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Global mindedness in International Baccalaureate schools

Research summary

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Background

The concept of **global mindedness** is integral to the International Baccalaureate (IB). Characteristics of the IB mission statement and learner profile echo the multidimensional construct of global mindedness, which includes social responsibility, interconnectedness, openness and perspective taking.¹

This study measured IB Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP) students' global-mindedness levels benchmarked against their peers from a similar age range and the same six countries (**Australia, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Spain and the United States (US)**). To examine levels of global mindedness, researchers used the World Values Survey (WVS), an international research programme that studies people's social, political, economic, religious and cultural values worldwide.

Research design

The study involved two phases.

- The pilot stage focused on confirming the properties of global mindedness as a construct, assessing the adequacy of WVS Wave 6 items² to measure the construct, and creating a robust tool to measure it. The researchers also developed a global-mindedness measure that included a broader set of items to compare students within the IB programmes of interest for this study.
- In the operational phase, researchers measured IB students' global mindedness, and compared IB students' responses to WVS country-level benchmarks. The study resulted in **3,414** survey responses from IB students in **79** publicly or privately funded schools from Australia, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Spain and the US.³ Researchers also analysed IB students' global-mindedness levels disaggregated by characteristics, such as number of IB courses taken, year of IB programme (first year or second year) and demographics.

¹ Researchers relate international mindedness to global mindedness based on their common dimensions of global engagement, intercultural understanding and multilingualism (Singh, Qi 2013).

² Researchers used data from WVS Wave 6, representing data collected from more than 85,000 respondents in 60 countries from 2010 to 2014 (Inglehart et al. 2014).

³ Of the students who participated in the study, roughly two in three were DP students, 40.9% were from Mexico and 57.2% were male.

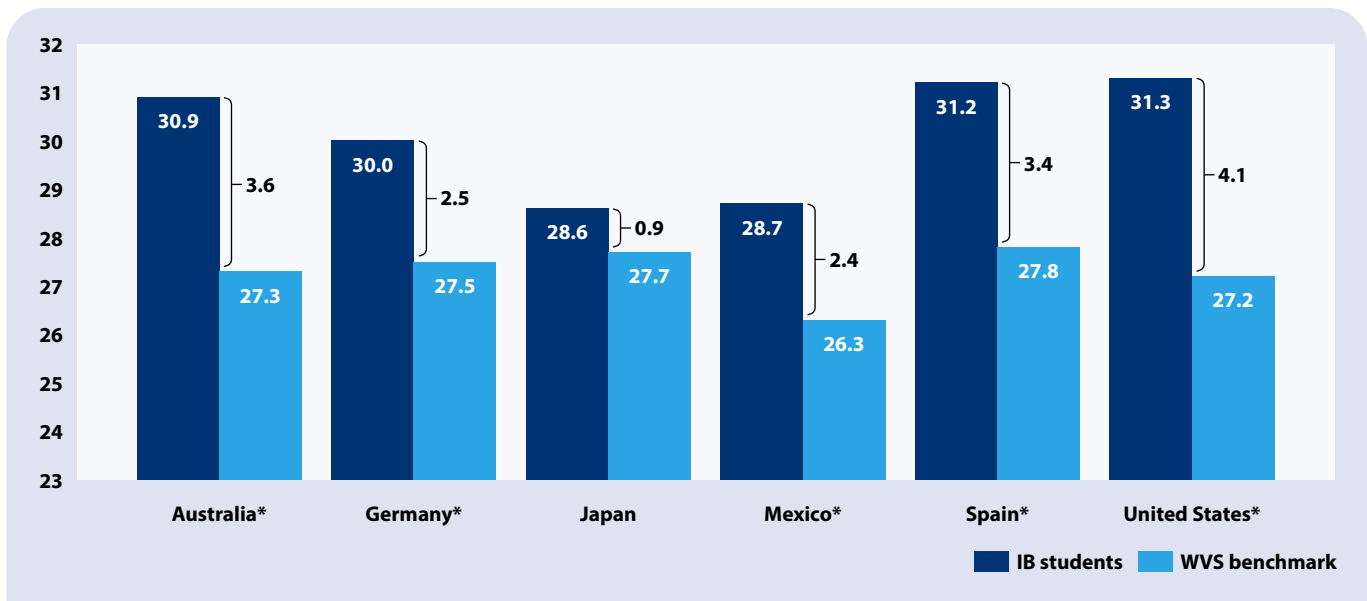


Figure. Levels of global mindedness of IB students compared to WVS country-level benchmarks. Note. An asterisk (*) indicates a statistically significant difference between groups at a 5% level.

Key findings

Comparison of IB students and country benchmarks

DP and CP students in all six countries showed higher levels of global mindedness than young adults⁴ in the WVS Wave 6 benchmark groups (figure). Across countries, IB students’ global-mindedness levels were between 3% and 15% higher than the country-level benchmark sample. The results were statistically significant for all countries except Japan; in the case of Japan, this was likely due to a very small sample size available for the comparison.⁵

Differences by student characteristic

- **Global mindedness tended to be higher for second-year IB students.** Specifically, second-year IB students had between 1% to 5% higher global-mindedness levels than first-year students; however, this difference was only statistically significant among students in Australian schools.

- Global-mindedness levels did not vary based on the number of standard level (SL) or higher level (HL) courses that IB students were taking.
- Findings varied by country when comparing global-mindedness levels for DP course students versus diploma students.⁶ Some countries had higher levels of global mindedness among course students while others showed little difference or higher levels for diploma students. Only in Mexico was the difference statistically significant in favour of diploma students.
- DP and CP students’ gender correlated significantly with global mindedness across all countries, with female, non-binary and gender non-conforming students tending to average higher global mindedness than their male peers.
- Global mindedness tended to correlate positively and significantly with students’ intentions to: study abroad for a limited period of time; move abroad for an extended period of time; find a career that involves travel; and pursue a graduate degree.

⁴The young adults in the WVS Wave 6 benchmark groups were between the ages of 18 and 29.

⁵The researchers only retained the records of participants who provided valid answers to each of the items used in the comparison; this number was extremely low in the case of the WVS sample in Japan.

⁶Researchers defined diploma candidates as DP students enrolled who had a total course load of (a) three SL courses and three HL courses, or (b) two SL courses and four HL courses. Course candidates included DP students with fewer than six courses in total and all CP students.

Conclusions

Across all of the countries studied, DP and CP students showed higher levels of global mindedness than young adults in the WVS benchmark groups. Additionally, second-year IB students averaged higher global-mindedness levels than their first-year peers in five out of the six countries, suggesting that exposure to the DP and CP may increase levels of global mindedness. While the study cannot provide causal evidence that the DP and CP increase students' global-mindedness levels, the results are promising and indicate a positive relationship between participation in the DP and CP and higher levels of global mindedness.

References

Inglehart, R, Haerpfer, A, Moreno, C, Welzel, K, Kizilova, J, Diez-Medrano, M et al. 2014. *World Values Survey: Round Six – Country-Pooled Datafile Version*. www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp. Madrid: JD Systems Institute.

Singh, M and Qi, J. 2013. *21st Century International-mindedness: An Exploratory Study of Its Conceptualization and Assessment*. Parramatta, NSW, Australia. Centre for Educational Research.

This summary was developed by the IB Research department. A copy of the full report is available at: www.ibo.org/en/research/. For more information on this study or other IB research, please email research@ibo.org.

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