

Game Changers in Education: Intercultural Competence Development Through Virtual Global Exchange

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Abstract

Acquiring negotiation skills and intercultural competence using advanced technology has become a priority for many higher education institutions around the globe especially in conflicted areas. Virtual global exchanges have made it easier to connect students from diverse backgrounds. The purpose of this case study is to explore one such global exchange program,

“Game Changers in Education,” sponsored by the Steven’s Initiative and conducted by Pathways, and examine the impact on preservice teachers’ intercultural competence development. The three participating institutions include an Arab college and a Jewish college in the north of Israel and an American university in the northeast. This mixed methods study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the impact of the program on the participants’ intercultural competence and empathy. Data collection included pre- and post-surveys (before and after the telecollaboration) in addition to exploratory interviews. Preliminary findings suggest that students were able to overcome initial apprehension and break down stereotypical views of one another through engagement in this program. Students reported feelings of appreciation for this opportunity and expressed a desire to seek out more of these global exchange opportunities.

Keywords: intercultural competence, global exchange, negotiation skills, empathy, telecollaboration, multiculturalism