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Friend or peer: the networks students rely on during mobility programs

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The present research focuses on two different types of participants in students mobility programs. On the one hand, we evaluate the impact of previously established networks on academic performance of Master degree students who spend two years of their studies in two different universities. On the other hand, we check on the importance of existent networks for undergraduate students that move to another university for one semester. The study demonstrates that in the first case the students use the networks formed in Master programs to acquire assistance in their studies. The network does not tend to be populated, but it's very cohesive. It provides academic support needed to complete successfully the studies and, in some occasions, to start career. However, the networks formed before starting the Master program serve as a source of emotional support in difficult situations students have in their academic and personal life. In case of Undergraduate studies, the majority of students prefer to mostly rely on networks established prior to start of their mobility program both for academic and emotional support. Such difference might be explained by length of mobility program, that in the second case potentially does not permit to establish strong connections with groupmates.

Keywords

Student mobility, academic performance, emotional support, education

Topics

- Student mobility network

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