



STUDY ABROAD

What are students learning?

International Education Week 2009
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Design by :
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OUTLINE

- Self-reports of Student Learning
- Intellectual Development
- Creativity
- Discussion and Ideas

What are students learning?

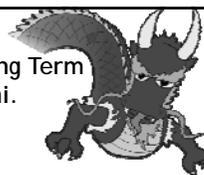
- Self-Reports



Chieffo, Lisa, & Lesa Griffiths (2004). Short-Term Study Abroad: It Makes a Difference. *IIE Networker* (Spring 2004), pp 28-32.

- Month-long winter term
- 1,100 survey responses
- SA has significant impact on the frequency with which students engage in international activities.
- Those who go abroad report a greater level of global awareness and acquisition of internationally related knowledge.

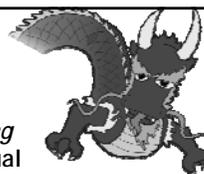
Akande, Yemi, & Carla Slawson (2000). Exploring the Long Term Impact of Study Abroad: 50 Years of Study Abroad Alumni. *International Educator* (Summer 2000), pp12-17.



- 707 responses
- Primary Benefit of Study Abroad (strongest agreements):
 - Enabled me to learn something new about myself
 - Made me more comfortable interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds
 - Helped me to better understand my own cultural values and biases
- Effects on life:
 - Personal/individual growth (30 percent of all benefits)
 - Increasing open-mindedness, openness to diversity (27 percent of all benefits)
 - Improved language skill (26 percent of all benefits)
- Intl experience after SAS
 - Returning abroad to travel (72 percent of all respondents)
 - Keeping in touch with IES students met while abroad (71 percent of all respondents)
 - 95% of the respondents over the five decades covered in the study agreed that their study abroad experience continued to influence their perspectives on world events



Meyer-Lee Elaine, Saint Mary's College (2006), *Assessing Impact: Study Abroad at 2 Institutions*, 2006 AIEA Annual Conference (Feb 2006).



Self-Reported Growth in

- Understanding of different cultures
- Different perspective on American culture
- Greater understanding of the U.S. in world affairs and history
- Different perspective on your ethnic heritage
- Understanding of my faith
- Self-awareness
- Maturity and confidence
- Interpersonal skills and the ability to adapt
- Intellectual development in the liberal arts
- Ability to communicate in a foreign language



Lincoln Fellowship Commission (2005), *Global Competence and National Needs*, November 2005.

- Students who participate in study abroad programs are “those who make the most progress in the language of choice and are most likely to become fluent.” (Freed, 1995)
- Learning outcomes include:
 - Enhancing students’ self awareness and understanding of their own culture
 - Developing students’ skills for relating to culturally different others in various situations
 - Contributing to students’ professional development . . . (MSU, Ingraham and Peterson, 2004)
- Increased intercultural awareness in such areas as enhanced understanding of international issues, other cultures, their host country’s culture, and their own culture, as well as increasing their curiosity about other cultures and their appreciation of human difference (MSU)
- Individual growth: confidence in traveling abroad, personal independence, understanding of life in the host country, desire to travel overseas, appreciation of other cultures, ability to cope with new and different surroundings. (Thomlinson, 1994)



What are students learning?

- Intellectual Development



McKeown, Joshua S. (2009). *The First Time Effect: The Impact of Study Abroad on College Student Intellectual Development*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

- One semester study abroad student population
- 8 U.S. colleges and universities
- 226 students
- Purpose - were gains in intellectual development occurring, and which variables were associated with intellectual development?
- Survey instrument = the Measure of Intellectual Development (MID). Moore, 1990; based on evaluation of writing sample

Variables:

- Gender
- Lang in study abroad country
- Amount of cultural immersion
- Where, and with whom, did they study?
- Where, and with whom, did they live?
- Student activities while abroad
- Previous international travel

Pre and post MID given

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Results

- Semester have effect? no
- Gender have effect? no
- Lang or country have effect
- Lang? No
- Amt of cult immersion? No
- Previous intl exp? No

But → previous travel abroad had higher pre and post test scores

Then, if take away travel less than two weeks → Students who had traveled abroad previously for 2 weeks or longer still had significantly higher pre-scores than for their less-traveled peers, but their post scores were not significantly different.

In other words, students for whom study abroad was their *first meaningful international experience* caught up to their more experienced peers after one semester abroad.

Why <2 weeks?

Probably purpose was for vacation or recreation only, likely without structured, sustained, and purposeful cultural interactions.



Studying abroad, for some students, is associated with gains in intellectual development relative to their peers.

Students for whom studying abroad was their *first meaningful international experience* made gains in their intellectual development not seen in their peers.

Other variables, like language of the study abroad country, degree of cultural immersion, did not have such an impact.

William Perry - college years, interactions with environment, meaning making, encounters with diversity, thinking critically (freshman seminars, senior capstones, etc).



??? If international travel itself has the ability to influence intellectual ability, this might explain the initial difference in MID scores.

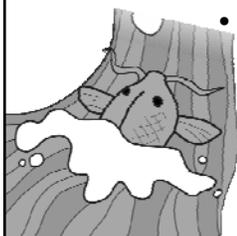
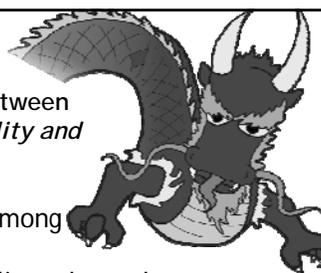
What are students learning?

- Creativity



Maddox, W.W. & Galinski, A.D. (2009). Cultural Borders and Mental Barriers: The Relationship Between Living Abroad and Creativity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 1047-1061.

- Creativity is found at relatively high rates among first- or second-generation immigrants (Simonton, 1994, 1997, 1999) and among bilingual people (Nemeth & Kwan, 1987)
 - Living abroad can allow individuals access to a greater number of **novel ideas and concepts**, which can then act as **inputs** for the creative process.
 - Living abroad may allow people to approach problems from **different perspectives**.

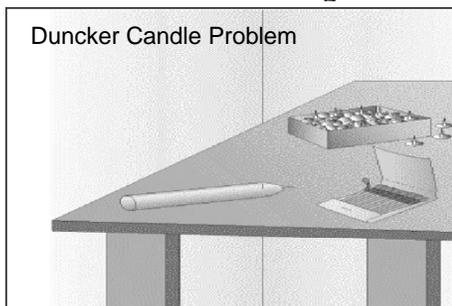


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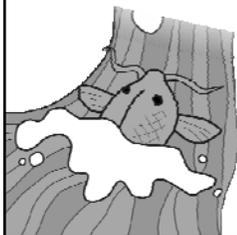
Study 1

Participants were 205 full-time masters of business administration (MBA) students at a large business school in the United States (127 men, 78 women) who participated as part of an exercise prior to a lecture on culture and communication.

Dunker Candle Problem

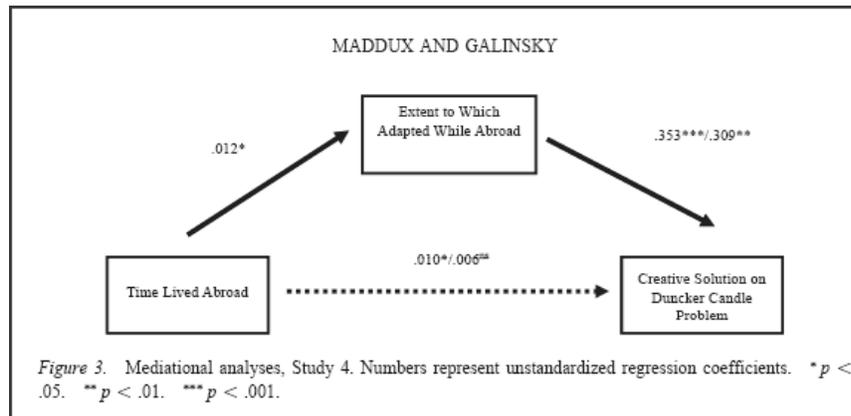


- The amount of time individuals had spent living abroad was a **significant positive predictor** of creative solutions to the Duncker Candle Problem, $R = .25$



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Adaption to the Culture



Study 3

- 65 undergraduates at a large university in France (29 men, 34 women, 2 gender undisclosed) participated in exchange for a coupon for a free coffee.
- All participants were French nationals and native French speakers. For participants to be eligible, they needed to have lived abroad (i.e., outside of France) previously.
 - Four Cognitive Generation Conditions:
 1. Living Abroad
 2. Traveling Abroad
 3. Visiting Hometown
 4. Going to the Supermarket
- Administered the Remote Associates Test (RAT) playing, credit, report **CARD**
hall, car, swimming **POOL**

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Thinking about Living Abroad?

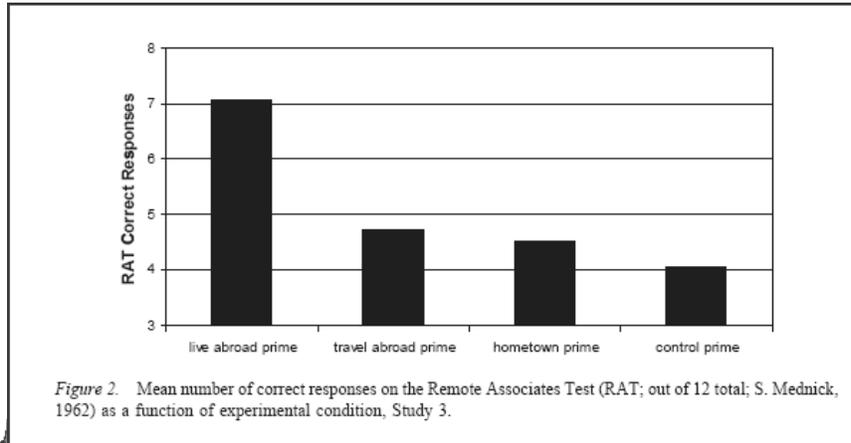


Figure 2. Mean number of correct responses on the Remote Associates Test (RAT; out of 12 total; S. Mednick, 1962) as a function of experimental condition, Study 3.

This effect of contemplating experiences living abroad was strongest for those participants who had **lived abroad the longest**.



DISCUSSION

