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# Discover Yourself – Study Abroad

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Discover Yourself – Study Abroad  
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## Discover Yourself – Study Abroad

### Introduction

Have you ever had a moment of instant regret? Thinking back on it, do you feel a little silly for feeling that way? Well, that is how my study abroad experience started. When I first stepped off the plane in Spain I couldn't believe what I had done or what I had gotten myself into. I really did not prepare myself well and could not believe I just jumped into this experience hoping for the best. In the midst of my abroad trials and tribulations, many times I told myself *there must be a bigger reason, this is so much bigger than me*. While I was abroad – learning, growing, changing, and adapting to a new life – I quickly knew that it wasn't just a five-month vacation away from reality.

There was something unique in my heart while I was abroad and I couldn't quite put my finger on it until I came home and spoke with other students, faculty, and friends who had also studied abroad. We'd compare stories and feelings and would always find ourselves wide eyed exclaiming 'Yeah! Me too!' This feeling inside my heart was change, acceptance, understanding, and appreciation for the little things all around me and for other parts of the world. All of these feelings are the reason why I wanted to do a project about my abroad experience. I needed to find out if this experience really was *bigger than me*. Will it have any real impact on my future?

I wasn't exactly sure how to get started, but I knew I needed to answer the million-dollar question for myself: what are the benefits of studying abroad? Will this impact my future or was it really just a vacation away from my reality? To my pleasant surprise, there are a variety of answers as to future benefits of studying abroad, and throughout my research I have found an underlying theme that solidifies the fact that studying abroad really does have a lifelong impact.

There is real evidence to reveal correlations between an abroad experience with enhanced interpersonal skills, global awareness, acceptance and understanding for other cultures and differences that fill this world. In this article, I will combine factual evidence from journals and research articles with my own personal research, conducted through several interviews, that prove studying abroad is beneficial beyond just the time spent in another country. The research is important because I'm a strong advocate for the fact that a greater population of students need to be properly convinced that studying abroad is not only fun and educational, but provides lifelong and positive life changing benefits for the future. With increasing exposure to countries and cultures outside of the United States, American students need to become more globally aware and internationally tolerant in order to recognize and appropriately interact with the rest of the world. Though difficult on a variety of levels, full emersion in another culture fosters a global mindset and ultimately creates an international community. The benefits and opportunities that arise from an abroad experience are innumerable; however, there is a serious lack of awareness of the fact the experience provides lifelong benefits, which is why I've taken the time to do a bit of researching.

### Research

To best examine the certainty of lifelong benefits of studying abroad I have researched and studied several documents, as well as conducted personal interviews of my own. I have discovered several sources that explain how benefits of studying abroad have been proven in variety of different ways.

For starters, author Sanford Ungar wrote an article called *The Study Abroad Solution*, to discuss the importance of implementing and supporting study abroad programs at American universities due to the lack of world knowledge held by most

Americans. Ungar suggests there is huge potential to gain real benefits that studying abroad has to offer in order to better engage Americans in foreign affairs. There is an overall understanding described, that there is a true broadening of perspectives, strengthening of identity, and bettering of mindsets for success in a globalized world.

With that being said, Ungar recognizes and discusses several deterring agents preventing students from getting abroad. With deterrents such as class schedule with credits requirements, extracurricular activities, collegiate sports, specific major requirements having too rigorous plans for students, along with the most popular deterrent, cost, many students are discouraged from getting an abroad experience. In addition to these unfavorable factors, Ungar also points out there is a lack of diversity within the student population who chose to study abroad. Regardless of these deterrents, Ungar suggests that having an abroad experience fosters the mindset for a more globalized perspective, which generally outweighs any discouraging factors due to how impactful and important becoming globally aware is. Ungar believes it is important for students and people of all backgrounds to engage in a culture outside their own in order to enhance personal well-being and the American society as a whole.

Ungar definitely states that studying abroad is the best way improve American society and rid the fear of foreign affairs held by too many Americans. There is an ignorance held by Americans about the rest of the world, and to create a better society, the first and critical step for Americans is to cross the borders, and expand global horizons so as to expand their own mindsets to be more globally aware. This better and truer understanding will be essential to generations in the future to “ensure U.S. competences and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving world” (Ungar, 2016). Ungar believes in the benefits of study abroad so intensely that, as president of Goucher

College, made it mandatory for students to study abroad in some fashion. Along with efforts made by many universities throughout the United States, there has been an increasing amount of effort made by the federal government to encourage students to study abroad, as this type of experience has numerous benefits both personally as well as for the betterment of American society. Ungar quotes the Institute of International Education (IIE) as the research suggests studying abroad amounts for “basic training in the 21st century” alluding to how important understanding the rest of the world is in the continuously globalizing world we live in (Institute of International Education, 2017).

Furthermore, the IIE is a non-profit organization that seeks to improve international education and access to education worldwide through educational and training programs. The IIE is dedicated to creating a more interconnected world where all people “act and think as global citizens to build inclusive, thriving communities” (Institute of International Education, 2017). Through their Open Doors Annual Report, the IIE is able to examine the expansion of international programs and participants. The 2016 Report states that 90% of American students do not study or intern outside the United States, while the report also recorded a high of one million international students studying in the U.S this same year (Institute of International Education, 2017). Evidently, there is a disconnect between American students and international students on their ideals and ability to gain international experience, and ultimately a more global mindset. International students have a more open and global mindset, that benefits them throughout school as well as in the future career paths, which is something many American students do not recognize as an important skill. Not only does the American student benefit from an abroad experience, but the U.S. economy and foreign relationships improve as well. Evan Ryan, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational

and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State explains, “international education helps people develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in today’s global economy, and creates networks across borders that improve international understanding and strengthen the national security of the United States,” which exemplifies the social and economic impact of American students broadening their horizons, and the positive impact it can have on a larger, national and international, scale (Institute of International Education, 2017). There is an increasing amount of American students who choose to go abroad as the rate improved by roughly 3% from 2014/15 to 2015/16 academic calendar year, however still only about 1 out of 10 American students in their undergraduate programs participate in an abroad experience (Institute of International Education, 2017). This disconnect and lack of necessity is what stifles American students from gaining a global experience and ultimately a more globally acceptant mindset.

Additionally, the scientific paper *Study Abroad and Its Transformative Power*, written by George Fry, R. Michael Paige, Jae-Eun Jon, Jon Dillow, and Kyoung-Ah Nam, is another important source when examining the benefits of an abroad experience. The article was written to analyze both the short term and long term effects of study abroad. The article explains four core ways study abroad affects a person’s life, which includes career development, educational attainment, knowledge and skills, and basic values and world view. The research project analyzes both quantitative and qualitative impacts of studying abroad based on 648 participants coming from a variety of universities and abroad experiences. The methodology and results include data in summation of the findings along with personal stories from interviewees of the study. Participants were both surveyed and interviewed about their experience. The personal

stories allowed the statistical data to really come to life for a better explanation and understanding of the impacts of study abroad.

The research findings include that studying abroad did not necessarily help with career skills or direction for all participants, however, the overall consensus is that it gave everyone universal skills such as being able to interact with people who are different or with whom you may have nothing in common. It also gave students a better worldview and made them open to different perspectives, which are skills that helped greatly in career development. Rather than having a direct correlation, the four core dimensions intertwined in unexpected ways as many of the interviews and surveys revealed that studying abroad impacted participants to their core, which ultimately played a role in their career development, educational attainment, knowledge and skills, and basic values and world view. Participants are generally more open minded, more accepting of other cultures, and have developed and strengthened new personal skills throughout the abroad experience.

Additional findings conclude the top five themes of studying abroad to be: gaining language fluency and appreciation for other cultures, broadening one's perspectives, gaining a greater understanding of other countries, and the overall experience itself, one quoting it to be "life changing and transformative" and another stating it to be "one of the best investments [they've] ever made" (Fry, 2009, p. xiv). These real and positive experiences are enough to convince a greater population that studying abroad provides benefits for a lifetime.

As seen throughout the previous article, a combination of statistical evidence and conversations about experience have proven to be the best source of information in regards to general impact and personal benefits gained from studying abroad. It's been



important throughout my research to continually connect data with real world experiences, therefore personal explanations and stories as to why one should study abroad is vital to my research. In this way I am attempting to show how participants of study abroad experiences of any kind light up when they talk about the huge impact that studying abroad has had on their life, these stories are what gets other students and people excited about potentially venturing outside their comfort zone as well.

Moreover, one of the most well-known travelers, guidebook author and TV host for international travel, Rick Steves, can attest to the fact that gaining exposure and real experiences is what changes and inspires people. Steves works to educate people about “smart, affordable and perspective broadening travel” (Steves, 2011). Rick Steves makes the point that being abroad and learning from other cultures is uniquely beneficial on a variety of levels (Rick Steves' Europe, Inc, 2017). Rick Steves explains how traveling opens you up and gives you new perspectives, connects you with culture and people, and eliminates ethnocentricity (Steves, 2011). Becoming more open minded and gaining a new perspective on a variety of subjects enhances one’s life through expansion of thought. This expansion of thought leads to better understanding and acceptance for things, places, people, and cultures that are new and different. Through this higher thought process, understanding and acceptance, getting over the fear of differences and having the ability to deal with these things will help eliminate the ethnocentric mindset established by many Americans, simply because they have not been exposed to new and different perspectives held around the world.

With these skills, we learn how to deal with the world, accept its differences, and learn from one another in order to make our communities and our world a better place. Rick Steves discusses how this helps us better understand the “baggage” of people from

other nations, not only sympathizing with others in tragic situations, but learning to empathize with a nation and a culture by experiencing the loss or tragedy alongside each other (Steves, 2011). Steves gives the example of American “baggage” for events such as 9/11, and explains how Americans understand it so intensely while other nations do not. He suggests how similar events have impacted other nations as intensely, but there is also a lack of awareness from Americans to outside nations as well, therefore preventing nations to sympathize for one another. By taking advantage of our increasingly connected world, and taking the steps to see cultural history through a new lens, people will become more sympathetic and empathetic towards other people and other cultures. This deeper understanding will push the people of a variety of nations to work together for a greater cause, especially when tragedies impact an area. The best advice Rick Steves concludes with is to be better about taking the time to understand the world and to “celebrate the world instead of fearing its diversity” through international travel, which is a crucial point in why studying abroad is so beneficial both personally and worldwide (Steves, 2011).

Another influential advocate for abroad exposure is Fatoumata Traore, a young girl from Mali, a country in West Africa, who spent her study abroad experience in the United States living with a host family in Texas, and has done several other educational trips to countries outside her own. Fatoumata felt that going abroad opened her mind, gave her new perspectives, and changed the way she thought and interacted with the world. Fatoumata often said “in reality, I was wrong” exemplifying how her assumptions about the American culture were not true, and the only way to determine that was to experience it first hand and learn for herself; a step she took to prove the idea of understanding cultural baggage. Fatoumata is evidence that the best way to learn is

through experiences and through a broadminded perspective. She also said “it’s not just about learning for yourself but it’s also about learning for your community and your country back home” (Traore, 2014). She learned that almost all stereotypes or preconceived ideas that she had about others, and that others had about her, were proven wrong, and that her best learning about herself and the world was all outside of Mali. Fatoumata’s journey to the United States provides good reasoning for American students to step out of their comfort zone and study elsewhere in order to gain knowledge about themselves as well as to be enlightened about the realities of different parts of the world.

Throughout the formal research I conducted, the themes of a broadened perspective, a better understanding of self and the rest of the world, and overall better global awareness remain true to the impacts of studying abroad. The research displays how students who participated in an abroad experience came home changed in a positive way, returning with a better understanding of themselves and how the rest of the world works. Though bias to the impacts, I think it’s vital to see the time spent abroad provided benefits that have stuck with and made positive impacts on participants throughout their lives. It’s also important to note that there are several positive impacts the United States society gains from its citizens becoming more globally aware and accepting. Having institutions support and encourage abroad experiences from a Federal level all the way throughout each tier of education will allow for more students to be able to participate and get exposure to differences throughout our world, ultimately fostering a better national and international community.

## Interviews

In combination with outside research, I also conducted my own research to provide myself with some real and relevant experiences. I conducted one-on-one interviews in person as well as over the phone with a total of five participants, three females and two males, all roughly 30 years out from their first abroad experience. The participants attended Merrimack College, The College of the Holy Cross, Canisius College and Denison University. The participants studied abroad in European countries including the United Kingdom, France, and Spain. I asked questions in regards to overall experience in addition to other more specified skills the participants had while abroad, and if and how these experiences and skills have helped them throughout their life. All of my participants were fortunate to have traveled outside of their base location while abroad, some of the location include Ireland, Spain, Germany, Denmark, Scandinavia, UK, Italy, Berlin, and Sweden. Additionally, all of my participants agreed that the most underestimated benefit they have from their abroad experience is the positive internal impacts, which have follow them throughout their lives.

The participants were first asked about their global awareness skills before and after the abroad experience, all of whom concluded that studying abroad opened their mind to many differences in political, economic, and social systems throughout the world. All of the participants resolved that becoming more aware was the key to their success both abroad and back home. Having that initial understanding that things are not done in the same way all over the world, was something that impacted interpersonal skills in addition to interactions with community members abroad and in the United States. My participants agreed that this new awareness for their outside surrounds brought them to new conclusions about themselves and their own culture. They felt that

some of their values or beliefs may have been challenged, changed, or solidified throughout the exposure to all that was new and different to them throughout their time abroad. One participant so eloquently said that “the little awareness’s stay with you, and I wouldn’t have that if I didn’t study abroad,” exemplifying the vitality of becoming more aware both globally as well as internally with oneself (Female 1, 2016).

Many new and different things came to surprise many of the participants, which I felt I connected with throughout my time abroad as well. For instance, almost all participants were surprised at how other students and people of other countries viewed Americans. As Americans, we understand that there are some general stereotypes held about us, but being abroad really exposes those stereotypes and many other aspects of American culture that are so imbedded in our daily lives that we forget these aspects even exist. Many participants agreed that as an American, people abroad either love you or want nothing to do with you, and that is a hard feeling to swallow, but is the reality of some perceptions of American people and the influence the United States has on the rest of the world. In addition to that, the participants also agreed that they didn’t fully understand how influential the United States is in regard to our impact worldwide. One participant discusses both politics and the impact of America on the rest of the world, as the participant said “we play a big role, and I think that if more people traveled, and got out there and understood the influence and the leadership that the United States provides to the rest of the world, like it or not, I think it would make us better citizens here” providing insight on how important travel can be for an enlightened perspective on the world (Male 1, 2016).

Moreover, several participants were surprised at how engaged other students were in regards to their specific country’s politics. My participants felt like in the United

States not as many college-aged students were actually aware of what's going on in the United States, let alone other countries, whereas students of the same age in other countries were more engaged, and not afraid of discussing and standing up for or against important political issues. One participant noted "how aware people my age [were] of politics and social climate. It wasn't something I was exposed to; it really wasn't part of my thought process. It could've been part of my immaturity but growing up I didn't come from a politically charged family," and several other participants concurred that political and social engagement for young people is much different for student of other nations than it was for students in the United States (Female 2, 2016).

Another question I asked participants was about general skills they learned while abroad, the top answers being time management, crisis management and general travel skills, financial management, and the biggest skill being communication. For many participants this was their first big trip on their own and outside of the United States, and it was really a big testament to their personal survival skills. During the time these participants studied abroad, they all mentioned how important it was to be able to plan and to think on their feet if things did not go according to plan. During their time abroad cell phones, credit and debit cards, GPS navigation, and the internet were not available travel tools that many people today have the luxury of using throughout their traveling. This impacted the way these participants learned their travel skills and learned the importance of being on time in order to make flights, busses, or train rides, or for how they budgeted money over the course of several months, knowing that the money they had in their pockets was all the money they could really spend. (All mentioned traveler's checks, let's not forget about those!). The overall travel experience is much easier for travelers now, however, the general travel skills, time management, and crisis

management skills are important throughout every aspect of a persons' life, not just when traveling.

The most impactful skill my participants acquired and fervently discussed was better communication and a learned cross cultural communication. Each participant noted how important is it to be able to communicate with others who are different, and often times don't speak the same language as you, in order to have a good experience abroad. Several participants mentioned how they were lost in an unfamiliar area and felt really turned around, sometimes asking for help and being pointed in the wrong direction, therefore being able to communicate effectively across cultures was vital to survival and making it home or to their next destination on time. Communication not only boils down to the language barrier, but also connects with understanding other cultures and the meaning of interactions between people. Understanding all aspects of communication was most important for the participants. Throughout each interview, communication was a common theme and skill that participants enhanced throughout their time abroad, and continued to enhance throughout the rest of their lives.

Many of these skills can and will be discussed throughout one's education, however many of the skills are not put to the test in a realistic way, which is why studying abroad and practicing these skills can be influential to long term success and work habits of a person, especially things like cross cultural communication and understanding. When combining all of these newly learned or strengthened skills, all of the participants said that their abroad experience made them become more confident with themselves and how they portray themselves and interact with the world. One participant noted that "another thing is independence, starting to get comfortable with being uncomfortable and constantly learning new things" as a pretty important piece of

the abroad trials and tribulations (Female 3, 2016). The participants claimed to have gained “real independence” through their experiences abroad, which is what makes the experience that much more significant.

With this new-found confidence and independence, all of the participants agreed that these skills allowed them to improve their interpersonal skills, especially when dealing with co-workers, clients, or other people throughout their lives. A few participants noted that being forced to interact with people in a foreign country where you do not speak the language was really transformative. Several participants found themselves lost and looking for help or directions and had to reach out to a person on the street or in a restaurant for help. This type of interaction was naturally uncomfortable, but necessary, and all participants made the point that being uncomfortable and out of their comfort zone is when the most growth happens. The growth in interpersonal skills was also brought about through awareness of cultural differences, and becoming more comfortable in interacting with different situations. One participant noted after being abroad that you “develop the openness and appreciate different perspectives,” which has impacted the participant’s viewpoints, decisions, and interactions with the rest of the world (Female 1, 2016). Several other participants felt the same about becoming more aware of differences, and understanding that not all things are understood or done in the same way, which was very influential in the development of personal skills throughout their lives.

As I look to the future, mostly meaning my next steps after graduating, I have been curious as to what impact my abroad experience will have, and if this experience will help me start my career, so I asked the participants their thoughts on the matter. The responses were mixed in discussing whether or not the experience would set me



apart in my job application and interview process. Participants wanted to say yes, but were not entirely confident the question could be answered yes or no. Many agreed that it depends how the experience is presented, if it could be presented, and if and how the company is invested abroad or interested in traveling or international affairs of any kind. All participants agreed that it is the overall experience and the benefits from being abroad that are more influential in a job application and interview rather than just the fact a candidate traveled abroad. For instance, one participant said that “it broadens perspectives, gives you exposure, and an understanding of cultural differences. Now more than ever, with everything being so global and the global economy, that exposure makes you appreciate and understand everything in the bigger world,” in discussing the importance and the impact an abroad experience can have on a soon to be college graduate looking to start real life (Male 2, 2016). An abroad experience helps young people understand and appreciate the world in a different way, and with a bigger lens. Having an abroad experience can be influential in one’s career, as much as the candidate makes it so. What I understood from my participants is that if nothing was gained, no new exposure or new knowledge from being abroad, then the answer is no, the experience will not be beneficial for you when looking jobs or determining a career path. However, if you have gained exposure to different cultures and ways of life, awareness of differences throughout diverse communities, and a new appreciation for all these variances throughout the world and back in your home community, then absolutely an abroad experience can set you apart, and help you be more personally developed and able to deal with a larger variety of people.

After asking my selfish question, I asked participants if they had kids or younger family members if they would encourage these young people to go abroad. Everyone

agreed they would, and do, encourage young people to gain exposure to differences throughout the world, however, almost all participants were hesitant on sending their loved ones overseas. Given the climate and tensions at home and abroad, many participants felt that when they had studied abroad it was a much safer place, despite not having as much technology. That is not to start a debate on whether the world is more or less safe in the current times, however it is to highlight that through globalization and advancements in technology, the world is so much more connected, making it much easier to be informed about national and international affairs. Despite the participants' hesitations, recognizing their worries are only out of love, all participants agreed that gaining exposure abroad was one of the best things for them in order to become more aware and understanding to the world around them. As one participant passionately said,

*“I think you learn more in a week abroad than you do in a whole semester at college. It’s an intimate kind of learning, but it’s a learning that stays with you for the rest of your life. And it’s a big push, and its expensive as well, but if you can manage it, you’re never the same afterwards. There’s so many positive things, you learn so much about yourself and your country and the world, and you’ll know what you don’t know through this experience, you come back changed. When you think about living life fully, what better way than to do this (study abroad) while you’re young, to return and make sure you live your life fully” (Male 1, 2016).*

This participant emphasizes the true value in studying abroad and gaining exposure while at a younger age. All of the participants felt very strongly about going abroad if

possible and if not, finding other ways to get involved and connect with people, communities, and cultures unlike your own.

All things considered, I do not want to downplay the struggles of being abroad, but rather I want to highlight how the uncomfortable moments that feel like a big crisis are really what make the experience so intense, intimate, and unlike anything else in the most positive ways. One of the best answers I received from all participants was how the process and experience was a humbling process. Though intimidated, uncomfortable, and exposed as an American throughout their time abroad, all of my participants found that being out of their comfort zone was ultimately what made them want to learn and grow into a more aware and connected person. Through the difficult moments as well as the most rewarding moments, being abroad is a learning process that broadens your perspectives, provides you the opportunity to gain a truer understanding of other countries and cultures, allows you to gain a new perspective on the political, economic and social elements of other countries, and increases your awareness of the United States and its worldwide influence and impact. Lastly, but most importantly, studying abroad will allow you to learn about yourself in ways you least expected, which makes this experience invaluable for the rest of your life.

### Conclusion

Remember when I asked you to think of a time you felt silly for instantly regretting a decision that turned out to be great? Reflecting back on what I have accomplished during and after my study abroad experience, I often smile at my feelings of instant regret when I arrived abroad. Being abroad allowed me to grow, change, and be educated and exposed to many new, challenging, beautiful, and rewarding experiences and friendships I would not have had if I never traveled. The research I conducted made

me feel less silly about my initial feelings of being scared and uncomfortable, as many of the other participants had similar feelings upon arrival too. All along I knew there had to be a greater purpose for studying abroad, and that greater purpose was to make me a better version of me. It's nearly impossible to describe the feeling to someone who hasn't experienced it, but through my research I have demonstrated that studying abroad isn't just a five-month vacation away from reality, but the most positively impactful experience of a lifetime.

Gaining exposure to other countries and cultures is vital to personal growth and development as well as to national growth, development, and understanding, to make our global space a real global community. The best personal lifelong benefits are a newly gained strength of independence, self-awareness, confidence, maturity, and more defined personal values. Understanding cultural differences, cultural baggage, a new language and type of communication, gaining travel skills, learning how to manage yourself in a crisis, becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable, learning for yourself and for your community back home, smashing stereotypes and being exposed to a world and life outside your own are only a few of the incredible things you will learn abroad and carry with you everywhere you go. You are able to see and experience places, people, and cultures that you have only read about in textbooks. You will gain and improve your ability to understand and evaluate yourself and your own culture in order to enhance and solidify personal knowledge, beliefs, and values. All of these things will make you a better version of yourself, which is why studying abroad is so vital in the development of American students.

Global awareness and acceptance of cultures that differ from our own, is our generation's greatest challenge as the lack of acceptance to diversity is what drives

nations apart. Therefore, stepping out into a world only read about in books creates a powerful opportunity for positive change. Studying abroad is an investment you make on yourself due to all of the risks and rewards accompanied by the experience, but an investment experience that is well worth it all.

I have spent much time reading, studying, researching, and personally reflecting on my own experience. The more I talk about it (sorry friends who have heard enough), the more I realize I am so different and that I am much better as a person than I was before I went abroad. Reading different professional journals and articles and speaking with other professionals about the impact of gaining exposure abroad has reminded me how unique, and how essential, the experience has been to my overall well-being. I can conclude by telling you that going abroad is the best, most challenging and rewarding experience you will ever have. You will be changed for the better. No matter how difficult, fun, terrible or fantastic being out of your comfort zone may be, it is all worth it.

To put it briefly, studying abroad is like entering a world that isn't yours and making it your own. The research I've done throughout this project has shown a bright light on the lifelong benefits of studying abroad. It has provided me with the power to believe in myself and the overwhelmingly positive impacts that the giant leap of faith I took one semester has had on my life. My advice – go abroad. As William Hoffa said in *A History of Study Abroad*, all travel "has educational potential, whatever its inspiration and purpose. What and how much is learned, however, depends greatly on how open the traveler is to what the road offers" (William W. Hoffa, 2010).

So, do yourself a favor and go book yourself a ticket to enter a new world.

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