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Abstract

The acquisition of intercultural skills by studies abroad is often considered as desirable. But although we can observe a steady increase of studies abroad in the last two decades, the vast majority of students can, obviously, compete on the labor market also without study abroad experience. This leads to the consideration that it could be increasingly a socially expected and thus normative behavior to study abroad, which develops only in specific social and professional contexts. In this paper, both the conditions and effects of a social norm to study abroad are discussed theoretically and empirically. Data of a cross-sectional survey among students of economics and engineering at a German university are used. The direct mobility experience is the strongest predictor of a social norm to study abroad and this norm, in turn, determines the intention to study abroad most, compared to expected personality development and career success. The results are finally discussed in terms of possible effects on individual mobility biographies and social inequality..(HRK / Abstract übernommen) Petzold, Knut, E-Mail: knut.petzold@ku.de