

TRU 2019 Learning at Intercultural Intersections
(LII): Toward Equity, Inclusion, and Reconciliation

Seeking Answers

**Understanding the academic performance of
international students through an intercultural lens**

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Agenda



A question for you:



What does “academic success” mean to you?

Factors of Academic Performance

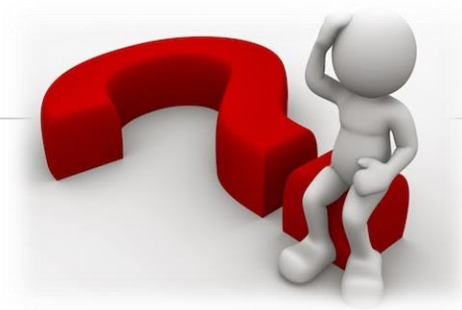


1. Academic adjustment
2. Social adjustment
3. Personal-emotional adjustment
4. Attachment
5. Perception faculty
6. Study support
7. Student's satisfaction with social life
8. Financial support
9. GPA
10. ECTS



Rientes, Beausaert,
Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet
& Kommers, 2011

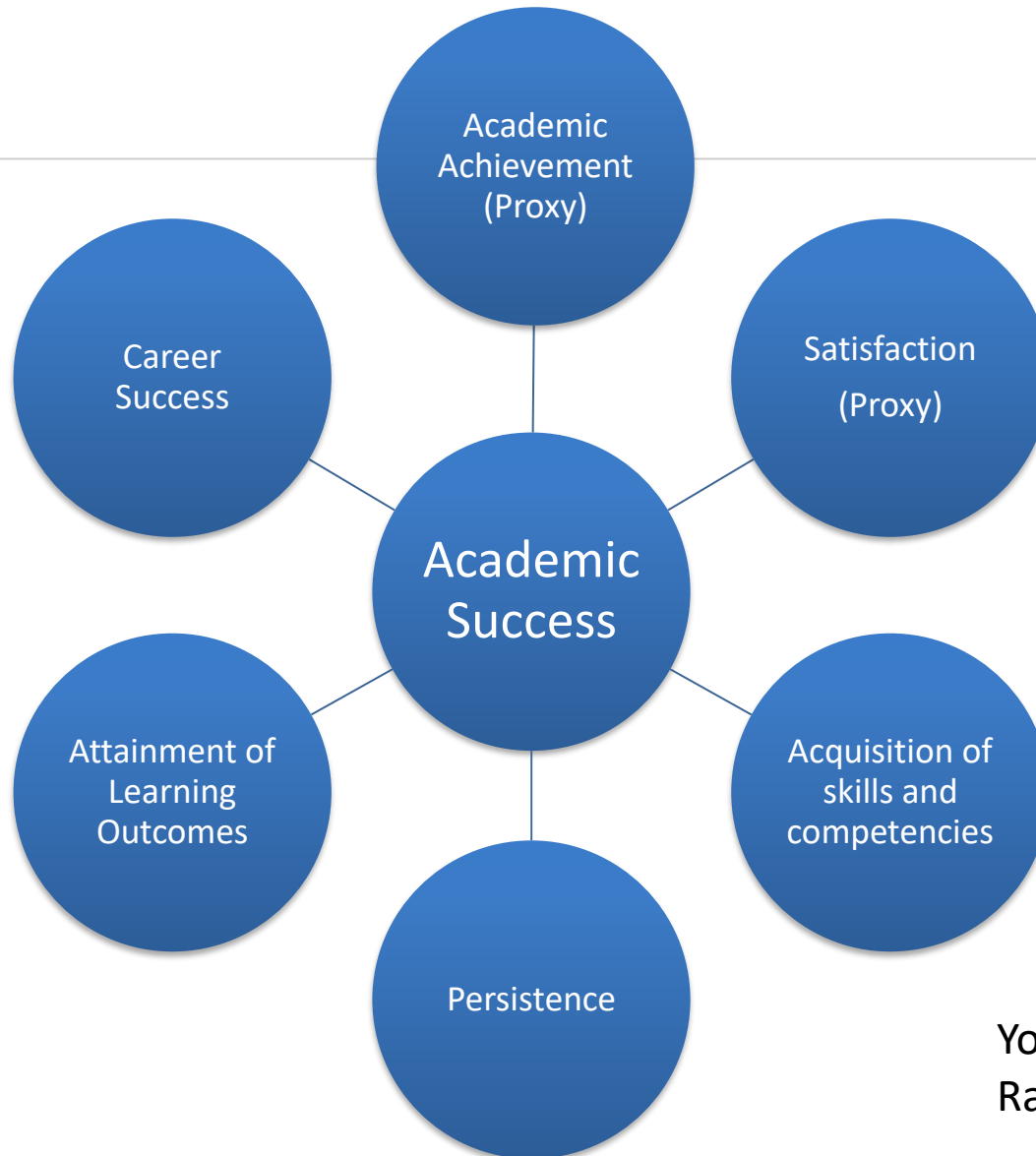
Preliminary Research Question



Is there an identifiable link between the *academic success* of international students and their level of *intercultural effectiveness*?

- Do students with greater intercultural effectiveness have greater academic success and inversely do students with lower intercultural effectiveness have lower academic success?

Defining and Measuring Academic Success



York, Gibson &
Rankin (2015)

The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale

- Based on the International Adjustment Model (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991) .
- 3 dimension model

1. Continuous Learning

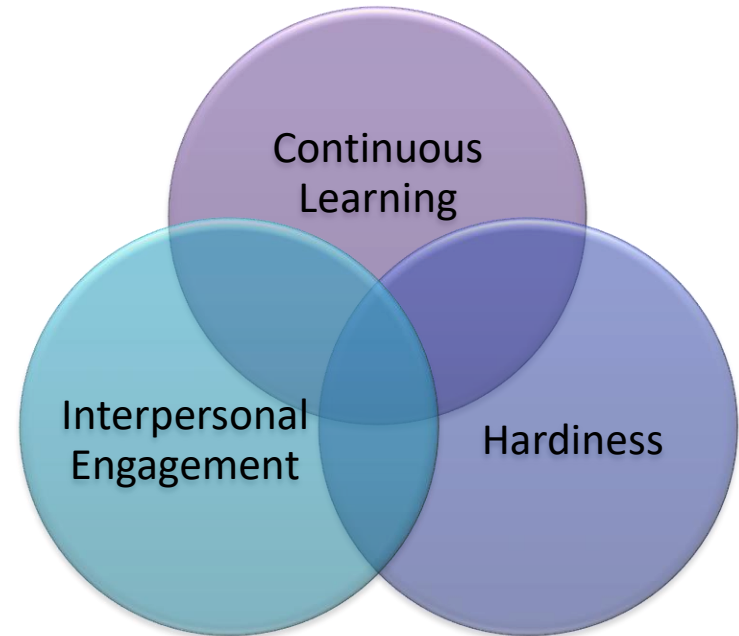
- Exploration & Self-Awareness

2. Interpersonal Engagement

- Global Mindedness & Relationship Development

3. Hardiness

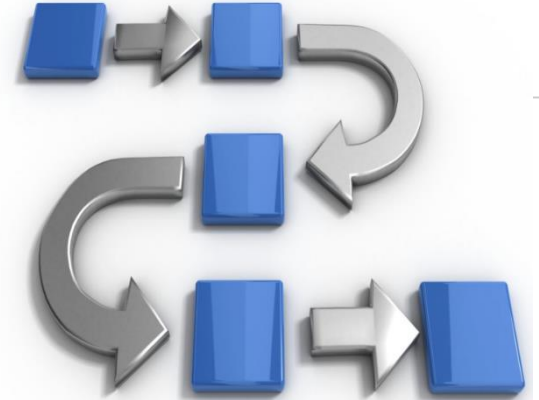
- Positive Regard & Emotional Resilience



What did we do?

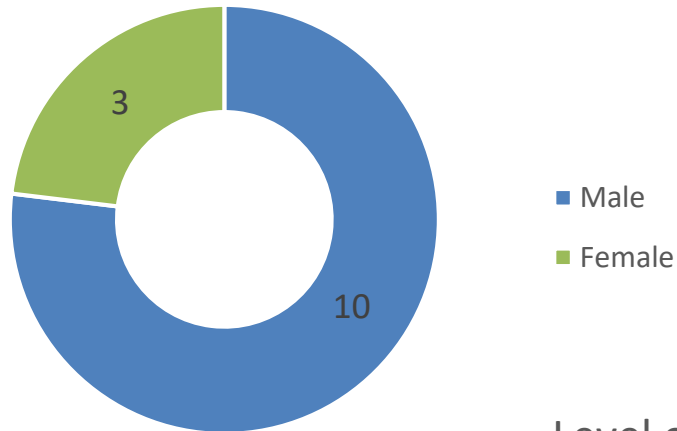


- Recruitment
- IES online survey
- Access to grades, IELTS score, gender and program
- Focus groups

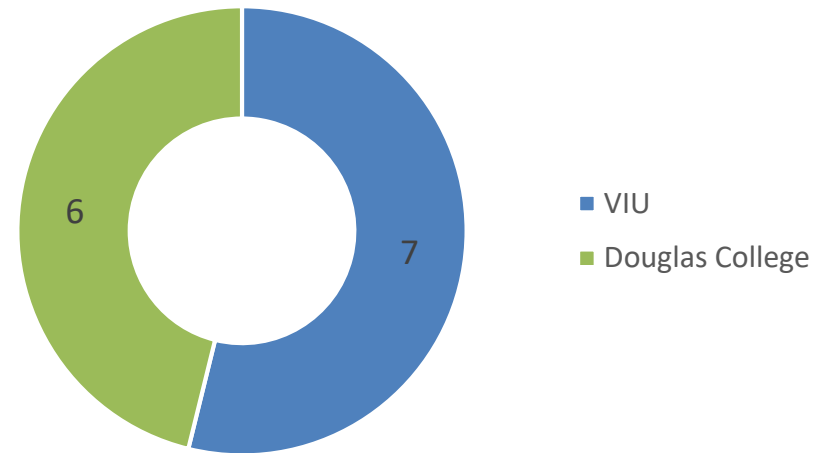


Participants

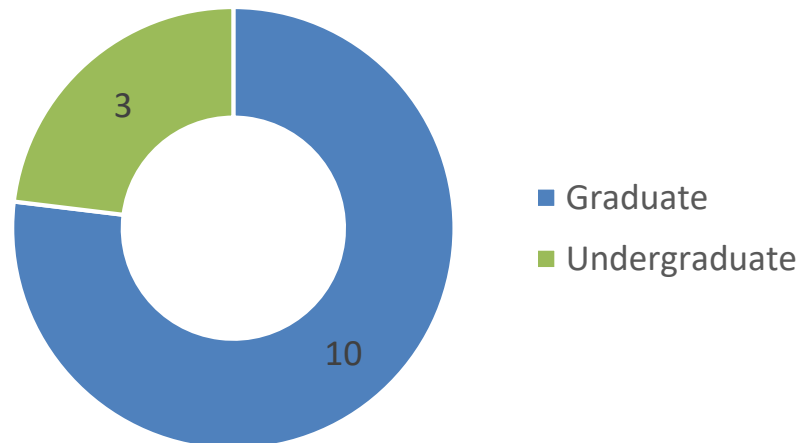
Gender



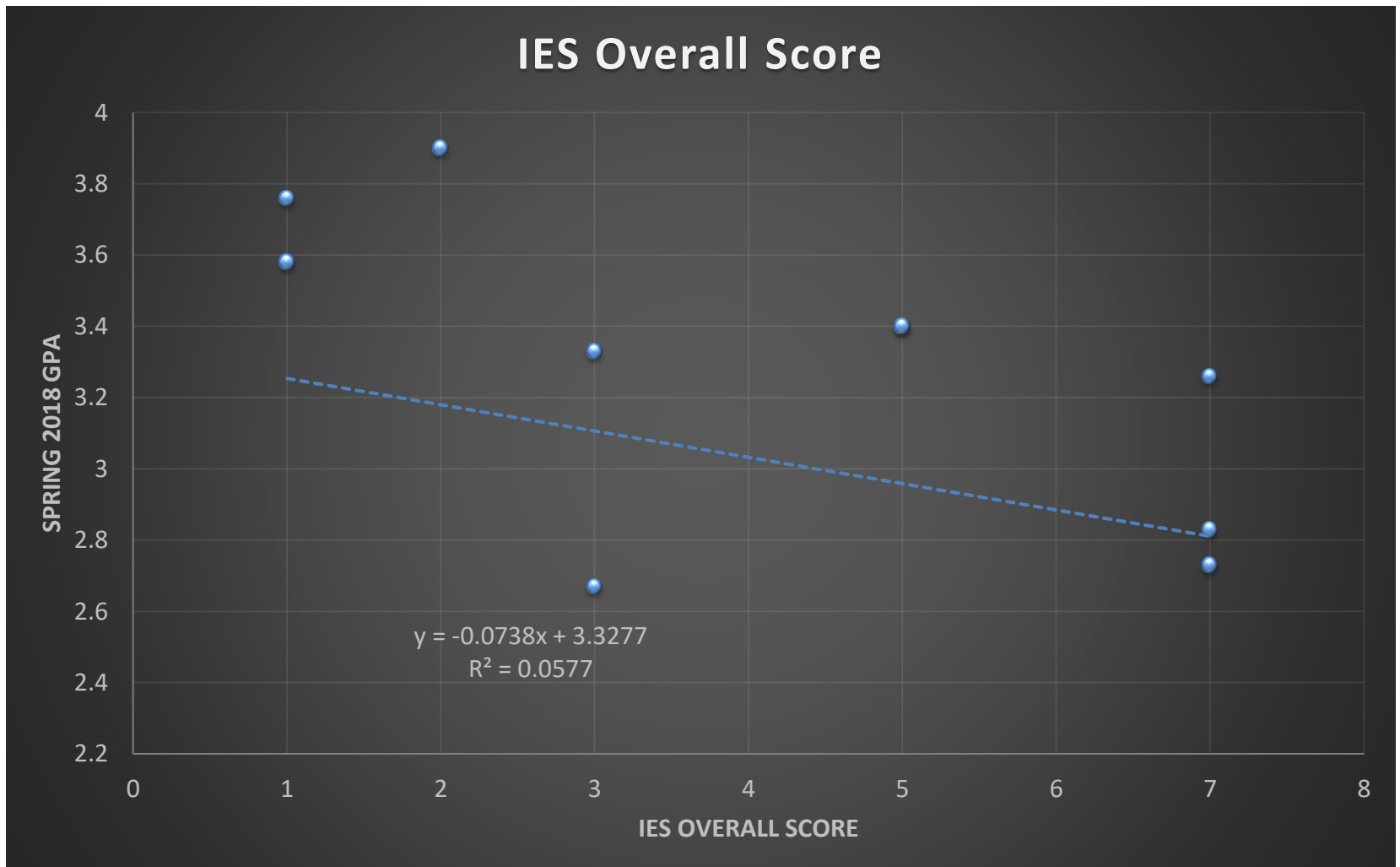
Participants by Institution



Level of Study



Quantitative Findings: IES and GPA



Sanchit's Story



Qualitative Findings: Focus Groups /Interviews



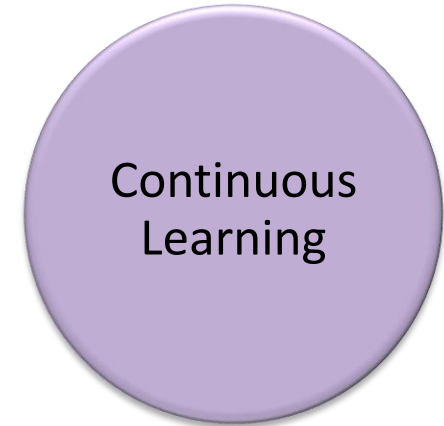
IES Competency: Continuous Learning

- Exploration
- Self-Awareness

Being open to:

- ideas
- values
- norms
- situations
- behaviours

that are different from your own.




Qualitative Findings: Focus Groups/Interviews Results



IES Competency: Continuous Learning

- Exploration
- Self-Awareness



Continuous
Learning

A large, light purple circular graphic with a subtle gradient and a drop shadow, containing the text "Continuous Learning" in a dark, sans-serif font.

“I think we should be like really open because like here everyone is coming from ... from different countries and stuff so if I don’t talk to the person sitting beside us, how we will get to know about other cultures and like how we will become friends with that person so I have like seen that we really need to be open here.”

Qualitative Findings: Focus Groups /Interviews



IES Competency: Interpersonal Engagement

A light blue circular graphic with a subtle gradient and shadow, containing the text "Interpersonal Engagement" in a black, sans-serif font.

Interpersonal
Engagement

- Global Mindedness
- Relationship Development

Interest in learning about people from other cultures.

Desire and willingness to initiate and maintain relationships.

Qualitative Findings: Focus Groups/Interviews Results



IES Competency: Interpersonal Engagement

- Global Mindedness
- Relationship Development



Interpersonal
Engagement

“So a lot of learning, and long way to go, this, all of these cultures coming together and working, I never wanted to be in a group with all Indians because I wouldn’t learn anything that was my initial thought, but then there was a time I regretted it, I was like “ok why am I not in an Indian group?” I saw all the Indian groups just moving forward peacefully. But then, the learning I have got is something that they would get eventually if they worked in different groups.”

Qualitative Findings: Focus Groups /Interviews



IES Competency: Hardiness

- Positive Regard
- Emotional Resilience



The degree to which you respond to uncertainty (patience and understanding vs judging, anxiety and stress).

The level of emotional strength and your ability to cope with challenging emotional experiences and your capacity to recover quickly from psychologically and emotionally stressful situations and setbacks.

Qualitative Findings: Focus Groups/Interviews Results



IES Competency: **Hardiness**

- Positive Regard
- Emotional Resilience



Student 4: You need to face failure, you need to face uncertainty, you need to face...

Student 1: Ambiguity

Student 4: Yah, ambiguity

“In India, you have to learn how to cope otherwise you’re not going to survive so may be because of that we are inculcated this, all this.”

Additional Findings



- Students come with a range of ability in multiple competencies and these competencies continue to evolve over time.

Quote:

“Initially I think “why are they doing this? Why are they complicating things? We have a project, let’s just do it as a project, finish it.” But there’s probing happening. There’s so many different ways of working so my perspective about things widened a lot more. I came to believe there’s more than two or three ways of thinking at, looking at things. And all of them are right.”



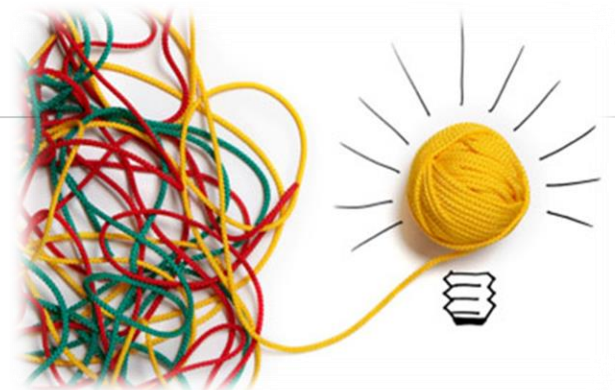
Additional Findings

- Students need to have their immediate needs met (safe housing, adequate food, reliable transportation, financial sustainability) before they are able to focus on their academic goals.

Quote:

“Everyday is a challenge right now, because I had to take a huge financial debt in order to come here and study so I survive myself doing the part-time job ... I don’t know how I can handle everything because I cannot ask any more money back from there because it’s all very hard over there [India] so it very much challenge about that part.”

What can we learn from this?



- How successful do you think international students are?
- What cultural factors influence their success?
- What intercultural competencies lead to academic success?
- What challenges create barriers to their academic success?
- How can a more sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the international student experience be communicated?



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