

Symbolic Capital and Identity Capital from International Student Mobility

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Relevance

International student mobility (ISM) is widely discussed as determinant for labor market and personal outcomes (EHEA 2012). The participation in ISM programs seems to be highly socially selective (Netz & Finger 2016).

Question

Are there heterogeneous monetary and non-monetary returns to ISM in terms of wages and personal development?

Theories

Human Capital Theory (HCT), Signaling Theory (ST), Bourdieu's (1982) Theory of Cultural and Symbolic Capital (TCSC), Mead's (1968) Identity Theory of Symbolic Interactionism (SI).

Hypothesis

HCT / ST: Similar additional qualification on perfect markets or similar signals, respectively.

H1: Positive Effects on *wages* for all social groups.

TCSC: Importance of cultural capital in transforming biographical differences to symbolic capital on the fields of labor markets.

H2: Positive Effects on *wages* more likely in case of academic background.

SI: Compensation of less diverse social interactions in the personal biography.

H3: Positive Effects on *personal development* more likely in case of non-academic background.

Data & Method

DZHW Graduate Panel 2013.1, university master graduates. Propensity Score Matching (pre-treatment heterogeneity bias + treatment-effects heterogeneity bias).

Table 1: Study abroad, treatment selection, logistic regression

	Model 1 all	Model 2 academic background	Model 3 non-academic background
Education background			
non-academic	-0.046 **		
Migration background			
one	0.063 *	0.067	0.087
both	0.038	0.038	0.054
Partner	-0.046 *	-0.075 **	-0.004
Children	-0.106 **	-0.141 ***	-0.042
No BA info.	0.035	0.114 †	-0.035
BA - study abroad	0.077 **	0.073 *	0.079 *
BA - MA decision	-0.042 †	-0.042	-0.042
BA - Degree			
1 - 25 perc.	0.041	0.090 †	0.009
25 - 75 perc.	0.050 †	0.129 **	-0.019
School Degree	0.008 ***	0.013 ***	0.001
Field of study (Ref.: Ing. & Inf.)			
Economics	0.177 ***	0.244 ***	0.089 †
Nature	-0.032	0.003	-0.086 *
Medicine	0.078 *	0.122 **	-0.030
Peda/Psyc	-0.054 *	-0.036	-0.094 *
Language	0.077 *	0.119 **	0.027
Human/Social	0.041	0.035	0.033
Law	0.045	0.058	-0.002
others	-0.004	0.029	-0.074
Internship (obliged)	-0.053 ***	-0.046 ***	-0.064 ***
Study duration	0.032 ***	0.037 **	0.026 *
Time structuration	-0.006	0.012	-0.031 †
Academic Integr.	0.003	0.006	0.002
Employment oriented	0.008	0.015	0.002
Goal: innovation	0.020 *	0.032 *	0.001
Goal: job autonomy	-0.005	0.008	-0.027 †
Goal: social recogn.	-0.024 *	-0.024 †	-0.027 *
Goal: social contact	0.027 *	0.030 *	0.026
Goal: family	0.010	0.015	0.001
Goal: person	0.050 **	0.030	0.074 **
Pseudo r²	0.12	0.14	0.10
N	3136	1854	1282

Figure 1: Study abroad, average treatment effect on the treated (ATT), by educational background



Source: DZHW Graduate Panel 2013.1, own calculation (without weights). 95 % confidence interval. Propensity score matching: 5 neighbors, Caliper .03. Treatment selection model: all variables from Tab. 1, Model 1, with $p < 0.2$ + gender and age. Matching quality: mean bias 15.2 before and 3.3 after matching, 3 vars. in 3 blocks with balancing problems.

Conclusions

Not that much human capital but a form of symbolic capital is gained by ISM.

Limitations

Plausibility of the selection model; Operationalization: wage (year), personal development & qualification (self-evaluation).

Source: DZHW Graduate Panel 2013.1, own calculation.

†/**/*** = significance on 0.1/0.05/0.01/0.001 % level. Other controls without sign.: female, age, non-gymnasium, apprenticeship, goal: money, goal: hedonism.