

# Understanding the effects that studying abroad education essay



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In this article, the authors strive to explore on the significance of understanding the effects that studying abroad has on international students. It is in this regard that Ingraham and Peterson endeavor to close the existing research gap and provide qualitative and quantitative resource materials for use in analyzing these effects. Michigan State University is central in this study as the authors assess the measures and designs which have been put in place in order to investigate the implications of studying abroad. In their report on the results accrued from the first and second phases of this project, the authors explain that even though the intellectual growth of these students is observed to be positive, learners are still hindered from achieving complete growth due to psychological problems. These students often encounter social conflicts which affect their self esteem and which also lead them into engaging in such habits like taking drugs and alcohol. This consequence is as a result of their inability to process changes accordingly and adapt to new social expectations. According to Ingraham and Peterson (93), this psychological challenge only amounts to the students lacking commitment in their studies. Therefore, the benefit that studying abroad may have on the students is not realized.

Ingraham and Peterson (94) also analyze the personal growth of students and the psychological implications of this concept. Students to a larger extent are observed to develop personal growth due to acceptance and will to learn in unfamiliar environments. However, international students in this project are unable to achieve that because they are faced with such psychological challenges like depression and feelings of homesickness. The unfamiliarity of this new environment causes learners immense anguish and

they are expected to overcome this if they are to benefit from studying abroad. In addition, students explained that it is through patience that they are able to cope with the unfamiliarity of the new environment. Closely related to the factor of personal growth is the aspect of intercultural awareness amongst international students. Students were reported to experience difficulties adapting to the new American culture. Furthermore; the authors insist that even though studying abroad is meant to benefit learners academically, there are other non-academic issues that impact greatly on the lives of these students. As such, they conclude that academic performances need not to be strictly pegged on the GPA scores of these learners. Even though the Michigan State University project is at its initial stages, it has been observed to provide accurate and relevant information which will further a greater understanding of the effects of studying abroad on international students.

#### Response to Key Quotations

1.

“ But the psychological challenge posed by the unfamiliar is particularly acute when abroad and, while sometimes the anguish it can cause (e. g., homesickness, depression) can diminish the benefit, there is no doubt that the predominant effect on personal growth is positive and profound.” (94)

This statement is quite significant in addressing the effects that studying abroad has on international students. Psychological problems such as depression and homesickness are not disputed to cause harm on the learner.

The authors acknowledge that such psychological effects can be reversed <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-the-effects-that-studying-abroad-education-essay/>

and propel the learner to greater heights of personal growth. As such, the question raised by this quote is on how these psychological challenges diminish the program's benefits. Following this, one is guided to scrutinize research materials keenly in order to ensure relevance of the materials used.

2.

“ A reader of these reports is left with the unequivocal impression that the impact of the study abroad programs for virtually every student in this pilot project was positive in each of the areas considered, though perhaps especially in personal growth and intercultural awareness.” (98)

It is crucial to not become overwhelmed by the fact that these programs mostly elicit positive repercussions. This quotation makes one question such circumstances and seek to understand why this is so. Why aren't negative effects observed amongst students? Does this imply another misrepresentation of international students, real situations? Having this in mind allows one to advance the research paper with an objective and open mind, ready to delve into these difficult questions. In the process, one can establish the extent in which these psychological effects have been documented.

3.

“ MSU's goals of study abroad contain two items directly related to intercultural awareness, the first relates to students' ability to understand and adapt to cultures other than their own, the second to the students'

increased understanding of their own culture resulting from comparing it to the host culture and from looking at it from the outside.”(94).

Culture shock is as a direct result of students’ failure to gain intercultural awareness. Thus, the above quotation implores one to fully investigate how a lack of understanding and failure to adapt to new cultures contributes to culture shock. Another question raised is whether this understanding relies completely on international students’ abilities. It is critical during research to explore the role played by the host country’s students in this process.

4.

“ One of the programs had students from three different countries participating and the leader reported that they all learned from the intercultural contacts within the group. (97)

Are group interactions of help to international students experiencing feelings of cultural disconnect? Also, this quotation leaves room to explore exactly how such groups can be of benefit to these students and to what extent these groups can be used within the programs. In doing so, one understands how psychological effects are displayed by international students in an intercultural group session.

Evaluation of the Usefulness

This article will not only be of benefit to researchers in this field but it will also remain an important source for others seeking to understand the psychological effects studying abroad has on international students in the U.

S. It has broadened my perspective on the impacts of these programs and <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-the-effects-that-studying-abroad-education-essay/>

more so, on how learners can benefit from them. As I seek to explore the psychological effects experienced by these learners, I am at a better position to measure the extent of these effects and their implications. As I am aware of the benefits of this program, I am able to tackle the research question objectively and am ready to indicate this in my research.