

# Studying abroad: a literature review examples

[Profession](#), [Student](#)



There has been a lot of research done on the topic of studying abroad, particularly for students who are learning cross-cultural disciplines like language, politics, business, and so on and so forth. Conventional wisdom shows that there are a variety of benefits to studying abroad. However, researchers have examined the different elements of study abroad programs to best weigh them. Examining how students behave in foreign environments is important to maximizing the positive impacts of any study abroad program.

In her paper *Multicultural Students in Study Abroad: Their Interests, Their Issues, and Their Constraints*, Brux discusses the potential benefits to students who are studying abroad in various capacities. First, she notes that the world is increasingly globalized, and having global, multicultural skills is a boon in business and life in general. Within tertiary institutions, Brux notes, educators are trying to diversify programs; one of the best ways to diversify educational programs is to engage foreign students in programs like study abroad programs-- and to send their own students outside the program to participate in study abroad opportunities.

Brux notes that students that participate in study abroad programs outside of their majority cultural group experience unique issues that their peers that are not studying abroad do not face. She states, " The results of the study indicate that institutional factors (academic scheduling difficulties, absence of relevant programs, lack of information, etc.), as well as other factors that can be moderated by institutional effort (providing encouragement, addressing financial issues, discussing family concerns, etc.), prevent students of color from participating in study abroad programs" (Brux, 2010).

She then goes on to suggest that different programs be implemented to encourage students who have multicultural backgrounds to participate in study abroad programs.

Like Brux (2010), Mapp participated in a similar study, entitled: Effect of short-term study abroad programs on students' cultural adaptability. The Mapp study was a study about how studying abroad helped students. Mapp suggests that there are costs to studying abroad, but the benefits that a student gets are much larger; today's business world requires students to have the ability to participate in cross-cultural and multicultural discourse. Like Brux (2010), she found that the positive effects of study abroad programs significantly changed the participant students (Rose). Because Mapp (2007) is focused on the effect of studying abroad on students, particularly the effect of short-term study-abroad opportunities, Mapp (2007) created an inventory known as the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory as a way of quantifying emotional resilience, flexibility, perceptual acuity, and autonomy before and after study abroad trips of short length. The study discovered that students who studied abroad had significant changes in every category, with particularly large changes in emotional resilience. While Mapp's sample size was small, this does indicate that studying abroad has a positive impact on students in general.

Rose and Bylander, on the other hand, were more concerned with creating programs that encourage diversity; their programs focused on students of color who had an opportunity to study abroad in Cameroon. These students were part of a four-week diversity program, in which they experienced educational opportunities in a variety of different locations, including

Cameroon (Rose and Bylander, 2007). The program was designed to help the students participate in cross-cultural activities outside their comfort zones.

The program was limited time-wise, but had great success (Rose and Bylander, 2007).

Jackson (2005, fall) examines the different constraints study-abroad students face. In addition to potentially falling behind in their course of study if it is particularly rigorous, students who are abroad for long periods of time may find themselves experiencing a variety of different cultural phenomena. This was an excellent study because it looked at the potential downfalls of studying abroad and the emotional impact that studying abroad can have on the individual.

Essentially, the literature suggests that there is a large, quantifiable impact on the individual from study abroad programs, and that these programs do indeed have a diversifying effect. Studying abroad, for both the long and short term, has a diversifying effect on students and a positive impact on their futures as a whole. Students who were interviewed suggested that their study abroad experiences were, by and large, positive ones, although they did experience some negative impacts.

## **References**

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