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Title	Student Participant Satisfaction during INU (International Network of University) at Hiroshima University: Promoting Global Citizenship and Peace through Summer Student Seminar
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Citation	Journal of Morito Institute of Global Higher Education , 6 : 8 - 20
Issue Date	2024-03-31
DOI	
Self DOI	10.15027/55625
URL	https://doi.org/10.15027/55625
Right	
Relation	



Student Participant Satisfaction during INU (International Network of University) at Hiroshima University: Promoting Global Citizenship and Peace through Summer Student Seminar

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Abstract

The goal of this international student seminar is to bring students together from across over ten university members in Hiroshima University and promote their awareness on global issues, universal responsibilities, multiculturalism and intercultural understanding. In this study, we conducted a qualitative content analysis of students' feedback collected from the international Student Seminars held at Hiroshima University in Japan in 2021 and 2022. The goal of this seminars was to bring together students from across ten INU (International University of Network) member institutions (2021) and nine (2022) from around the world, to explore how we, as global citizens, can understand the given themes and consider what we can do to contribute to the world. Findings revealed that students were satisfied with the program overall and that an international student seminar such as INU (International University of Network) held at Hiroshima University is an important instrument in promoting global citizenship and peace in the context of higher education.

Keywords: *global citizenship education, peace education, international student seminar, intercultural understanding, globalism*

1. INTRODUCTION-BACKGROUND

1.1 Promoting Global Citizenship and Peace at Higher Education

Under rapidly globalizing world, it requires for educators to train global citizens to promote individuals as members of a one human family. We are responsible to provide a safer and more sustainable world for our next generations, and educators are encouraged to do our best in order to promote global citizenship and peace in our global world. As Olessen, Codd and O'Neil proposes, "there is to be a statutory requirement on schools to ensure that education for citizenship is part of the entitlement of all pupils" (Olsen, Codd and O'Neil, 2004, p.275). Takkac and Akdermir state that "a number of ministries of education, non-government organizations and private corporations in the West have embarked on efforts for global citizenship. Similar interests have been spent also in Asia" (Takkac and Akdermir, 2012, p. 884). However, as Lim states, the fact is that "the lack of capacity and motivation of schools and teachers to run global citizenship education programs may be said to be a chief barrier..."(Lim, 2008, p.10). While it can be challenging to offer effective programs to promote global citizenship and peace in the context of higher education, the INU (International Universities of Network) student seminar held at Hiroshima University is one example to

show how a higher education play a major role to offer an effective practice to promote global citizenship and peace.

1.2 Participants of INU (International Network of Universities) in 2021

In 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the INU Seminar was conducted online for the first time (the INU Seminar 2020 was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic), and the theme of the year was “Understanding Global Inequalities: Bridging the Gaps.” The student participants for 2021 consisted of 74 students (40 female, 34 male) from various countries. The ages of participants ranged from 18 to 26 years. The 2021 INU student participants are shown in the table below:

Country	# of participants	University
Japan	33	Hiroshima University
South Africa	11	Stellenbosch University
Spain	7	Rovira I Virgili University
Indonesia	4	Parahyangan University
The U.K.	5	Kingston University
Argentina	5	Universidad Nacional del Litoral
Germany	3	European University Viadrina
Sweden	3	Malmo University
The U.S.A.	3	James Madison University

Table 1: The 2021 INU Student Seminar (Online)
Total of 74 student participants from nine universities (34 males 40 female)

In August 2022, the international student seminar for Global Citizenship and Peace was back to being conducted face to face after the COVID-19 pandemic settled. For this year, the theme of the seminar was “The Age of Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Concerns”. The goal of the seminar for 2022 aimed to explore and debate the issues raised by the developments in the area of the A.I. The 2022 INU Seminar critically considered how A.I. is increasingly impacting our day-to-day life by looking at the opportunities it can provide as well as at the dangers it poses. All the student participants for the 2022 INU Seminar attended this international seminar at Hiroshima University from August 3rd to August 12th, 2022. The participants consisted of 48 students in total (13 males and 35 females) from various countries (28 Japanese/Hiroshima University, 5 Indonesian/ Parahyangan Catholic University, 1 Malaysian/Hiroshima University, 1 Chinese/Hiroshima University, 2 Germans/ European University Viadrina, 2 Americans/James Madison University, 3 British/Kingston

University, 2 Swedish/Malmo University, 2 Argentinean/ Universidad Nacional del Litoral, 2 Spanish Rovira I Virgili University/, 2 South African/ Stellenbosch University).

The 2021 INU Seminar student participants are indicated in the table below:

Country	# of participants	University
Japan	28	Hiroshima University
South Africa	2	Stellenbosch University
Spain	2	Rovira I Virgili University
Indonesia	5	Parahyangan University
The U.K.	3	Kingston University
Argentina	2	Universidad Nacional del Litoral
Germany	2	European University Viadrina
Sweden	2	Malmo University
The U.S.A.	2	James Madison University

Table 2: The INU 2022 Student Seminar (Face to Face)
Total of 48 student participants from ten universities (13 male, 35 female)

2. MATERIALS AND PROCEDURE

2.1 The INU Seminar Background

The 2021 INU Seminar was conducted online from August 5th through August 13th, 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The student participants were expected to attend all the activities in the seminar online during the program. Contents of the 2021 INU Seminar program included: 4 online workshops, 2 online keynote speeches, online interaction with a Hiroshima A-bomb survivor, online group introduction story exchange, live streaming of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony, online Intercultural Learning session, Japanese language session, and presentations on Japanese culture by Japanese students. Students were expected to read materials and on-demand lectures in July in preparation for the August online seminar. These on-demand lectures included four pre-recorded videos of each workshop and a pre-recorded video by the A-bomb survivor, which were sent to students for preparation. In order to manage the time difference for the online participants across the globe, students were allocated into two different groups based on time zones to enable them to work together more easily. Students were allocated to one of two different time slots for their online group work depending on the student's location. Students from Japan (Hiroshima University) were specifically divided between the two time slots in order to mix them with students from different cultures to promote intercultural experiences. For example, Time Slot 1 included

students based in the U.S.A., Argentina and Japan, and Time Slot 2 consisted of students based in the U.K., Europe, South Africa, Indonesia and Japan. For the purpose of promoting intercultural experiences even in a virtual environment, an online group introductions story exchange was employed as an intercultural learning experience. Students also joined breakout rooms to meet and discuss the seminar events. The result was that students from nine universities around the world joined their peers to get to know each other through events such as the story exchange held on August 9th, 2021. These students, on the same day, then all attended an online keynote speech at 22:00-23:00 (Japan standard time).

Contrasting the 2021 INU Seminar, the 2022 INU Seminar was held face to face on Hiroshima University campus from August 5th thru 13th, 2022. Since the COVID-19 pandemic had began settling in 2022, this event was held face -to- face for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic started in 2020 (the 2020 INU Seminar was canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic). Contents of the 2022 INU Seminar program consisted of: 4 workshops, 2 keynote speeches, meeting with a Hiroshima A-bomb survivor, and country group work sessions. While all the activities and programs were similar due to the 2022 INU Seminar’s in-person format on Hiroshima University’s Campus, an in-person United Nations general assembly role play was added. This event in 2021, was canceled and replaced by group presentations as conducting a virtual Model UN role play would have been quite challenging for the student participants. Furthermore, in 2022, student participants attended the Peace Memorial Ceremony and meeting with Hiroshima A-bomb survivor in person.

2.2 Comparing Program Contents 2021 and 2022:

Below summarizes the differences of program contents between the INU 2021 and 2022 seminars:

	The INU 2021 (online)	The INU 2022 Seminar (in-person)
Theme	“Understanding Global Inequalities”	“The Age of Artificial Intelligence”
Workshops	4 online workshops	4 in-person workshops
UN Role Play	replaced by online final groups presentations	The United Nations General Assembly Role Play
Keynote Speech	2 online keynote speeches	2 online keynote speeches
Hiroshima Peace Ceremony	Live streaming of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony Online	Live streaming of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony Online
Intercultural Learning	Online Intercultural learning session	In-person Intercultural learning session

A-bomb survivor's talk	Online lecture by an a-bomb survivor	In-person lecture by an a-bomb survivor
Cultural Story Exchange	Online introduction story exchange	Online introduction story exchange
Japanese Language Lesson	Online Language lesson	None
Group Discussions	Online breakout room discussion	In-person group discussion
Feedback Session	Online survey	Online survey and in-person session
Cultural Presentation	Online Japanese culture presentation	In-person country presentations

Table 3: Program Contents of the INU 2021 and the INU 2022

3. PROCEDURES AND DATA COLLECTION

In this study, data was collected from an online survey (both in 2021 and 2022) and feedback sessions (online in 2021 and in-person in 2022) with students. The feedback sessions were conducted by this author, acting as a moderator in both years. The questions asked in the 2021 and the 2022 INU Seminar's students' feedback survey are shown below:

3.1 The INU 2021 Seminar Students' Feedback Questions

● <i>How would you rate the seminar overall? (rating from the scale of 1 to 5)</i>
● <i>What did you enjoy most about the seminar? (free comments)</i>
● <i>What did you enjoy least about the seminar ? (free comments)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the organization of the seminar? (rating from the scale of 1 to 5)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the support and information provided before the seminar? (rating)</i>
● <i>How well do you think the seminar addressed the issue of global inequalities in...? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the overall intercultural learning activities delivered...? (rating)</i>
● <i>What did you enjoy most about the intercultural learning activities? (free comments)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the Story Exchange/Story Circles Session? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the Japanese Culture session? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the Intercultural learning session? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the Japanese language session? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you find the session on reflection on the Hiroshima bombing? (free comments)</i>
● <i>Please provide comments on how the group sessions worked and the role of your group facilitator. (free comments)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the workshop on? (rating on four different online workshops)</i>
● <i>What aspects did you enjoy the most from the workshops/ keynote speeches? (free comments)</i>
● <i>What do you think you will take away from the INU seminar? What have you learnt, in terms of academic knowledge, personal development and cultural understanding? (free comments)</i>

● <i>Would you be interested in attending seminar sessions on intercultural learning organized by the INU in the future? (yes, no and maybe answer)</i>
● <i>Please leave any additional thoughts and/comments. (free comments)</i>

Table 4: 2021 INU Seminar Students' Feedback Questions

3.2 The INU 2022 Seminar Students' Feedback Questions

● <i>How would you rate the seminar overall? (rating from the scale of 1 to 5)</i>
● <i>What did you enjoy most about the seminar? (free comments)</i>
● <i>What did you enjoy least about the seminar ? (free comments)</i>
● <i>What do you think you will take away from the INU seminar? What have you learnt, in terms of academic knowledge, personal development and cultural understanding? (free comments)</i>
● <i>Overall, how well do you think the seminar addressed the theme of Artificial Intelligence from different perspective? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the organization of the seminar? (rating)</i>
● <i>What aspects did you enjoy the most about the workshops? (free comments)</i>
● <i>What did you enjoy least about the workshops? (free comments)</i>
● <i>How well do you think your group worked together? (rating)</i>
● <i>Please provide comments on how the group sessions worked and the role of your group moderator. (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the UN role play? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you describe your experience of the UN Role Play? (free comments)</i>
● <i>How would you describe your experience of the country presentaiton? (free comments)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the Story Exchange/Story Circles Session? (rating)</i>
● <i>How would you rate the Japanese Culture session?</i>
● <i>How would you rate the events (Ms Ogura's talk, visit to Peace Memorial Museum, HU Peace Ceremony) marking the anniversary of the A-bomb on Hiroshima? (rating)</i>
● <i>Would you like to give any additional feedback on any of the above activities /talk? (free comments)</i>

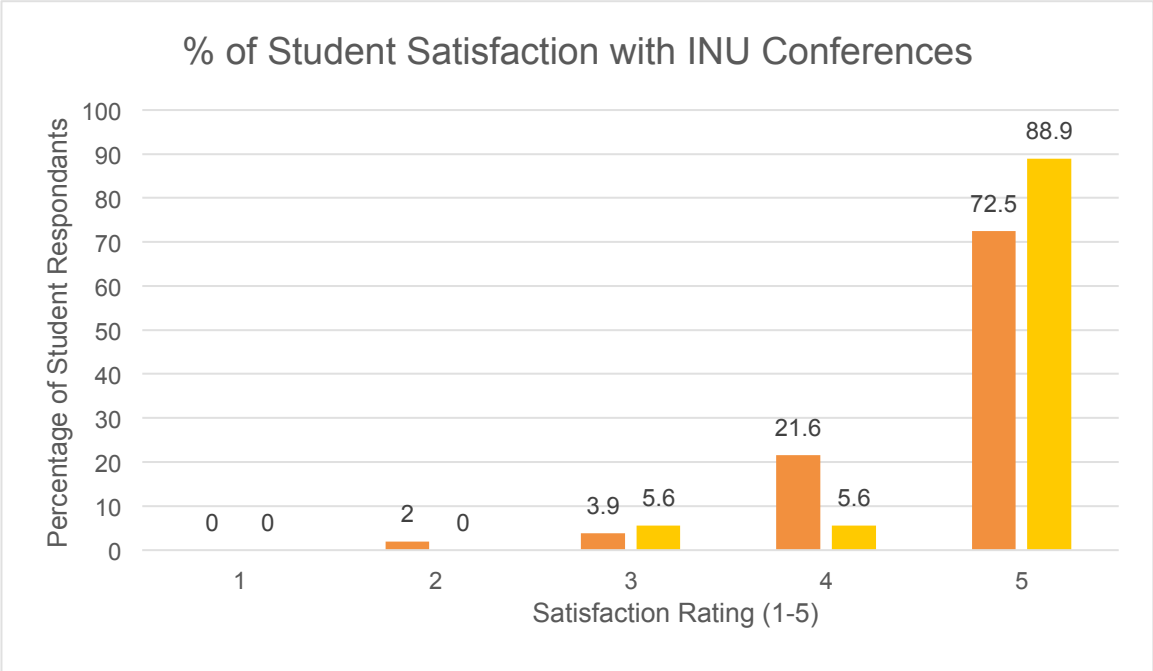
Table 4: 2022 INU Seminar Students' Feedback Questions

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION BASED ON STUDENT SURVEYS

Within the qualitative post-seminar feedback surveys administered in 2021 (total of 51 respondents) and 2022 (total of 18 respondents), answers gauging overall satisfaction and satisfaction with particular seminar contents were recorded. Moreover, dissatisfaction regarding seminar contents, intercultural activities, and workshops were further documented. The sections below collectivize, quantify, and compare each of these to deduce the benefits of the contrasting formats in which the INU program was presented—online in 2021 and in-person in 2022.

4.1 Overall Participant Satisfaction

Graph 1 below records the satisfaction scores reported by responding INU participants from 2021 and 2022 regarding overall satisfaction with the INU program. The satisfaction scores were scaled from one to five, with a one representing a low level of satisfaction and a five representing a high level of satisfaction. The satisfaction scores are scaled on the x-axis, and the y-axis represents the percentage of students who agree with that rating. The results are as follows:



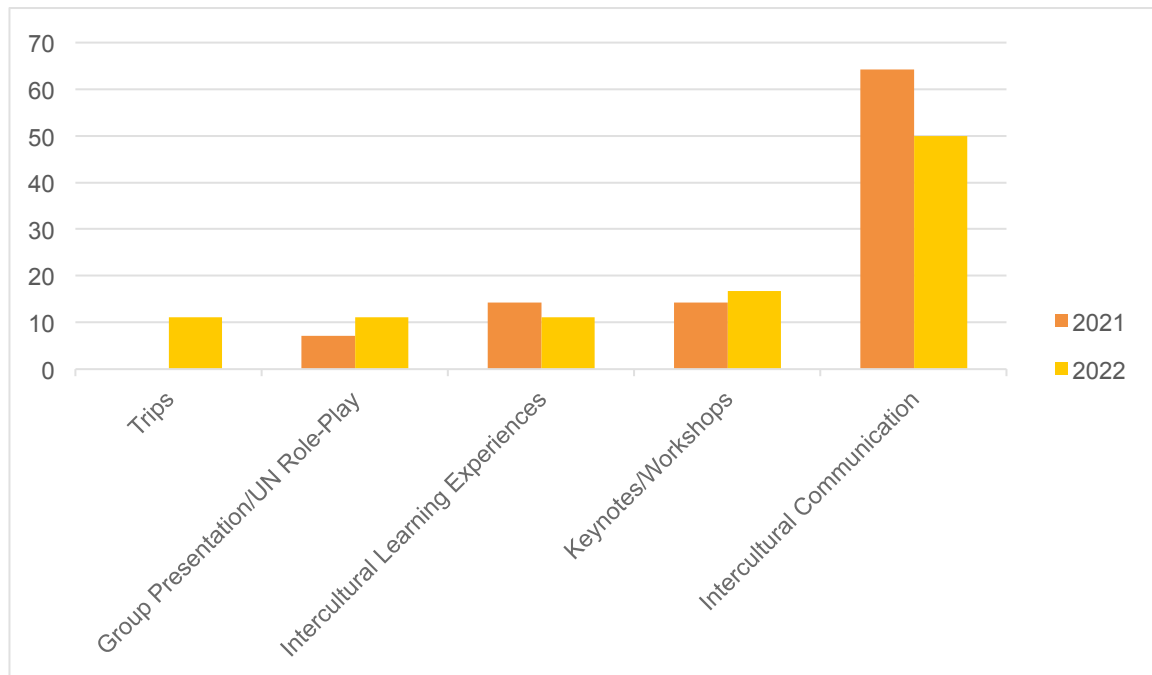
Graph 1: Overall Student Percent Satisfaction Rate with INU in 2021 & 2022

The 2022 INU Seminar had a higher level of satisfaction than the 2021 INU Seminar, with 16.4% more participants rating the seminar a five. In total, 88.9% of participants rated the seminar as a five in 2022, and 72.5% of participants rated the seminar a five in 2021. There were also higher overall ratings in 2022 than in 2021, with only 11.1% of scores being lower than a five. In contrast, 27.5% of the satisfaction scores in 2021 were reported to be lower than a five.

4.2 Most Enjoyable Seminar Content

When recording answers regarding specific seminar contents, participants were asked which portions/events of the seminar were the most enjoyable. The resulting graph below consolidates these responses, organizing them into the categories: Trips, Group Presentation/UN Role-Play, Intercultural Learning Experiences, Keynotes/Workshops, and Intercultural Communication. Within each of these, the “Trips” category only applies to the

2022 INU Conference, as no trips were conducted online within the 2021 INU Conference. Each category was quantified on the graph below by taking the number of respondents who reported that category as the most enjoyable over the total number of survey participants, which was then converted to a percent. The results of these calculations are reported on *Graph 2*:



Graph 2: Percentage of Most Enjoyed Portions within the INU Seminar 2021 & 2022

In both cases, portions of the seminar which involved intercultural communication, for example, the break-out rooms in 2021 and group study sessions in 2022, were deemed the most enjoyable—with 64.3% of respondents in 2021 and 50% of respondents in 2022 reporting it highly.

However, between the two years, the most enjoyable portions tied for second highest reported differ. In 2021, Keynotes/Workshops and Intercultural Learning Experiences are tied for second, with 14.3% of students stating it was the most enjoyable part of INU. In contrast, 16.7% of students in 2022 rated the Group presentations as the most enjoyable portion of the INU Seminar. This is particularly notable as, in 2021 this was the lowest rated portion, at only 7.1%. In 2022, all other portions tied for third, at 11.1% each.

4.3 Reported Dissatisfaction by Students in 2021

In contrast, when prompting participants about which aspects needed improvement, 24.5% of participants mentioned that within the 2021 INU Seminar, they had issues with the online seminar format. One student stated that computer fatigue negatively impacted the

Seminar, and they expressed hope for an in-person format in the future with the statement, “It was quite tiring sitting in front of a laptop. Hopefully, next time, it will be in person!” Moreover, issues with time zones and timing (reported in 12.2% of responses) also arose due to the online format of the seminar, as stated in the student quote, “It may not be about the seminar, but the sessions are conducted on a later night, so sometimes it was hard for me to keep my concentration.”

Critiques on the virtual formatting also were present in the 12.2% of responses in 2021 who stated that the intercultural learning experiences, as a result of the virtual format of the seminar, were the least enjoyable—as shown in the statement below:

“The shorter workshops on culture and language. I do think it is a great idea to include culture exchange and knowledge in the workshop, but due to the online format and the short amount of time, I felt I couldn’t fully dip into the sessions.”

Surveyor’s responses also reported issues with language barrier (12.2%) and keynote workshops (18.4%) as aspects which needed improvement. Conversely, 22.5% of surveyors stated they had no issues or critiques of the seminar.

4.4 Reported Dissatisfaction by Students in 2022

Comparatively, within 2022 the critiques and overall aspects of the program which participants felt needed improvement had changed, with 27.8% of surveyors stating that the keynote speeches and workshops needed the most improvement. Notably, the main critique regarding these portions of the seminar were due to their online format, as commented below:

“Keynote speaker’s lectures were very interesting, but I prefer face-to-face lecture[s]. Online lecture[s] sometimes allow me to [leave] behind because it is more difficult to ask someone else.”

While critiques regarding the keynote speeches were the most prevalent within 2022, both issues regarding timing and the in-person format tied for second most reported aspect of the event which needed improvement—tying at 16.7% of responders, respectively. Specifically, issues with jetlag and the compact and busy schedule of INU Seminar and issues with finding transportation were most common. Moreover, participants also mentioned discord regarding the remaining pandemic restrictions that were in place during the in-person conference, as stated in the participant quote:

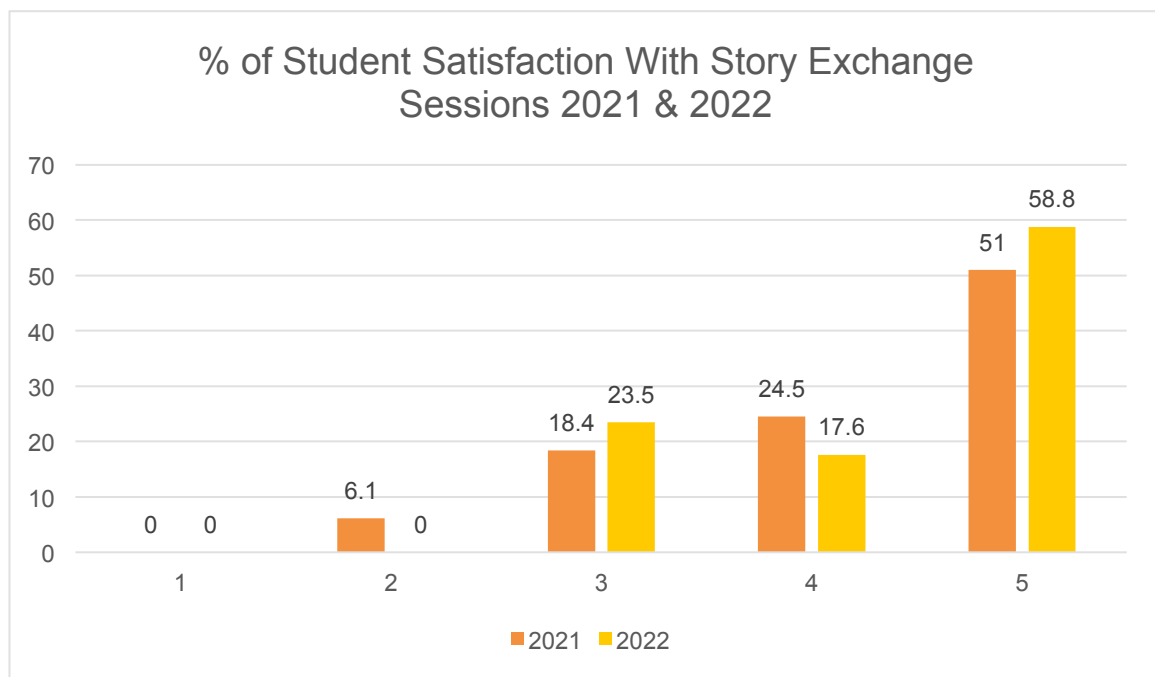
“The only thing I did not enjoy was something that was out of our control due to covid so I understand, but it would have been nice to have the arrival reception and end of the seminar reception for lack of a better word. There were not many opportunities for everyone to

interact together outside of the workshop and country groups and it would have been nice to have that time to bond with one another and get to know each other better as well as end it off together.”

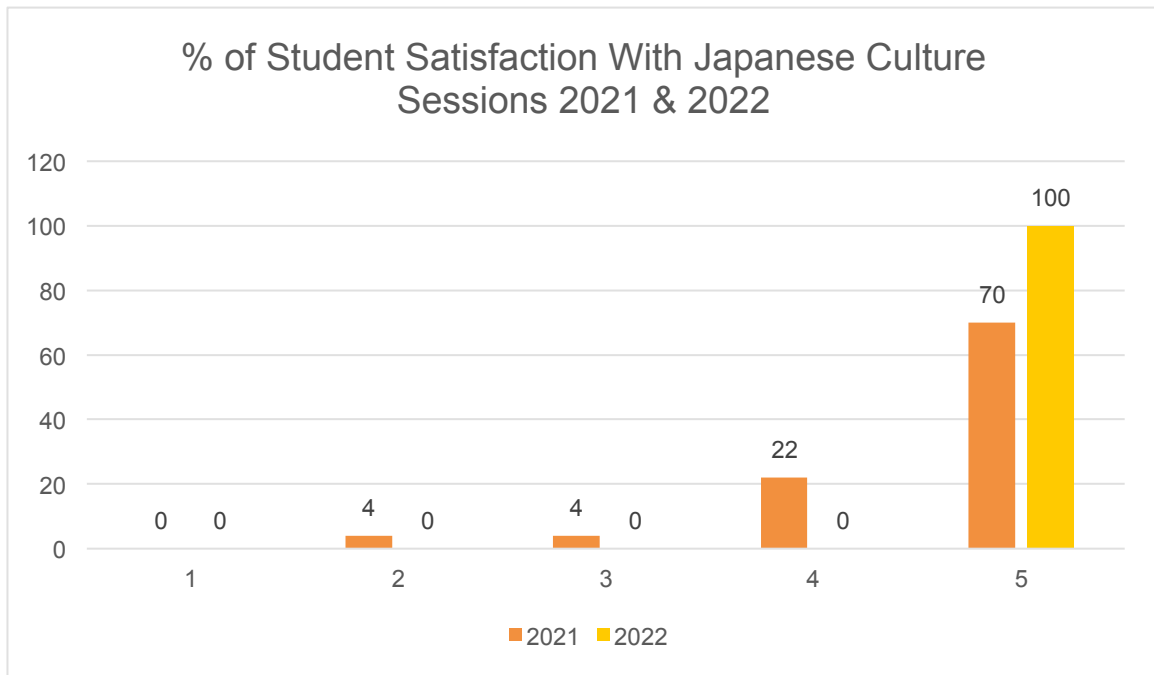
Issues regarding language barrier comprised the remaining 11.1% of responses regarding the aspects of the INU program which needed improvement. The remaining 27.8% of surveyors stated they had no dissatisfaction with the seminar, which was an overall increase from the previous year.

4.5: Satisfaction with Intercultural Activities 2021 & 2022

When discussing the workshops and intercultural activities, the most popular events were the Japanese cultural exchanges and the story exchange circles. Between 2021 and 2022, there was a general increase in overall satisfaction regarding these activities, which was especially prevalent in the events which switched from the online format in 2021 to an in-person format in 2022. The graphs below contrast the ratings (one to five, with five representing a high satisfaction and one representing poor satisfaction) of participants regarding two activities. The first, the Story Exchange Sessions, were conducted online in both years. The second, the Japanese Culture Session, was conducted online in 2021 and 2022.



Graph 3: Participant Satisfaction with Story Exchange Sessions 2021 & 2022



Graph 4: Participant Satisfaction with Japanese Culture Sessions 2021 & 2022

There is a greater increase in satisfaction within the Japanese Culture Sessions, which transitioned from virtual to in-person, than with the Story Exchange Sessions, which remained online.

4.6: Students' Satisfaction with INU Workshops

Within both seminar feedback surveys, participants were prompted about the most enjoyable aspect of the workshops. Additionally, within 2022, questions regarding the least enjoyable portion of the workshops were asked, too.

Regarding most enjoyable portion of the workshops in 2021, 51.0% of participants discussed specific featured workshop topics as the most enjoyable. Furthermore, 34% of participants stated that opportunities for communication, like via breakout rooms and discussion groups were the most enjoyable. A participant's feedback reflects this notion, stating that:

“I enjoyed that we learned poverty and inequality from [an] intersectional perspective. It has allowed me to gain a bigger picture how the situation arises and impacts. Also, I enjoyed moments when we worked in small group sessions. It helped to engage in an interactive learning process and exchange information”

14.9% of remaining responses included critiques regarding the 2021 INU Seminar, expressing dissatisfaction with the lack of interaction and surplus amount of speech time for

keynote speakers (which made up 71.4% of the critiques). The remaining 28.7% of critiques addressed topic choice and the group project.

Within the 2022 feedback on workshop satisfaction, students were requested to comment on the most enjoyable and least enjoyable aspects of the workshops. Regarding the most enjoyable portion, 75% of responses expressed that communication aspects, like discussions, were the most enjoyable. The remaining 25% expressed high satisfaction with specific lecture topics. Notably, this participant expressed satisfaction with both, indicating that discussions in specific lecture topics were highly enjoyable:

“I enjoyed Tutik[‘s] lecture the best. I could get the confidence to express my opinion[s] in English because she made [a] positive atmosphere to hear others’ opinions on the classroom. The warm mood looked like to have been shared among all classmates.”

5. CONCLUSION

As you have seen in this paper, educators need to explore the role of an international student seminar such as the INU (International University of Network) in order to promote Global Citizenship and Peace education in the context of higher education. The INU held at Hiroshima University every summer is a good case study to demonstrate how Global citizenship and peace education can be promoted effectively in a peace-conscious place in Hiroshima. Questions then we need to ask in our future study could include, ‘how can we teach global citizenship and peace education effectively in the context of higher education?’, ‘is Global Citizenship education an important feature of higher education in our world we live today?’ and ‘in what ways, do international student seminars such as the INU contribute to global citizenship and education?’

Our findings based on students’ survey revealed that an international student seminar held at Hiroshima University played an important role and became an effective instrument in promoting students’ global mindset and intercultural competence in global citizenship and peace education. Furthermore, our findings showed that an effective international student seminar such as the INU can impact and shape students on critical global issues and global responsibilities so they can be changing agents to make our world more sustainable and peaceful place to live.

Acknowledgments: This paper and the research would not have been possible without the exceptional support of my research assistant, Kylee Brahma.

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