Multicultural Experiences and the Secondary Transfer Effect of Intercultural Attitudes

This research examined whether simulating a multicultural experience increases positive attitudes toward foreign cultures. Using a computer slideshow, participants were randomly assigned to view pictures of their local culture (i.e., the control condition) or pictures of foreign cultures (e.g., Zambia, Bolivia, Oman). Aggregated results across four experiments show that, compared to the control condition, participants having a multicultural experience reported more positive attitudes toward Zambians, Bolivians, and Omani, but also more positive attitudes toward similar cultures not included in the simulation at all (e.g., Ethiopians, Peruvians, Saudi Arabians). These results suggest that after having an experience with one culture, the increased positive attitudes felt toward that culture generalize, or “transfer,” to similar cultures that were not part of the original experience.