

**IFYE ALUMNI: THE CONCEPTION AND  
PERFORMANCE OF ROLES  
PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING.**

**Richard Wesley Tenney, Ph.D.**

**The Pennsylvania State University, 1969**

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The purpose of this study was to determine the correlation and interaction of both personal and program characteristics of alumni of the International Farm Youth Exchange program in promoting international understanding.

The IFYE program is based on a foreign rural cultural living experience and is administered by the National 4-H Club Foundation. The 1967 study by Tenney, concerning the influence of the IFYE experience on educational achievement and type of occupation, found the following alumni characteristics: a mean age at application of 21.8; over one-half residing in urban areas; about 80 percent married; and a rise in the level of education obtained, from 15.2 years at application to 16.4, with over 70 percent completing additional education since completion of the IFYE experience -- resulting in over 90 percent with baccalaureate degrees, 35 percent with master's degrees, and 6 percent with doctorates. In addition the IFYE experience was found to be associated with the following: a higher rate and intensity of community participation; a greater orientation of occupations towards working with people; a higher proportion of occupations relating to international activities; and a higher rating of the influence of the IFYE program on both educational level and occupations.

The development of IFYE alumni roles began with assistance in IFYE program maintenance and development. From that point it moved through "junior leadership" to establishing pen-pals, and by 1962, to involving citizenship-leadership activities. More recent role development has been to more clearly spell out alumni role expectations in relation to leadership and responsibility in projects dealing with rural youth development and world food production.

A schedule was developed and mailed to 94 national IFYE applicants who had not become participants in the IFYE experience and to 570 IFYE alumni with respective responses of 63 and 474. The main statistical treatment used least squares multiple regression for a single equation stochastic model. The dependent variables studied were role importance and role performance. The findings were:

1. There is no significant correlation between current self-conception of role importance and of obtaining an IFYE experience. There is significant correlation between role performance and IFYE experience with the IFYE Experience Group performing at a higher level.

2. There was a significant change between those alumni responding in 1962 and their responses again in 1967 as both role importance ratings and performance percentages increased.

3. Both importance ratings and performance percentages were significantly higher for the alumni of the continental area of Latin America and those who are currently working in international type occupations. The variables of state represented as an IFYE delegate, community participation, and level of education were all positively correlated with role performance but none were correlated with role importance. In addition there was significant interaction of the variables Occupation-Chapin and Occupation-Education for role importance and the variable Occupation Education for role performance.

4. There is no significant difference between the leadership and resource capacities for either role importance ratings or role performance percentages.

In addition it was observed that IFYE alumni are currently seeing themselves more often as leaders in roles promoting international understanding than they have in the past, but at the same time they are failing to utilize an appropriate portion of the opportunities for performance of international service projects.

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