations. (3) Understanding Business: Students were asked to rate (1 – 7 Likert scale, 1 = weak understanding and 7 = excellent understanding) their understanding of six aspects of business in Spain (economy, banking, laws, protocol, organizational structures, and negotiations). The Understanding Business variable was constructed as a summation of the change in students' ratings of their understanding of these aspects of business in Spain. (4) Entrepreneur Skills: Students were asked to rate (1 – 7 Likert scale, 1 = weak understanding and 7 = excellent understanding) their understanding of six variables associated with entrepreneurial skills (ability to analyze information, ability to work in teams, ability to solve problems, willingness to take risks, and ability to adjust to new situations). The Entrepreneurial Skills was constructed as a summation of the change in students' ratings for these variables. (5) Program Structure: Students were asked to rate (1 – 7 Likert scale, 1 = weak understanding and 7 = excellent understanding) their degree to which five aspects of the program stimulated their interest in business ownership (tours of Spanish companies, lectures about business in Spain, discussion about business in Spain, independent exploring of Spanish businesses, and living with a host family). The Program Structure variable was constructed as a summation of the change in students' ratings of these activities.

Spearman correlations between the independent variables were calculated to assess significant relationships between the variables. Since no significant correlations between the independent variables are present, multicollinearity was not a problem. Spearman correlations coefficient estimation is a non-parametric technique based on ranks rather than value of responses. This non-parametric technique was used because of uncertainty about the population distribution (Winkler and Hays 1975).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Change in Interest} &= a_0 + b_1 (\text{Gender}) + b_2 (\text{Age}) + b_3 (\text{Previous}) + b_4 \\ & \quad (\text{Culture}) + \\ \text{in Starting a Business} & b_5 (\text{Language}) + b_6 (\text{Business}) + b_7 (\text{Skills}) + b_8 (\text{Structure}) \end{aligned}$$

where:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Change in Interest} &= \text{Change in Ranking of Interest in Starting a Business} \\ \text{in Starting a Business} & (1 = \text{not interested and } 7 = \text{very interested}) \\ \text{Gender} &= \text{Control Variable (1=male and 2=female)} \\ \text{Age} &= \text{Control Variable (Years)} \end{aligned}$$

Previous Study Abroad Program	=	Control Variables (1 = Previously Participated in and 2 = Had Not Previously Participated in Study Abroad Program)
Culture	=	Change in Ranking of Understanding of Spanish Culture (1 = No Change and 7 = A Lot of Change)
Language Ability (1 = Little)	=	Change in Ranking of Comfort in Spanish Language Comfort and 7 = Very Comfortable)
Business Business (1= No)	=	Change in Ranking of Understanding of Spanish Change and 7 = Great Change)
Skills	=	Change in Ranking of Entrepreneurial Skills (1= No Change and 7 = Great Change)
Structure	=	Change in Ranking of Program Structure (1 = Little Change in Ranking and 7 = A Lot of Change in Ranking)

Results

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 shows the sample characteristics. A slight majority of the respondents were males (53.4%). Most were older than 19 (87.3%). The vast majority of the respondents had no previous study abroad experience (80.5%).

Mean Rankings of Variables

Table 2 shows the pre and post mean rankings of variables. Table values show that four of the pre-program means were ranked about 5.0 (problem solving ability, ability to work in teams, ability to adjust to new situations, and ability to analyze information). All of these variables were related to skills commonly thought to be important in launching a new business. Four pre program means were ranked between 4.0 and 5.0 (independent exploring, knowledge of Spanish faith, ability to speak Spanish in informal situations, and living with a host family). These variables are directly related to issues related to personal experiences from program involvement. Fourteen of the pre program means were ranked between 2.0 and 4.0 (impact on interest in starting a business from classroom discussions about business in Spain, ability to speak Spanish in formal situations, willingness to assume risk, impact on interest in starting a business from touring Spanish firms, knowledge of Spanish culture, knowledge of Spanish music, Knowledge of Spanish Economy, Knowledge of Spanish Films, Impact on Interest in Starting a Business from Lectures about Spanish Business, Knowledge of Spanish Banking System, knowledge of Negotiations in Spain, Knowledge of Spanish Laws, Knowledge of International Journal of Family Business, Volume 4, 2007

Organizational Structure of Spanish Firms, and Knowledge of Spanish Business Protocol). Since these variables represent activities that are integral to the program, they would not expect to be highly ranked prior to the program.

Variable	Percentage
Age	
<20	11.9
>19	87.3
Gender	
Male	53.4
Female	45.8
Previous Study Abroad Experience	
Yes	18.6
No	80.5

Table 2 also shows the post mean rankings of variables. Table values show that six of the post-program means were ranked about 5.0 (problem solving ability, ability to work in teams, ability to adjust to new situations, ability to analyze information, and ability to speak Spanish in informal situations, and knowledge of Spanish music). Four of these variables were also ranked between 4.0 and 5.0. The additional variables ranked about 4.0 were ability to speak Spanish in informal situations and knowledge of Spanish music). Nine of the post-program means ranked between 4.0 and 5.0 impact on interest in starting a business from independent exploring, knowledge of Spanish faith, impact on interest in starting a business from classroom discussions about business in Spain, ability to speak Spanish in formal situations, impact on interest in starting a business from touring Spanish firms, knowledge of Spanish culture, knowledge of Spanish music, knowledge of Spanish economy, and knowledge of Spanish films).

The remainder of the post-program means were ranked between 3.0 and 4.0 (Impact on interest in starting a business from lectures about Spanish business, knowledge of Spanish banking system, knowledge of negotiations in Spain, knowledge of Spanish laws, knowledge of organizational structure of Spanish firms, and knowledge of Spanish business protocol).

A comparison of the pre- and post-mean values shows several patterns as well as specific differences in variable means. First, the post-program mean rankings tend to be higher than pre-program mean rankings. This general result would be an expect outcome of students immersion in the country's language and culture as part of the program. The variables that have higher pre-program means tend to be the same variables that have higher post-program means. Correspondingly, the variables that have lower pre-program means tend to be the same variables that have lower post-program means. The exceptions to this pattern are variables that are directly related to understanding aspects of Spanish culture (knowledge of Spanish culture,

knowledge of Spanish music, knowledge of Spanish economy, knowledge of Spanish films, impact on interest in starting a business from lectures about Spanish business, knowledge of Spanish banking system, knowledge of negotiations in Spain, knowledge of Spanish laws, knowledge of organizational structure of Spanish firms, and knowledge of Spanish business protocol). Higher post-program mean rankings of the variables are not unexpected since an important goal of the program is to develop a better understanding of the cultural aspect of the business environment.

Twelve of the post-program mean values are significantly different from pre-program mean values (ability to speak Spanish in informal situations, ability to speak Spanish in formal situations, impact on interest in starting a business from touring Spanish firms, knowledge of Spanish culture, knowledge of Spanish music, knowledge of Spanish economy, knowledge of Spanish films, knowledge of negotiations in Spain, knowledge of Spanish laws, knowledge of organizational structure of Spanish firms, and knowledge of Spanish business protocol). All of these post-program means were higher than pre-program means. These variables represent both cultural and business aspects of the program. Higher post-program means were not unexpected and a goal of the program.

Logit Regression

The results of the logit regression are shown in Table 3. The overall model is significant at 1% ($X^2 = 158.25$). None of the coefficients for the control variables (gender, age, and previous study abroad experience) in the regression analysis are significant. Four of the five independent variables are significant at either 1% or 5%. The coefficient for culture (0.2240) is significant at 1%. The positive coefficient indicates that greater change in students' ranking of understanding of Spanish culture (culture, faith, film, and music) is associated with higher student interest in starting a business after graduation. The coefficient for Spanish business (-0.0646) is significant at 5%. The negative coefficient indicates that greater change in students' ranking of their knowledge of Spanish business (economy, banking system, laws, protocol, organizational structure, negotiations) is associated with less student interest in starting a business after graduation. The coefficient for entrepreneurial skills (-0.2753) is significant at 1%. The negative coefficient indicates that greater change in students' ranking of entrepreneurship skills (ability to analyze problems, ability to work in teams, ability to solve problem ability to recognize problems, willingness to take risks, and ability to adjust to new situations) is associated with less student interest in starting a business after graduation. The coefficient for program structure (-0.1956) is significant at 5%. The negative coefficient indicates that greater change in students' rankings of the degree to which program activities impacted their interest in starting a business (company tours, lectures, discussions, living with host family, independent exploring) is associated with lower student interest in starting a business after graduation. The Spanish Language variable (student ranking of ability to speak Spanish in informal and formal situations) was not significant. Changes in students' ability to speak Spanish had no association with their interest in starting a business. Changes in language ability appears to not be an important factor in affecting interest in business ownership.

Table 2
Pre and Post Program Means Rankings of Variables
 (1 = little and 7 = a lot)
 (n=46)

Variable	Pre-Program Mean	Post-Program Mean
Problem Solving Ability	5.68	5.65
Ability to Work in Teams	5.68	5.54
Ability to Adjust to New Situations	5.48	5.89
Ability to Analyze Information	5.44	5.60
Impact on Interest in Starting a Business from Independent Exploring	4.69	4.98
Knowledge of Spanish Faith	4.22	4.65
Ability to Speak Spanish in Informal Situation	4.11	5.00*
Impact on Interest in Starting a Business from Living with Host Family	4.11	3.57
Impact on Interest in Starting a Business from Classroom Discussions about Business in Spain	3.79	4.10
Ability to Speak Spanish in Spanish in Formal Situations	3.74	4.46*
Willingness to Assume Risk	3.66	3.87
Impact on Interest in Starting a Business from Touring Spanish Firms	3.63	4.35**
Knowledge of Spanish Culture	3.49	4.93*
Knowledge of Spanish Music	3.37	5.39*
Knowledge of Spanish Economy	2.97	4.63*
Knowledge of Spanish Films	2.91	4.04*
Impact on Interest in Starting a Business from Lectures about Spanish Business	2.56	3.04
Knowledge of Spanish Banking System	2.48	3.20*
Knowledge of Business Negotiations in Spain	2.38	3.37*
Knowledge of Spanish Laws	2.34	3.56*
Knowledge of Organizational Structure of Spanish Firms	2.32	3.74*
Knowledge of Spanish Business Protocol	2.19	3.35*
* Significant at 1%		
** Significant at 5%		

Table 3
Logit Regression Results:
Interest in Starting a Business vs. Spanish Culture, Spanish Language,
Spanish Business,
Relationships, and Course Activities Variables.
Control Variable = Gender, Age, and
Previous Study Abroad Experience
(n=46)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Regression Coefficient
Change in Interest in Starting a Business ($\chi^2 = 158.25$)	Gender	0.6147
	Age	0.1286
	Previous Study Abroad	0.9812
	Experience	0.2240*
	Culture	0.0963
	Language	-0.0646**
	Spanish Business	-0.2753*
	Entrepreneurship Skills Program Structure	-0.1956**
* Significant at 1%.		
** Significant at 5%		

Discussion

One of the goals of this international entrepreneurship program was to expose students to a variety of new experiences that they would not normally have in a traditional entrepreneurship program. An intended outcome of the program was to increase students' entrepreneurial orientation as discussed by Carraher (2005). The variety of new experiences built into the program structure was intended to change students' perspectives on life and career possibilities. Integrating students into and requiring students to function in a foreign culture was expected to give students increased confidence. Hopefully the increased confidence would have a number of long term advantages that included attributes useful in becoming a future business.

Students' mean rankings were generally expected to be higher at the end of the program as compared to the beginning of the program. Knowledge of various aspects of Spain would be expected to occur through program activities and structure. All variables that were significantly different had higher post-program means as compared to pre-program means and represented cultural and business aspects of the program.

The logit regression analysis provided insight into which aspects of the program affected students' interest in starting a business after graduation. The results indicated that increases in students' understanding of culture-related aspect of Spain was associated with greater student interest in starting a business. One of the goals of the program was to expose students to a variety of new experiences that would have a significant impact on their lives and lead to new perspectives on life opportunities. Ultimately, the changes that would occur in students would lead to serious consideration and more openness to independent business ownership. The results provide some support that this goal has been accomplished. Entrepreneurship education sometimes including students' way of thinking about life opportunities. A variety of new

experiences and environments often provide the needed stimuli to alter students' perspective on possible career opportunities, especially those related to independent business ownership. Increases in students' understanding of three of the variables (Spanish business, entrepreneurial skills, and program structure) were associated with less interest in starting a business. Entrepreneurship courses and programs often have at least two expected outcomes. One outcome would be an increased interest in starting a business. Another outcome would be to help some student realize that business ownership may not be a good career choice. Entrepreneurship courses and program can help some students to understanding that business ownership is often more demanding, stressful, and risky than working as an employee. The results of this study abroad entrepreneurship program seem to be associated with this outcome.

The Spanish Language variable was the only purely academic variable evaluated in the study. This variable, which represented students' change in ability to speak Spanish, would have been determined to a large extent (although not entirely) through classroom learning. Spanish language classes would likely have not emphasized critical skills that can be transferred to business ownership. An implication of this result may be that non-entrepreneurship academic activities have little impact on student interest in business ownership.

Summary and Conclusion

This study examined the impact of a culture-based study abroad program on students' interest in starting a business. A pre and post program questionnaire was administered to 46 student participants that asked a wide variety of questions related to aspects of the program. The results indicated that mean rankings variables were generally higher at the end of the program as compared to the beginning of the program. Variables that diverged significantly between pre and post program represented cultural and business aspects of the program. Increases in students' understanding of culture-related characteristics of Spain were associated with greater student interest in starting a business while increases in variables associated with Spanish business, entrepreneurial skills, and program structure were associated with less interest in starting a business. Changes in students' ability to speak Spain had no association with interest in starting a business.

These results may be of interest to educators who are involved in entrepreneurship courses and programs and educators interested in study abroad programs. The results may be especially useful to educators developing interdisciplinary programs. The results suggest that exposing students of a variety of experiences, some that may be outside the comfort level of some students, impacts students' interest in starting a business.

This study has several limitations to provide opportunities for further research. The sample was relatively small and collected for a single time period and program. A longitudinal study could examine the impact of the program over time, especially the impact of changes in the program on student interest in starting a business. A later study could be designed to collect data from more program participants in various types of programs. A more comprehensive study might also determine which program participants start a business. Tracking program participants over time would provide a perspective on the long term impact of international entrepreneurship programs on business start-up activities.

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Figure 1
Interest in
Business Ownership

