

Student Challenges When Facing International Academic Mobility: The Case of Division Academica De Ciencias Economico Administrativas

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Abstract – The aim of this paper is to discuss about the challenges faced by the student population of Division Academica de Ciencias Economico Administrativas from Universidad Juarez Autonoma de Tabasco, specifically participants in the international and institutional academic mobility. The evidence here shown are the results of 2 interviews in two moments from January to July 2016. The information obtained enhances the necessity of motivating professors, who during their students' learning process, to provide and at the same time make students aware of the opportunity mobility programs may give them if they participated in this type of programs.

Keywords – Public Higher Education, Educational Innovation, Globalization, Student Mobility and Studies Abroad.

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a phenomenon we are currently experiencing, it has caused great impact on lifestyles in many countries and on cultural, economic, educational and social aspects. Lifestyles have changed according to needs and expectations, these have not been the same they were neither 25, 40 nor 50 years ago; when referring to higher education there is a similar scenario. Universities have engaged in modifying students education by adjusting them in order to meet the necessities of the society.

Considering that very recently, Higher Education Institutions need to implement strategies in order to increase their quality standards, one valuable instrument to consider is student mobility in a way so students are able to develop academic, laboral and professional competences.

Academic stays abroad are internationalization strategies because they allow the development of laboral competences which results as a unique and rewarding experience for students. It also aids to promote personal growth which enables a professional profile so required by employers.

Student mobility is a process that promotes cultural and academic experiences, and which improves communication skills in such a way student can have a wider vision of the world.

Kholer (2002) points out that programs, where students are sent abroad, partially respond to the belief that those students when coming back, will do so with world-mindedness accompanied by an enhanced sensitivity to cultures different from theirs.

Being part of a mobility program has its advantages, such as: taking advantage of the quality of the receiving institution, besides learning other teaching methods for professional performance.

The reasons for an institution to internationalize have to do with its mission and vision, cultural cooperation and extension. There is a close relation between the quality of universities and the internationalization process, according to Knight (1994), Internationalization of Higher Education is the process of integrating the international/intercultural teaching, research and service dimension.

Madarro (2011:73) states that “academic mobility for students, professors and researchers constitutes one of the components for the internationalization process of universities”. For Corti, Oliva and de la Cruz (2015), student mobility is considered a favorable element for people's education and from the perspective of the derived benefits for degrees transformation, academic internships, institutions, Higher Education systems and the integration of different territories.

Student exchanges offer visible opportunities, from learning and speaking another language and broadening academic horizons, up to the point of developing the ability for adapting to complex situations, and at the same time to access different educational systems, getting to know different teaching techniques and getting acquainted to new technologies.

Gonzalez (2011:74) considers that “...according to scientific and technological innovation activities become important, international flow of highly qualified human resources becomes an imperative action”. In other words, information and communication technologies have greatly influenced international flows, students traveling abroad, and, in some cases, they are obliged to serve as a host home, with this type of activity the ex-change of ideas is allowed as well as the experience gained through the interaction generated by the students involved.

Not only do students obtain benefits, but also universities since they create academic alliances, gain quality standards when having foreign students due to the improved teaching processes and above all, internationalization takes place.

The following study is based on college students' opinions from Division Academica de Ciencias Economico Administrativas enrolled in the academic term August-December 2015 from Tabasco, Mexico.

II. DEVELOPMENT

Higher Education has recently changed according to environmental demands, students are required to be highly competitive and to have certain skills for the laboral market.

These skills are acquired in the institutions they

graduated from, which in turn are obliged to be continually updated in order to offer new educational programs and strategies used by different countries around the world; institutions involvement is necessary so students receive education where acting outside their comfort zone is imperative, in order to explore new horizons and acquire new experiences, which cannot be obtained as knowledge or abilities in certain classes or activities performed before graduating.

New experiences from the laboral environment as well as knowledge, this is the only way Higher Education Institutions educate and prepare people, not only for performing a specific post in a company or working areas, but also educating citizens who can contribute significantly in their country, educating new generations, new discoveries or patents, in the scientific, commercial and technological context.

College students are aware of the opportunities they can take advantage of when doing academic stays abroad, for instance, meeting people from different cultures, adapting, learning or mastering another language, and also personal and professional growth.

Higher Education of excellence requires students to be able to compete in the international arena. Academic exchange implies the use of information and communication technologies as they strengthen communication channels and research networks.

To have competent cohorts, Universidad Juarez Autonoma de Tabasco fosters student mobility to different countries, such as: Spain, France, Italy, Chile, Colombia, Canada, United States, Brazil and Costa Rica.

Even though, college students did not choose France (see annex 1), chosen students by connotations are short term mostly, Mexican students choose to study one term of their academic life, more than registering to a degree or postgraduate abroad.

Etienne (2008) points out that 65.6% of Mexicans go to this country for a semester and do stays or internships, inter institutional exchanges or international academic mobility.

According to data published by Secretaria de Education Publica (SEP), in the national student mobility inquiry of Mexico (2012), our country is a student exporter to Spain, since the proportion of students that choose this destination is four times more than the number of Spanish students who come to Mexico.

Student Mobility as a Globalization Consequence.

Nowadays, the development models are based on technologic innovation, as well as an increase in the productivity for new job skills in a global environment. It is for this reason that higher education plays an important role when it comes to this subject. (Rama, 2009).

To talk about academic mobility the definition of the globalization concept is needed, Didou points out that "... it is an economic process that results from financial and commercial integration politics combined with an intensive use of telecommunications "(Didou, 2000:68), and the participants in this research enjoy the use of technology since a young age.

Globalization is a social phenomenon that goes through

frontiers, which leads universities to work to improve the academic training with new knowledge and attitudes in order to settle labor, education, social and economic expectations.

Student mobility is a fundamental matter for the educative sector, it requires being studied because it is one of the most dynamic aspects of globalization.

This global era in which we live, has had consequences in the so-called internationalization, that is getting stronger due to the relevance of the movements in the economic, politic, social, cultural and of course educative sectors. (Didou, 2000). The education internationalization subject implies a series of factors that in the present day have greater relevance as are study programs, investigation and educative cooperation. The contemporary world requires people who, beyond the professional field, have the capacity to respect cultural diversity, tolerance towards the others and promote the pacific coexistence to motivate the making of common projects.

In this tenor, Moctezuma and Navarro (2011), consider that the term education internalization, is understood as a mean and not as a result, that is, through this internationalization achieved by globalization, the higher education institutions and their students get to participate actively in the subjects imparted during their stay aboard.

The internationalization is a fundamental part of higher education since it helps in a significant way to obtain a high competitiveness grade in their students. We have to keep in mind the meaning the word "competitiveness" has for universities, it consists in their main objective, because if they educate competitive persons they will not only contribute in a positive way to their residence country, but they will also make their countries stand out with their contributions.

Before the outlook of internationalization is needed to emphasize the subjects related to higher education, one of them is the benefit that the student mobility program has brought with itself, the experiences that those students who got a scholarship to study abroad got can't be ignored, since the country and the universities need to progress academically, besides it is an opportunity that is not in everyone's reach.

One of the best ways to form part of internationalization is academic mobility that has been in constant development during the last years,

The mobility of one country to another offer a lot of opportunities and challenges that are mentioned in this research.

III. MATH

This research was made in the Academic division of economic administrative sciences belonging to the autonomous Juarez university of Tabasco, both located in the Zona de la cultura in the city of Villahermosa, Tabasco, located in the southeast of the Mexican republic.

The criteria to apply the survey was based in the choice of a total of the 29 participants in the program of international academic mobility during the period of July-December 2015, without regard of gender, age, or degree

they study, and assuming that all of them are regular students and students of the previously mentioned academic division in which four degrees: administration, economics, accounting, and marketing.

The surveys were filled out by the students and the open questions were product of an in-depth interview with the most significant cases, which were used to make the closed questions and build the facts in an analytic way.

The instruments used for measurement were two semi-structured surveys applied in two moments. The first survey consists of 25 questions and was used to detect the population with the required characteristics: regular students, students who belong to this academic division and participants in the international academic mobility program during the period of July – December 2015. In a second moment, a survey with thirteen semi-structured questions was applied to students who answered affirmatively to 70% of the questions in the first survey. The research reports aspects related with the following categories: Globalization, knowledge and learning techniques, national security and cultural diversity.

IV. RESULTS

When students were asked if their parents had influenced their decision to participate in this program, 11 students (38%) said no, that the decision was taken by them. See table 1.

Table 1. Influence of their parents in the decision of participating in the program.

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	2	7
Agree	4	14
Neither agree or disagree	12	41
Disagree	6	21
Strongly disagree	5	17
Total	29	100

Source: own elaboration

To the question about if they had moral support from their parents, 70% answered affirmatively, against 30% who consider that they didn't receive this support.

This is a challenge both for those who participate in the program and their parents.

In the in-depth interviews they explain that this attitude by part of their parents is due to economic factors:

“... Because unemployment hit my family too” (Carlos, mobility in Colombia).

“My mother supports the household and we are a lot in the family” (Cinthia, mobility in Spain).

“... My parents work for Petróleos mexicanos and they don't know for how long they will have their jobs” (Roberto, mobility in Chile).

“I had to save money during two years because I live with my grandma and an aunt” (Nadia, mobility in Italy).

The purchasing power that students have is insufficient, even though they have a secure and solid job, the salary which they count with, won't let them live comfortably. (Gil, 2002).

As Silva, Chelme & Salgado (2003) comment, the educative development in a country is one of the elements that can generate a greater equity and benefit for students, since this makes the access to education easier and with that the possibility of getting access to academic mobility programs.

When they were asked if their professors had encouraged them to enter this program, 38% answered that their professors acted in an indifferent way before this decision, not giving much attention. 24% answered in a negative way, that is to say that their professors discouraged them. This way of acting by part of their professors turns into a challenge to beat for university students. The 37% left answered affirmatively, commenting that their professors had a positive influence in taking this decision, (See table 2), and the thing is that student mobility is not limited only take subjects in another country, but also experiencing new sensations, new knowledge about how to conduct your life, how to move in different places to each student belongs.

Table 2. Professors encouraged you.

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	1	3
Agree	10	34
Neither agree or disagree	11	38
Disagree	4	14
Strongly disagree	3	10
Total	29	100

Source: Own elaboration

Student mobility represents a lot more things besides school, people get prepared academically indeed, but at the same time, maybe without it being the main purpose, human beings sensible to other cultures and people with different lifestyles are being formed, it is then a way to find out a lot about themselves, becoming competent in knowledge and in life, as shown in Table 3, in which 100% of students pointed out that having participated in this program prepared them to face new challenges showing proof of their capacity to survive.

Table 3. You think mobility was an academic and life experience.

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	26	90
Agree	3	10
Neither agree or disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	29	100

Source: Own elaboration

Marzo, Pedraja & Rivera (2004) consider that student academic mobility is one of the factors that has increased the competence in the higher education sector, when the participants in this research were asked if they consider that the university's prestige had any influence in their choice, 59% of participants agreed as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. The recipient institution's prestige had any influence in your choice.

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	6	21
Agree	11	38
Neither agree or disagree	9	31
Disagree	2	7
Strongly disagree	1	3
Total	29	100

Source: Own elaboration

When being asked if they liked getting to know another country, 100% of them answered affirmatively, 89% considers that having participated in this program raised the quality of their academic formation, it is the traditional function of the university to merge education with investigation, it has been innovated because of the need to insert it in their social environment. (Aparicio, 2000).

58% of the participants consider that the economic support they received by the Autonomous Juarez University of Tabasco, was insufficient, against 17% who consider that this economic support was sufficient to cover their expenses.

The results are shown in Table 5. Nowadays we observe that despite being to a certain extent accessible going to another country using a scholarship imparted by the government or the institutions who send the students, the support they receive, is insufficient to stay abroad during a semester.

Table 5. The support received was insufficient to cover your expenses.

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	5	17
Agree	0	0
Neither agree or disagree	7	24
Disagree	7	24
Strongly disagree	10	34
Total	29	100

Source: Own elaboration

93% of participants considers that Autonomous Juarez University of Tabasco, should increase the economic support they give, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Increase the economic support granted by the UJAT

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	18	62
Agree	9	31
Neither agree or disagree	2	7
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	29	100

Source: Own elaboration

It is important to stand out that all of them must fulfill certain requirements as maintaining their GPA, speaking a foreign language because speaking and learning new

languages gets rid of the limits to take classes abroad, especially if it is the English language. On Table 7 we show the results obtained when the students were asked if they had learned another language during their stay abroad, 55% answered negatively. Learning a foreign language in the country they stay, symbolizes a challenge they must face, since in that university can emerge new academic opportunities, if they succeeded to master a second foreign language.

Table 7. You learned another language.

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Strongly agree	5	17
Agree	8	28
Neither agree or disagree	13	45
Disagree	2	7
Strongly disagree	1	3
Total	29	100

Source: Own elaboration

V. DISCUSSION

Munoz, Rios & Abalde (2002), consider that the quality of higher education is an important issue for all universities, considering that the development grade it reaches, will have an impact in the activities their graduates do in the labor market.

Student mobility has represented a great progress in different knowledge fields in the world, through the exchange of ideas and cultures that had promoted the development of countries, being bachelor's degree students the main ambassadors. In regard to this Luchilo (2006) points out that this program is one of the main aspects of qualified personnel mobility, as well as the most notorious option of the higher education internationalization process.

A great part of the participants in this research states that they didn't receive any economic support from part of their parents, Arino, Soler, & Llopis (2014) and Bazan, Backhoff & Turollols (2016), consider that the access and participation to this programs is the outcome of a social selection, this is that the parents with a better formation and greater purchasing power are the ones who bet for an experience abroad for their university student children.

Which means that it is not that the parents of these students don't want their children to participate in this program, but the thing is that their purchasing power won't let them do it, in addition to they not counting with the academic formation that encourage this participation.

The support the professors must give their students, is very important, as Gairin, Feixas, Gillamon & Quinquer (2004) say, since it helps to motivate them in the achievement of new objectives, strengthen their learning and guide them through the decision making, the participants in this research point out that not all of their professors were willing to help them in this decision.

All the students consider that having participated in this program has been a great experience. And the thing is that international mobility provides the students with the needed knowledge to perform efficiently in the labor field. In regard to this Chevaillier (2002) considers that the changes

in the work environment demand a constant update and innovation in the future workers and the existing ones.

The labor market requires trained human factor, with the needed skills to cope with the work area. According to Sobrado & Romero (2002), the growth in the labor market, is producing a constant process of professional diversification.

The student flow modifies a series of elements in the academic, social, labor and economic fields. In regard to this Alvarez & Rodríguez (1997) consider that among the main change inducing factors, are among others, the social and economic changes, in addition to the development of new information and communication technologies.

VI. CONCLUSION

Without a doubt, nowadays the world experiences a multitude of events, most of them, mediated by the employment and the use of technologies that have become an important part of the society's life which university students take part.

The job of higher education institutions nowadays consists in opening the doors and promoting the opportunities they have for their internationalization and make themselves known like competent universities in this demanding globalized world, but above all else, students must motivate themselves and explore new paths that will bring them big benefits.

However, these benefits often symbolize challenges to the ones involved in them, the participants of this research consider that their purchasing power limit them to enjoy or participate in this program created for them, with the sole purpose of they are being encouraged and increase their knowledge, besides interacting with students of different parts of the world.

To participate in this program is required to master a foreign language and even though all the participants master a language, the fact of travelling to a non-Spanish speaking country, is a challenge for them, since most of the students chose a Spanish speaking country.

The third challenge the participants faced was the fact of coexisting with people from different cultures, having to adapt to them. The total of the university students, consider they developed their survival capacities.

The participants in this research had evaluated the results obtained and consider they have invested their time well, as for the money received, they point out that managing to survive with that support became a challenge for them, since the exchange rate of the peso compared with the foreign currency, make them limit themselves to their basic expenses to cover their needs.

The requisites that both the recipient and the home universities demand symbolize an encouraging challenge for the student to improve the quality of their learnings, since we note that they are students with economic possibilities the ones who can study in another country, but in the case of the ones who do not count with this possibility, the ones who have high knowledge levels and full the requirements are chosen for an academic exchange scholarship or for being accepted by a foreign university.

APPENDIX

Annex 1 Destination of the participants

COUNTRY	NO. OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
SPAIN	26	91
ITALY	1	3
COLOMBIA	1	3
CHILE	1	3
TOTAL	29	100%

Source: Own Elaboration

Annex 2 Entry Interview

Hello. I ask you to answer the following questions which answers will support the work "Challenges of university students from Tabasco before international academic mobility.", The results obtained will be confidential.

1. Your parents influenced you to participate in student mobility.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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2. You had the moral support of your parents to participate in student mobility.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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3. Your teachers encouraged you to participate in student mobility.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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4. You went on student mobility with your friends.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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5. Your friends participated in student mobility.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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6. You consider that the prestige of the university influenced to have gone on mobility.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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7. You chose the country you wanted to go to study.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>8. The country you selected was always your first choice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>18. You were able to enrich your professional training.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>9. You liked participating in the mobility program.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>19. The academic environment is better than that of the UJAT.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>10. You liked meeting another country.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>20. The evaluation form has higher quality than the UJAT.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>11. You consider that the professors of the receiving university have higher academic quality.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>21. The money that the UJAT gave you was enough to cover your expenses.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>12. You believe that student mobility increased the quality of your academic education.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>22. The economy of the country you visited is more vigorous than that of our country.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>13. You obtained benefits in your academic training</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>23. You considers that the economic support should be increased.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>14. You selected the participating university for its teaching methods.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>24. You had difficulty managing your money during your academic stay.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>15. The way of evaluating of your teachers affected your GPA.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>25. You got more knowledge.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> |
| <p>16. He schedules of the subjects that you studied were rigid.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p>We appreciate your help.
 Source: Own elaboration.</p> |
| <p>17. The schedules of your subjects were convenient to carry out all your activities.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree</p> | <p><i>Annex 3 Second Interview</i>
 Hello. I ask you to answer the following questions whose answers will support the work "Challenges of university students from Tabasco before international academic mobility", the results obtained will be confidential.</p> |

1. -Do you think that the knowledge you acquired was beneficial for your professional development?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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2. -Student mobility allowed you to strengthen your teaching-learning techniques.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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3. -You believe that having participated in mobility was a learning and life experience.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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4. -You adopted other cultures.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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5. -You acquired knowledge of other cultures.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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6. -You had to modify your lifestyle.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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7. -You were able to enter a multicultural and globalized world.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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8. -You learned new languages.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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9. -You believe that student mobility allowed you to master the language.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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10. -The issue of social security influenced for you to participate in mobility.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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11. - You felt safe having been in another country.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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12. - You put your personal safety at risk.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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13. - Your classmates and teachers were kind to you.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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We appreciate your help.
 Source: Own elaboration.

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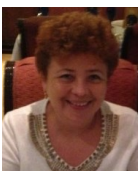
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