

Attitudes toward research after participation in an undergraduate research internship

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ABSTRACT: Changes in attitudes towards research have been identified beneficial outcomes associated with student participation in research experiences. However, few assessments evaluate how attitudes change after participating in undergraduate research. PINEMAP (Pine Integrated Network: Education, Mitigation, and Adaptation Project) is a large research project across the Southeast that provides undergraduates with summer research opportunities in forest resources. Over the course of three years, 2012-2014, we surveyed 24 students before they started their research experience and again after completion. The survey consisted of 17 Likert-type items from the Attitudes Toward Research scale (1 meaning “Strongly Disagree” and 5 meaning “Strongly Agree”) and seven items on research methods that compose four proposed factors: research use, negative attributes of research, positive attributes of research, and research methods. Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were used to examine differences between pre- and post-experience scores. Results indicated a significant change in attitudes for research use ($p \leq 0.001$) and negative attributes of research ($p = 0.008$) after the experience. However, there was no significant difference for positives attributes of research ($p = 0.271$).

Keywords:

Undergraduate research experiences, PINEMAP.