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Long-Term Effects of a Short-Term Study Abroad on Mindset

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An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders

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There are many reasons why individuals decide to attend college. Institutions around the world offer a multitude of involvement opportunities in order to encourage students to attend their university and to enhance the college experience. One of the opportunities that most institutions offer is some form of study abroad. At Illinois State University (ISU), there is an array of study abroad options. As a part of the university's strategic plan, ISU created seven core values, three of which can be directly related to studying abroad (Illinois State University, 2018). These three core values include diversity and inclusion, civic engagement, and respect (Illinois State University, 2018). ISU believes that there are many advantages to studying abroad. Aside from earning academic credits, enrolling in this type of program offers exposure to an array of different languages, cultures, and people. ISU also advertises that studying abroad can help students gain important life skills, such as confidence, independence, and intercultural communication (Study Abroad Illinois State University, 2019).

One study abroad program offered by ISU is through the Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) department. The department offers a short-term study abroad experience once a year to undergraduate and graduate students. Those who enroll in this program receive credit towards their degree and a CSD clinical experience while abroad. This program has been available to students for the past 6 years and has received a number of participants from students within the CSD department. This may be particularly beneficial for these CSD students as the goals of the study abroad experience align with vital skills of being a competent speech-language pathologist (SLP). Harbers and Friberg (2019) indicated that valuing cultural and linguistic differences, being open-minded, positive, and adaptive are some examples of those vital skills.

Any study abroad experience offers individuals the opportunity to learn about cultural awareness and competence, as well as identify and address their own cultural biases (Eckert,

Luqmani, Newell, Quraeshi, & Wagner, 2013). These experiences also allow students the chance to grow in self-identity and acceptance (Eckert et al., 2013). Study abroad trips provide intellectually stimulating experiences that may encourage a person's future travel (Eckert et al., 2013). Historically, college students have been attracted to long-term study abroad programs because of their many benefits; however, short-term study abroad programs are rapidly becoming more popular as their benefits have become known in research (Donnelly-Smith, L., 2009). A short-term study abroad program can be described as anything shorter than the traditional semester- or year-long program (Donnelly-Smith, L., 2009). Its length ranges from 1 to 8 weeks, often led by faculty from a department within an institution (Donnelly-Smith, L., 2009). Donnelly-Smith (2009) found that most individuals who complete a short-term study abroad experience rather than long-term do so for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include affordability, concerns with the commitment to a longer study abroad experience, and the ability to keep up with course requirements in order to graduate at their desired time.

According to Dweck (2016), a mindset is a self-perception that an individual has about themselves; it is a way of thinking about one's capabilities. A mindset may change depending on different life events that a person may experience. One's mindset can be placed somewhere on a continuum, from fixed to growth. A fixed mindset is when individuals believe that their qualities and abilities are what they were born with and what will carry them through a life of fulfillment and success (Dweck, 2016). Those with a fixed mindset rarely accept change. On the contrary, a growth mindset is when an individual believes that their qualities and abilities can be improved upon through effort and attitude. They believe that the abilities they were born with are just the starting points of what they are capable of (Dweck, 2016). Study abroad experiences (both short-

and long-term) have the potential to shift one's mindset from fixed to growth or to expand one's growth mindset even further.

The following literature review will examine 10 studies. The first section will discuss one study regarding common personality traits that practicing SLPs and SLP graduate students possess. The next section will review four studies about studying abroad. The final section will summarize four studies about the impact of mindset on life experiences and one study on how a growth mindset may potentially affect a study abroad experience.

Literature Review

Personalities of SLPs and SLP Students

A study conducted by Baggs (2013) sought to examine the personality types of speech-language pathology graduate students and whether those traits have changed over time. The study used 320 first year SLP graduate students enrolled at six different universities from the southern parts of the United States. Information about personalities was obtained by having the participants complete the 70-question *Keirsey Temperament Sorter II* (KTS II). The KTS II uses the Jungian characteristic traits to describe personality types of individuals: extraversion-introversion (E-I), sensing-intuitive (S-N), thinking-feeling (T-F), and judging-perceiving (J-P).

The results of the study revealed that more than half (52%) of the participants were considered extraversion, sensing, feeling, and judging (ESFJ) or introversion, sensing, feeling, and judging (ISFJ), with the majority of these being ESFJ. Sensing-judging was the most common 2-part combination, with intuitive-feeling as the second most common. According to the Keirsey (n.d.), there are six major characteristics that make up an ESFJ. Those include integrous, providing, sociable, caring, procedural, and collaborating.

Studying Abroad

Carley and Tudor (2006) examined the perceptions individuals had about studying abroad before and after traveling and how their perceptions changed following the experience. The study included 41 undergraduate college students between the ages of 22 and 48. Of the 41 participants, 29 of them were females. The study abroad trip was the first time 39 of the participants had traveled to Mexico; only two were fluent Spanish speakers. There was also a control group of 79 upper-classmen undergraduate college students enrolled in a marketing course. Both groups completed a quantitative and qualitative questionnaire regarding their perceptions about Mexico. The traveling group completed it twice: prior to traveling and upon return. The control group completed the same survey only once following the return of the traveling group. Each participant completed a 15-question survey where they were asked to respond using a 7-point rating scale. They also responded to one open-ended question asking respondents to describe their thoughts and perceptions in greater detail.

Several findings came from this study. The first finding was that the short-term (2 week) study abroad experience to Mexico was influential on student's perceptions about the country. Based on the feedback given during the qualitative portion of the pre-questionnaire, respondents traveling to Mexico showed a somewhat higher level of positive regard for Mexican culture than the control group did. Differences between the control group and traveling group before travel were less significant than differences within the traveling group pre- and post-travel. The findings indicated that students returned from their study abroad experience with greater understanding and appreciation for Mexican culture than the control group. Finally, it was found that the traveling participants were able to make connections and relate American and Mexican

culture and people, whereas those in the control group did not have the opportunity to do the same.

Another study evaluating short-term study abroad experiences was conducted by Gaia (2015). The purpose of the study was to understand what changes occurred as a result of a short-term study abroad experience, specifically one that was faculty-led and was 2-to-3 weeks in length. There were 136 (48 males, 86 females, and 2 unidentified) participants selected from a private college in Virginia. The *Global Perspectives Inventory* (GPI) was administered online 3 months prior to their departure and again within a 2-week time frame upon return. Three major domains were targeted in this 40-item instrument: cognition, intrapersonal skills, and interpersonal skills. Cognition questions concentrated on the students' perceptions about cultural differences and the value of understanding them. Intrapersonal skills related to identity and the affects someone has on their own life. Interpersonal skills asked questions about social responsibility and interaction. Questions were to be answered by participants by selecting a response on a 5-point range Likert scale.

Overall, it was found that the participants of this study increased in all areas of the GPI as a result of the short-term faculty-led study abroad program; however, only two of the three major domains were found to be statistically significant: cognition and interpersonal skills. The findings indicated that cognition, related to cultural differences and understanding, increased most as a result of the short-term program when considering what knowledge a person had about other cultures. Participants also displayed an increase in self-identity and perceptions as they related to intrapersonal skills. There was only a slight increase, however, in cultural sensitivity and interaction with other cultures pertaining to interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, a study by Nguyen (2017) assessed whether college students' intercultural competence was affected by completing a short-term study abroad experience and if so, how. Eight different short-term study abroad programs by three different universities in the state of Texas across a 9-month period of time were used for this study. The participants of this survey were undergraduate students, with the exception of one graduate student, and were enrolled in a non-language learning short-term study abroad program of 8 weeks or less. The study had a total of 55 participants that completed the online *Intercultural Effectiveness Scale* (IES) questionnaire before their study abroad trip, immediately after it, and then, 3 months following the trip. The IES was comprised of 60 questions covering three major components of intercultural competence: continuous learning, interpersonal engagement, and hardiness. Each component was made up of two competencies. Continuous learning contained the competencies of self-awareness and exploration. Interpersonal engagement included global mindset and relationship interest. Hardiness involved the competencies of positive regard and emotional resilience.

Overall, results of the IES indicated that as a group, intercultural competence increased from pre-travel to post-travel. The average score of the IES was equally as high immediately post-travel as it was 3 months later. Results showed that the highest scoring major component on the IES was continuous learning, in which participants were most competent immediately post-travel as compared to pre-travel and the follow up. Within this component, participant exploration was highest immediately post-travel, whereas self-awareness was highest 3 months following the experience. Of the two, exploration had a highest overall competence among participants. The lowest scoring major component was hardiness, averaging its highest score during the 3 month follow up as compared to pre-travel and post-travel. It contained the competencies of positive regard and emotional resilience, which had similar scores throughout

all three assessment periods and ranked the highest during the 3 month follow up assessment. Interpersonal skills, involving the competencies of global mindset and relationship interest, averaged the same score immediately post-travel and 3 months later, whereas its lowest average was during the pre-travel assessment. The averages of global mindset and relationship interest were significantly different throughout all three assessment periods. Global mindset scored highest immediately post-travel and relationship interest scored highest during the 3 month follow up.

Another study conducted by Cheng (2013) examined what college students think the value of studying abroad short-term is, and if and how those values guide their decisions in following through with enrollment in such program. It also evaluated what the most common countries to study abroad in would be if students were given the choice. This study included participants from eight major Hong Kong institutions. It began with an initial interview in which 12 individuals, who had previously studied abroad, volunteered to participate in. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. A 17-item questionnaire was then administered to 146 student participants in which they were asked to answer using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire included items regarding the respondents' demographic information, as well as their perceived values of short-term study abroad programs. Most of the participants were between the ages of 20 and 24 and were undergraduate students. A follow-up interview was conducted with the same 12 participants in order to gather more in-depth opinions about short-term study abroad programs based on the information that was given in the initial interview and the questionnaire.

Results indicated that the respondents of the questionnaire found the greatest advantage of enrolling in a short-term study abroad program to be personal development. Specifically, they felt that they were able to broaden their horizons and become more independent. They also noted

that they would be more likely to travel again in the future. Results from both the initial and follow-up interview were consistent with the results from the questionnaire responses. Six of the interview participants found that studying abroad helped them broaden their horizon, while four felt that studying abroad made them more independent, and two found that it did both. The majority of the participants indicated that the United States and the United Kingdom were the two most common locations they would like to study abroad in. Participants did not find academics or professional development to be greatly impacted by enrolling in a short-term study abroad program.

Growth Mindset

Paul, Meyskens, and Robbins (2011) conducted a study that evaluated the relationship between social responsibility and cross-cultural sensitivity in global corporations. The participants of this study were undergraduate college students enrolled in business courses at two large public universities in Southeastern United States, all of whom had previous work experiences and were seeking employment with global corporations in the future. The demographic characteristics of the 433 participants indicated a diverse group of individuals, including those whose first language was not English, who lived outside of the United States for at least 6 years, or had at least one parent who was born outside of the United States. All participants completed a two-part survey developed by the researchers. The first part of the survey used the *Employee Sensitivity to Corporate Social Performance* (ESCSP), a 5-point Likert scale, to determine how much employees felt socially responsible to corporate expectations. Questions of the ESCSP targeted three main factors: socially responsible companies, job preferences, and discrimination. The *Cross-Cultural Sensitivity* (CCS) scale, also

a 5-point Likert scale, evaluated each participant's openness and sensitivity to new cultures. The CCS targeted three main factors, including interests, activities, and experience.

Results of the study showed an overall significant relationship between social responsibility and cross-cultural sensitivity. The study found significant relationships between multiple factors of the ESCSP and the CCS. All three factors of the ESCSP and the experience factor of the CCS were significantly related, as was the relationship between job preferences in the ESCSP and activities in the CCS. A significant relationship was found between two of the ESCSP factors (socially responsible companies and discrimination) and the interests factor of the CCS. This study also found that women were significantly more sensitive to factors of job preferences and discrimination when considering social performance as compared to men. Additionally, women had significantly higher scores than men on the activities factor of the CCS. No significance was found between the ESCSP factors and a person's first language and political beliefs; however, there was a strong correlation between political views and interest levels of cross-cultural sensitivity. Those with more conservative views were less likely to live, travel, or work outside of the United States. The length of time a person had previously lived outside of the United States had a significant impact on the job preferences factor of the ESCSP, indicating that those who lived 10 or more years in another country were more likely to consider job preferences when evaluating a company. Finally, it was found that scores in all factors of the CCS were significantly lower in Native English speakers than in those whose first language was not English.

Mindset in the workplace was further explored by Caniëls, Semeijn, and Renders (2017) studied the relationship between proactive personalities, mindsets, and transformational leadership and how those relationships may influence an employee's engagement in the

workplace. A four-part questionnaire was created and distributed to all contracted employees of a high-tech organization. Only 259 of the 731 questionnaires delivered were used as a part of this study. Of those 259 respondents, 30 were female, while the rest were male. As a collective group, the average age was 49 years with an average tenure of 18.5 years.

The four-part questionnaire was divided to evaluate levels of work engagement, proactive personalities, transformational leadership, and mindset. Levels of work engagement were assessed by nine questions. Respondents could answer these questions on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Proactive personalities were then evaluated using 10 items, also on a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Transformational leadership was measured by the use of 15 questions with responses ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). Finally, mindset was judged by three items with responses ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). These specific questions were developed to measure a fixed mindset, therefore, the higher the number, the greater the growth mindset of the respondent.

The results of the survey indicated that engagement in the workplace was higher when the leadership style matched the mindset of the individual employee. A proactive personality and transformational leadership had a positive impact on employee engagement in the workplace. Growth mindset alone was not found to significantly impact engagement in the workplace. The researchers discovered that, for those with a growth mindset, a proactive personality was more likely to affect engagement in the workplace when transformational leadership was high. Those with a fixed mindset did not display higher levels of proactive personality and engagement when transformational leadership was high. On the contrary, if transformational leadership was low, those with a fixed mindset were more likely to display a proactive personality and engagement in the workplace.

The relationship between mindset and personality traits was also examined by Mofield and Parker Peters (2018) who conducted a study to compare mindset, perfectionism, and achievement attitudes of typical, advanced, and gifted middle school students. Typical students were considered to be those who performed academically at the same rate as their same age peers, whereas advanced students were those who performed above average on most academic tasks. Gifted students were considered those who were performing significantly above their academic grade level and not only compared to their same age peers, but above those older in age. The study had the participation of 416 public middle school students between grades 6 through 8 from a suburban southeast area of the United States. There were 86 typical student participants, 66 advanced student participants, and 264 considered gifted.

The students completed three surveys. The first was the *Mindset Assessment Profile Tool* that included four growth mindset questions and four counterpart questions based on a fixed mindset. This survey gathered data about the students' thoughts regarding intelligence, effort, mistakes, and learning. The second was the *Goals and Work Habits Survey* (GWHS) which assessed perfectionism in each of the participants. The GWHS contained a total of 25 questions, some of which concentrated on mistakes whereas others were concerned with organization, doubts, and personal standards. The third was the *School Attitudes Assessment Survey-Revised* (SAAS-R), which required 35 responses in order to determine whether or not students were susceptible to feelings of underachievement. There were five segments to the SASS-R: (1) self-perceptions of academics, (2) attitude toward teachers, (3) attitude toward school, (4) values of goals, and (5) motivation and self-regulation.

Results of the *Mindset Assessment Profile Tool* survey displayed no significant impact on growth mindset, fixed mindset, or concern over mistakes by typical, advanced, or gifted students.

Results of the GWHS showed a significant impact on personal standards by advanced and gifted students. It was found that organization was higher in advanced students than in gifted and typical students. Results from the SAAS-R survey indicated higher academic self-perception in gifted students as compared to their peers in the advanced and typical student groups. Where a fixed mindset was related to concern for mistakes, a growth mindset was related to personal standards, organization, and attitudes about self-perception, teachers, school, goals, and motivation.

Another study conducted by Rhew, Piro, Goolkasian, and Cosentino (2018) sought to determine whether or not middle school special education students' self-efficacy and motivation to read would improve as a result of a growth mindset intervention. This study was made up of 68 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade special education students coming from urban school districts in western Connecticut. Of the 68 participants, approximately half of them were considered economically disadvantaged students. These students were divided into two groups: a control group and a treatment group. The treatment group included 21 male and 19 female students, whereas the control group included 12 male and 16 female students.

Two measurements were used to evaluate students' self-efficacy and motivation to read: *The Reader Self-Perception Scale 2nd Edition* (RSPS-2) and the *Motivation for Reading Questionnaire* (MRQ). All students completed these measures after which the treatment group received the growth mindset intervention (i.e., a program that helps students develop a growth mindset). The treatment group completed an online program called Brainology 5 days a week for 10 weeks during a regular class period. During this same time period, the control group attended the regular class period with no additional training on mindset. At the conclusion of the 10-week intervention period, both groups were re-evaluated.

The findings of this study revealed that motivation to read in middle school special education students improved as a result of the growth mindset intervention, whereas self-efficacy did not. The results of the RSPS-2 revealed no significant differences between groups for self-efficacy related to reading. The MRQ pretreatment test found no significant differences between groups on motivation to read. The MRQ post-treatment test revealed that motivation to read was higher in the treatment group than the control group following growth mindset intervention.

Additionally, Kehl and Morris (2008) conducted a study to compare the mindsets between three groups of college students, including (1) those who were planning to complete a study abroad program in the future; (2) those who had already completed one of 8 or less weeks; and (3) those who had already completed one lasting an entire semester. In addition to examining differences in demographic information of the participants, this study compared the global mindedness between participant groups. The first comparison was between individuals who had previously studied abroad for 8 or less weeks to those who had not yet studied abroad. Those who had studied abroad for a semester and those who had not yet studied abroad were also analyzed. The study also compared the groups that had both completed a study abroad program. The study was comprised of 520 students from higher education institutions. All participants completed the 30-item *Global-Mindedness Scale* assessment, which gathered information about each participant's thoughts and opinions regarding global mindedness.

Results of the study revealed significant differences in gender, age, classification, and ethnicity. Lower levels of global mindedness were found in women as compared to men and in students coming from families that have parental income of more than \$100,000. Results also indicated no significant differences in global mindedness between individuals who had previously studied abroad for 8 or less weeks and those who had not yet studied abroad. Higher

levels of global mindedness were found between those who had studied abroad for a semester and those who had not yet studied abroad, as well as between both groups that had completed a study abroad program.

Conclusion

Overall, research confirmed that SLP students showed personal characteristics of being caring, collaborative, and giving (Baggs, 2013). Additionally, being open-minded and sensitive were found to be important for future SLPs to have in order to be culturally and linguistically competent (Harbers and Friberg, 2019). Research also showed that studying abroad can improve personal development and cultural competence, specifically related to self-awareness, self-identify, and independence (Carley & Tudor, 2006; Gaia, 2015; Nguyen, 2017; Cheng, 2013). Further research concluded that mindset can be measured across the lifespan and may change depending on life circumstances (Paul, Meyskens, & Robbins, 2011; Caniëls, Semeijn, & Renders, 2017; Mofield & Parker Peters, 2018; Rhew, Piro, Goolkasian, & Cosentino, 2018; Kehl & Morris, 2008). The research explored mindset across a wide range of individuals, including school aged children, college aged students, and working professionals (Paul, Meyskens, & Robbins, 2011; Caniëls, Semeijn, & Renders, 2017; Mofield & Parker Peters, 2018; Rhew, Piro, Goolkasian, & Cosentino, 2018; Kehl & Morris, 2008). As a result of a growth mindset, children tended to have higher levels of motivation, organization, personal standards, and self-perception (Mofield & Parker Peters, 2018; Rhew, Piro, Goolkasian, & Cosentino, 2018). College aged students were more likely to take a growth mindset perspective as a result of studying abroad (Paul, Meyskens, & Robbins, 2011; Kehl & Morris, 2008). Working professionals were more inclined to take a growth mindset perspective when

considering job opportunities and professional interactions, in addition to a higher level of engagement in their work (Caniëls, Semeijn, & Renders, 2017).

Based on the presented research, there appears to be a number of benefits to support a short-term study abroad experience; however, minimal research has concentrated on the long-term effects of an individual's mindset as a result of these experiences. These long-term effects may differ depending on an individual's mindset prior to studying abroad and immediately after studying abroad. It is also unknown if a study abroad experience would change an individual's mindset about traveling again in the future. This study aims to determine the long-term effects of a short-term study abroad experience on SLP students.

Method

Participants

Potential participants of this study were individuals who were enrolled in a short-term study abroad experience with the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) at Illinois State University (ISU) within the past 6 years. While most participants were students of ISU, some were enrolled at other institutions, including Eastern Illinois University and University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. All participants were 18 years of age or older. Additionally, each potential participant was a member of one of six private Facebook groups that was created and maintained to facilitate communication before, during, and after the study abroad experience.

Instrument

A 14-item online survey was created through ISU's Qualtrics software. The survey was comprised of three demographic related questions, 10 Likert scale questions, and one open-ended question. The three demographic questions were designed to understand the population of the participants. The Likert scale and open-ended questions were designed to gather insight of the perceived effects of a short-term study abroad experience on a person's mindset. They were divided into three sections. Each section was introduced by a prompt. The 10 Likert scale questions assessed the likelihood of the participants to do something based on their study abroad experiences that were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from extremely likely to not at all likely. The open-ended question allowed participants to express their thoughts about their personal study abroad experiences and how it impacted their mindset post-travel. The participants were encouraged, but not required, to answer all 14 items.

One of the three demographic questions introduced the survey. A prompt was then provided to the participants to introduce the first set of Likert scale questions. These questions assessed the likelihood of participants to do something now that they had participated in a short-term study abroad experience. This section contained three questions based on a growth mindset and one question based on a fixed mindset. The remaining two demographic questions were asked between the two sets of Likert scale questions. Another prompt then introduced the second set of Likert scale questions which assessed the likelihood of the participants to do something if they were to go on another study abroad trip or travel again. This section contained four questions based on a growth mindset and two questions based on a fixed mindset. See Appendix A for the complete survey.

Procedure

Permission was granted by the creators of the six private Facebook pages for the student researcher to post a letter and link to the online ISU Qualtrics survey on each page. The letter included information regarding the purpose of the survey, the form in which the survey would be available, as well as the approximate time it would take to complete the survey. Potential participants were then invited to complete the survey. It was indicated in the letter that the survey would be completely anonymous and voluntary. A link to the survey was provided at the end of the letter. Participants were given a total of 6 weeks to complete the survey. After week 5, the letter was reposted to each private Facebook page as a reminder to complete the survey if desired. Potential participants were informed that the survey would be closing 1 week following the repost. Individuals provided consent to participate in the study by completing some or all of the survey. Those who did not wish to participate did not complete the survey at all or to completion. See Appendix B for the initial and secondary posts.

Data Analysis

Responses to survey items were collected electronically through the Qualtrics software. The total number of participants responding to each question was provided and percentages for each individual response were obtained. Responses to the open-ended question were analyzed using a content analysis to expose themes that were discussed among the participants. Themes emerged from the 19 provided responses, some of which appeared to have multiple themes in a single response. After each response was thoroughly evaluated, themes were compiled into a table indicating the frequency in which each theme emerged among the responses.

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the long-term effects on mindset of individuals who participated in a short-term study abroad experience in the past 6 years with the ISU CSD department. The 14-item online Qualtrics survey evaluated participant's demographic information, the likelihood of them to do something following their study abroad experience and if they were to travel abroad again, as well as their insights about their experiences. The survey was opened by 35 individuals of which 34 responded to the first question asking if they were currently enrolled as a student. The majority of the survey was completed by 29 respondents.

Demographic Information

Three questions on the survey were used to determine the demographic information of the respondents. The first question asked if respondents were currently students. The majority ($n = 23$) of the 34 respondents reported that they were not. When respondents ($n = 29$) were asked if they had traveled outside of the United States since their short-term study abroad experience, more than half (52%) indicated that they had. Based on their responses to this question, participants were prompted with an additional question asking the approximate number of times they had traveled outside of the United States since their study abroad trip. Eleven (65%) of the 17 respondents reported that they had done so at least once or twice. The remaining six respondents reported that they had traveled outside of the United States since their study-abroad experience three or more times.

Likelihood to Do Something After a Study Abroad Experience

Four questions on the survey were used to determine how likely participants were to do something as a result their short-term study abroad. The distribution of these responses are displayed in Figures 1 through 4. The first question asked respondents how likely they would be

to persevere through personal challenges following their study abroad experience. Of the 29 participant responses, all but two indicated that they were somewhat or extremely likely to do so (see Figure 1). The remaining two respondents reported that it would depend on the context of the situation. Respondents were then asked to rate how likely they would be, following their study abroad experience, to persevere through professional challenges. Twenty-five (89%) of the 28 respondents specified that they were somewhat or extremely likely to persevere through professional challenges, while two reported that it would depend on the context of the situation and one indicated that they were not very likely to do so (see Figure 2).

Figure 3 displays participant responses regarding how likely they would be to view failure as a negative (mistake) now that they have completed a short-term study abroad trip. While two said that they were somewhat likely to view failure as a negative, the majority ($n = 19$) of the 29 respondents reported that they were not at all or not very likely to do so. An additional eight respondents indicated that it would depend on the context of the situation. When asked how likely respondents were to set a goal and stick with it until it was achieved, the majority (97%) of the 29 respondents indicated that they were somewhat or extremely likely to do so. While only one respondent reported that it would depend on the context of the situation, none of the respondents to this item indicated that they were not at all or not very likely to set a goal and stick with it until it was achieved (see Figure 4).

Likelihood to Do Something When Traveling Again

Six questions on the survey were used to determine how likely participants would be to do something if they were to ever travel abroad again. The distribution of these responses are displayed in Figures 5 through 10. When asked how likely respondents ($n = 29$) would be to give up when faced with a challenge, all but two respondents (93%) reported that they were not at all

or not very likely to do so. Only two respondents indicated that they would be extremely likely to give up when faced with a challenge (see Figure 5). When respondents were asked to evaluate how likely they would be to do something outside of their comfort zone if they were to travel abroad again, all but one of the 29 respondents indicated that they were somewhat or extremely likely to go out of their comfort zone. The one respondent reported that it would depend on the context of the situation (see Figure 6).

Respondents were asked to report how likely they would be to do something alone if they were to travel abroad again. The majority ($n = 21$) of the 29 respondents indicated that they were somewhat or extremely likely to do so, while six reported that it would depend on the context of the situation. Only two respondents stated that they were not at all or not very likely to do something alone if they were to travel abroad again (see Figure 7). Additionally, respondents were asked how likely they would be to avoid a situation if they had to do it alone in their future travels. Seventeen (59%) of the 29 respondents indicated that they were not at all or not very likely to avoid a situation if they had to do it alone. Ten respondents indicated that it would depend on the context of the situation and two respondents said that they would be somewhat likely to do so (see Figure 8).

Figure 9 shows the results of the respondents being asked how likely they would be to educate themselves about a culture before traveling in their future. Twenty-six (90%) of the 29 respondents reported that they were somewhat or extremely likely to do so while the remaining three respondents indicated that it would depend on the context of the situation. Respondents were then asked how likely they would be to notice cultural differences around them when traveling abroad again. The majority (97%) of the 29 respondents stated that they were

somewhat or extremely likely to notice these differences while only one respondent indicated that it would depend on the context of the situation (see Figure 10).

Open-ended Question Content Analysis

Participants were offered the opportunity to provide insight about their personal study abroad experiences and the impact it had on their mindset post-travel by answering the open-ended question: how has the study abroad experiences changed you? Over half (66%) of the 29 respondents provided their thoughts and opinions to the question. A total of six themes emerged from the analysis of the 19 responses. The two with the highest frequency of occurrence in responses ($n = 10$) was awareness of culture and going outside comfort zones. Additionally, increased independence, greater confidence, and overall positive change was reported by the respondents. The willingness to try new things was mentioned in three of the 19 (16%) responses. The distribution of these themes is displayed in Appendix C.

Discussion

This study sought to examine the long-term effects on mindset following a short-term study abroad experience. Potential participants of this study were those who completed a short-term study abroad program through the ISU CSD department in the past 6 years. These individuals were past or present students of ISU, Eastern Illinois University, and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. The student researcher asked potential participants to voluntarily complete a 14-item online survey using ISU Qualtrics software. A letter was posted to six private Facebook pages that were created in order to maintain communication before, during, and after the study abroad experience. The majority of the survey was completed by 29 participants. Respondents answered questions about their demographic information, their likelihood to do something after studying abroad, and their likelihood to do something if they were to ever travel again. Each question was designed based on a growth or fixed mindset. They also answered one open-ended question in which they were able to share deeper insight about their study abroad experiences. Results of the Likert scale questions were analyzed using the ISU Qualtrics software, whereas the open-ended question responses were examined by completing a content analysis. This study resulted in three major findings, all leaning toward a growth mindset perspective. It appeared that the students were more open to new experiences after studying abroad. Their experiences abroad also allowed them to take a more open approach to managing different situations when traveling again. All themes consistent with a growth mindset emerged when the participants were asked how they have changed as a result of their study abroad experience.

When asked how likely they would be to do something following their short-term study abroad experience, participants responded indicating that they were more open-minded to

experiences following their study abroad. For example, most of the participants indicated they are more likely now to persevere through personal and professional challenges as a result of their short-term study abroad experience. Each question in this section of the survey was written in a growth or fixed mindset point of view. Regardless of the way these questions were portrayed, results showed that the majority of participants answered with a growth mindset perspective. Based on these results, it is likely that their study abroad experiences positively impacted the perceptions participants had about themselves, different cultures, and diverse populations. These findings support the outcomes from the Carley and Tudor (2006) study, which found that studying abroad increased participant perceptions about a country's culture and people, resulting in higher levels of understanding and appreciation. Similar to Carley and Tudor (2006), this study supports the findings from Gaia (2015), who found that a faculty-led short-term study abroad increased student's cultural sensitivity and understanding. Although, the present study's findings did not support the Cheng (2013) study. While the current study found that professional development increased due to a short-term study abroad program, the Cheng (2013) study found that participants did not believe a short-term study abroad program impacted their academic or professional development.

Another finding of the current study is that the majority of participants responded to questions regarding their likelihood to do something when traveling again in the future with a growth mindset perspective. The adoption of a growth mindset in future travels may be contributed to their mindset immediately following their short-term study abroad experiences. Results of the Nguyen (2017) study indicated that participants of a short-term study abroad experience showed the largest amount of intercultural competence, self-awareness, and relationship building skills 3 months following their study abroad experiences. The present study

supports these findings by acknowledging that a growth mindset, which include aspects of intercultural competence, self-awareness, and relationship building skills, would be embraced when doing something in future travels. Based on the results of Cheng (2013), the current study supports the finding that students who had already completed a short-term study abroad experience were more likely to travel again in the future. This study does not support the Kehl and Morris (2008) study that found no significant differences in global mindedness between those who have and have not studied abroad.

Finally, six themes transpired as a result of the responses to the open-ended question of the survey. These themes included awareness of culture, going outside comfort zones, more independence, greater confidence, overall positive change, and willingness to try new things. It was concluded that the themes were associated with a growth mindset. This is significant as it implies that the mindset of those who participated in a short-term study abroad program with the ISU CSD department were potentially impacted in a positive way. The present finding largely supports Cheng (2013) in that studying abroad short-term improved the personal development of participants, specifically with broadening their horizons and becoming more independent. Additionally, the current finding supports the result that a short-term study abroad experience improved self-identity, as indicated in the Gaia (2015) study. The present finding is not consistent with the Rhew, Piro, Goolkasian, and Cosentino (2018) study, which found that self-efficacy did not increase as a result of a growth mindset perspective. The present study found that greater confidence in one's abilities was a significant result of both a growth mindset and a short-term study abroad program.

Limitations

While there were three major findings of the present study, there were four major limitations. One drawback of this study was that it evaluated the perceptions of individuals that enrolled in one or more of the six study abroad opportunities through the ISU CSD department. All six experiences took place in different locations around the world. This could have impacted the type of responses that participants of the study provided. As a result of each location offering different experiences during the trip, the impact on participants' likelihood to do something following a study abroad experience or in future travels likely varied and may have impacted the results of the study. Additionally, participants of the current study may have only been ones that had a positive study abroad experience. This study may not have attracted participation of individuals that attended a short-term study abroad with the ISU CSD department who had a negative experience. There is a potential that those who had a negative experience opened the study but did not complete it to its entirety. Another limitation of this study is that the survey was only taken by the participants following their study abroad experience. While results displayed a primarily growth mindset of individuals answering the survey questions, it is unknown what the mindset of the individuals was prior to their study abroad experience. If participants had a growth mindset prior to studying abroad, then the results of the study would indicate no change from pre- to post- travel, whereas if they had a fixed mindset prior to studying abroad, then the results would indicate that most of the participants in this study changed from a fixed to growth mindset, possibly due to their experience abroad. Finally, there was no mindset survey available to use that also incorporated aspects of studying abroad, therefore the student research created one. This is a limitation because the survey may have allowed for more calculated answers,

rather than authentic responses by the participants. There were no guidelines for manipulating how questions were worded or organizing the survey in order to avoid automatic responses.

There is a need for further research about how a short-term study abroad program impacts the mindset of those who attend, both immediately post-travel and long-term. While most of the participants of this study were individuals who are or were studying speech-language pathology, some participants were enrolled at other institutions and studying in a different field. Therefore, it would be particularly interesting to know how mindset of individuals studying speech-language pathology would change as a result of a short-term study abroad experience, as many of them possess characteristics that are consistent with that of a growth mindset. Additionally, future research in this area should include a pre-survey, as it would be important for researchers to know what the mindset of the traveling individuals were prior to studying abroad. Change would be measured more accurately this way, as well as be linked to the study abroad experience if applicable. Another area for future research is how to best create a survey for this type of study in order to ensure authenticity of responses throughout the entire survey. When considering questions written in a way that portrays a growth and fixed mindset, one should organize them in a way that would ensure that the respondent would not know which questions were fixed mindset and which were growth mindset.

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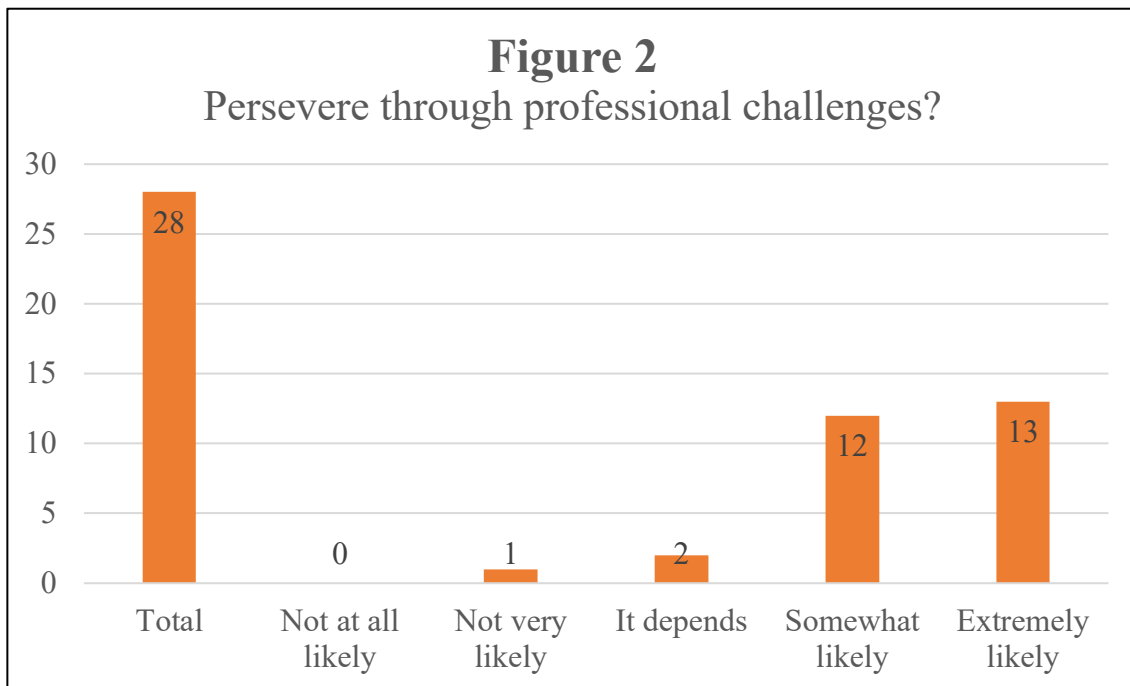
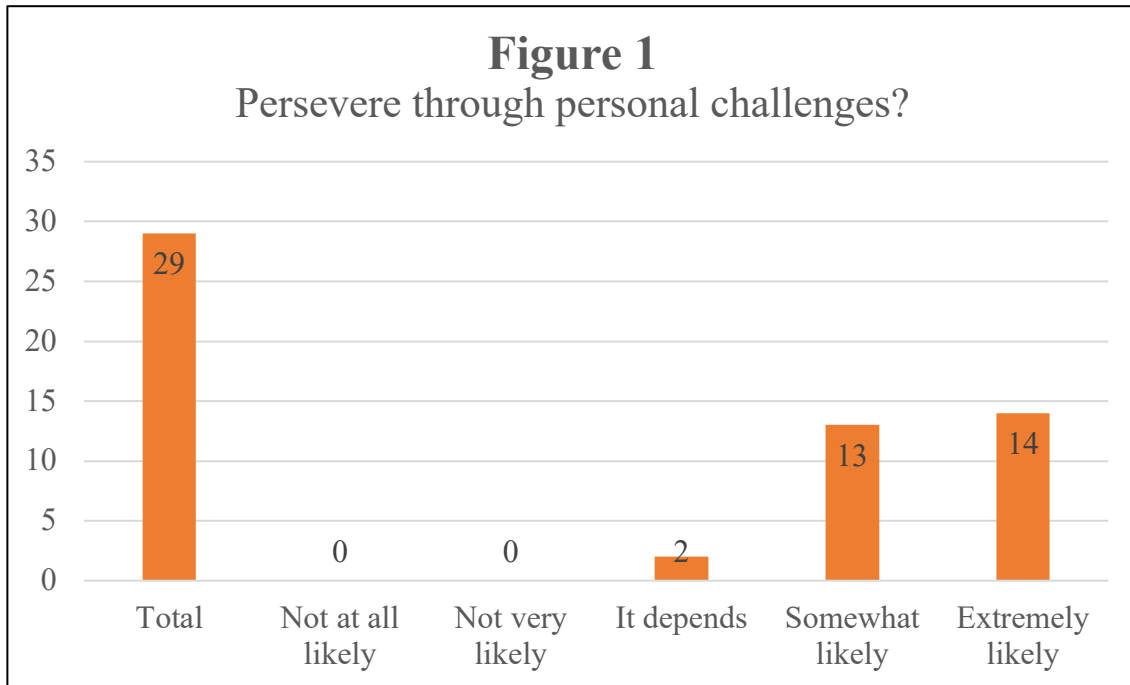
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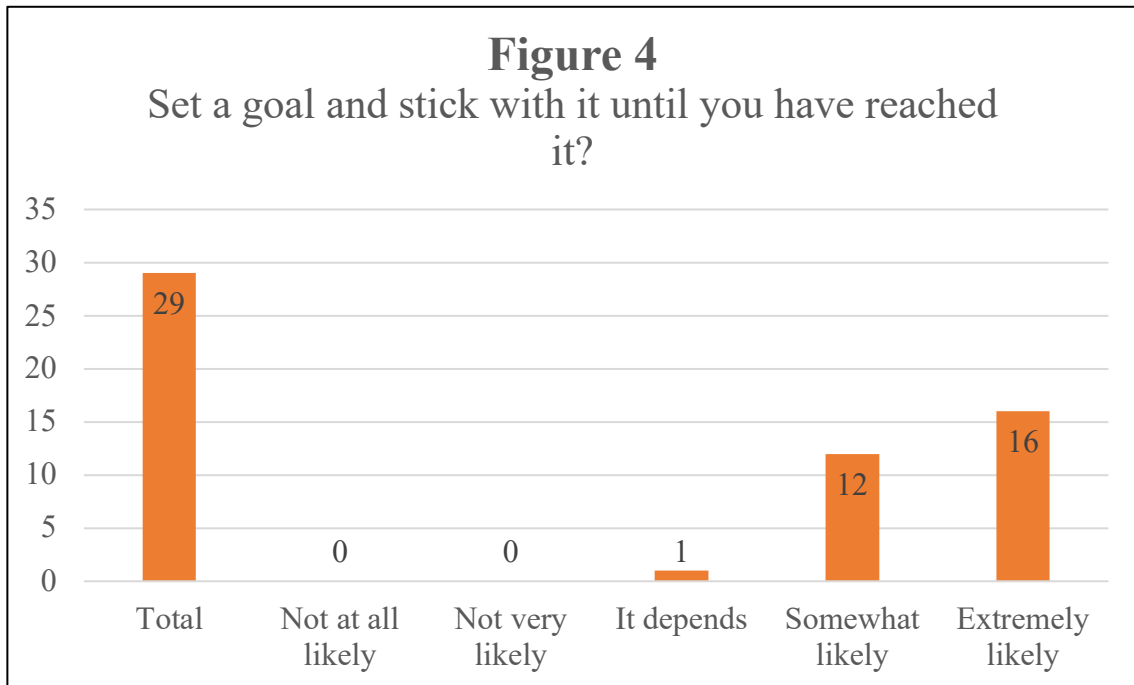
Table 1
Themes of Content Analysis

Theme	*Responses
Awareness of culture	10
Going outside comfort zones	10
More independence	6
Greater confidence	5
Overall positive change	5
Willingness to try new things	3

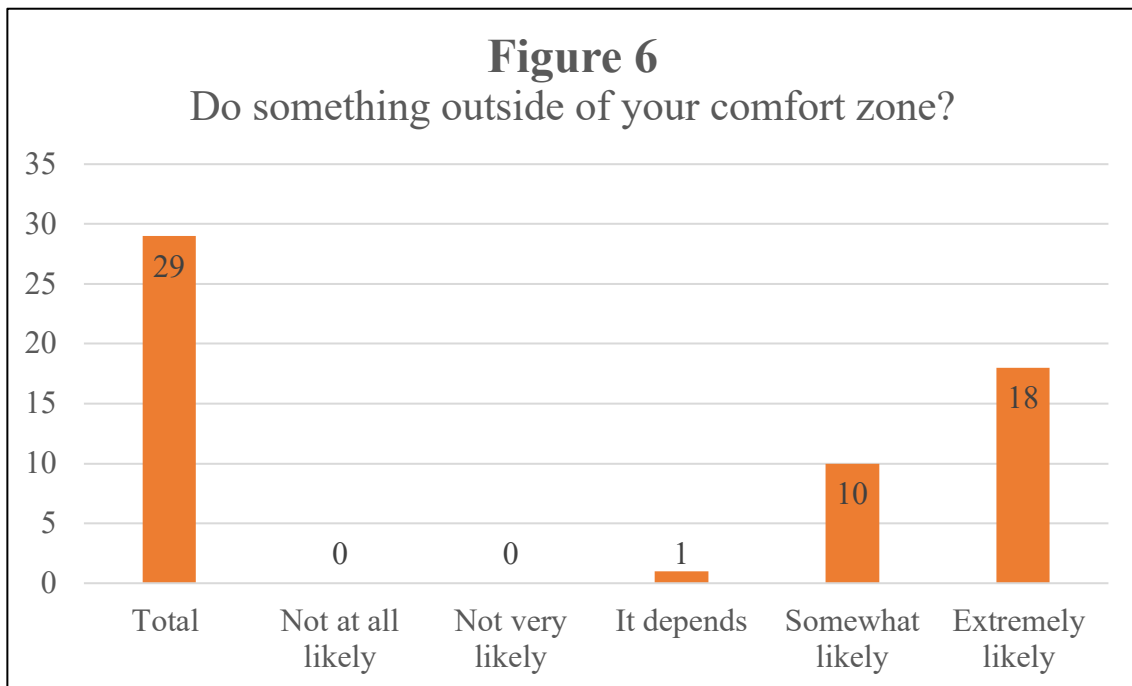
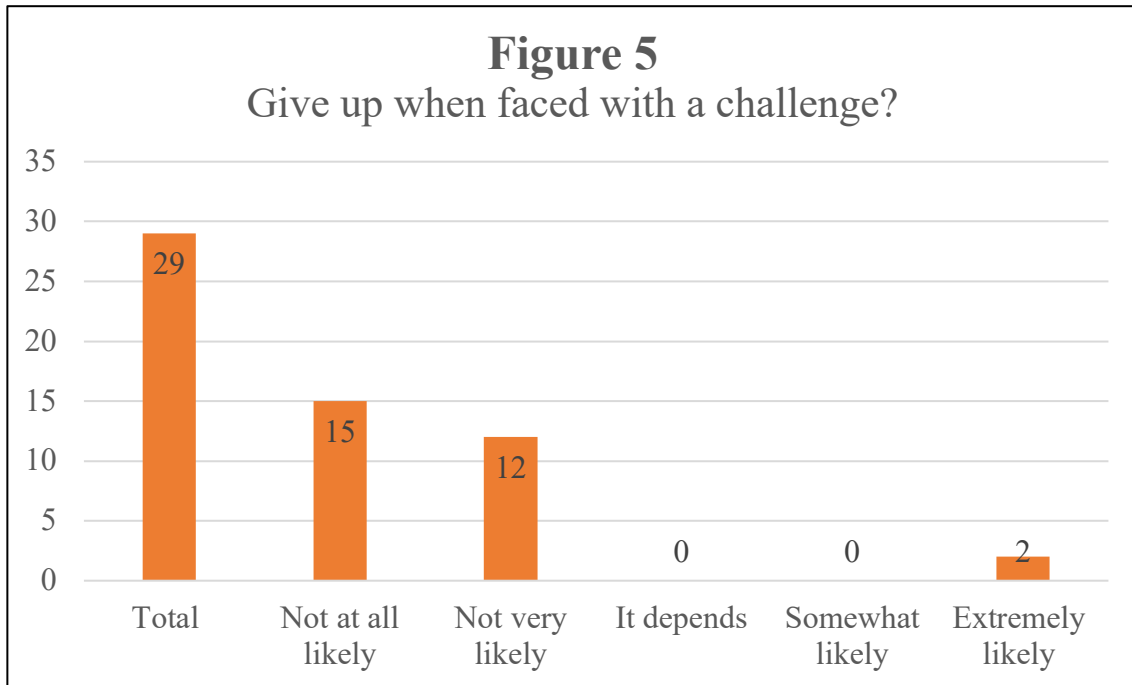
**The responses column represents the frequency of which responses occurred in participant responses (out of 19 total responses).*

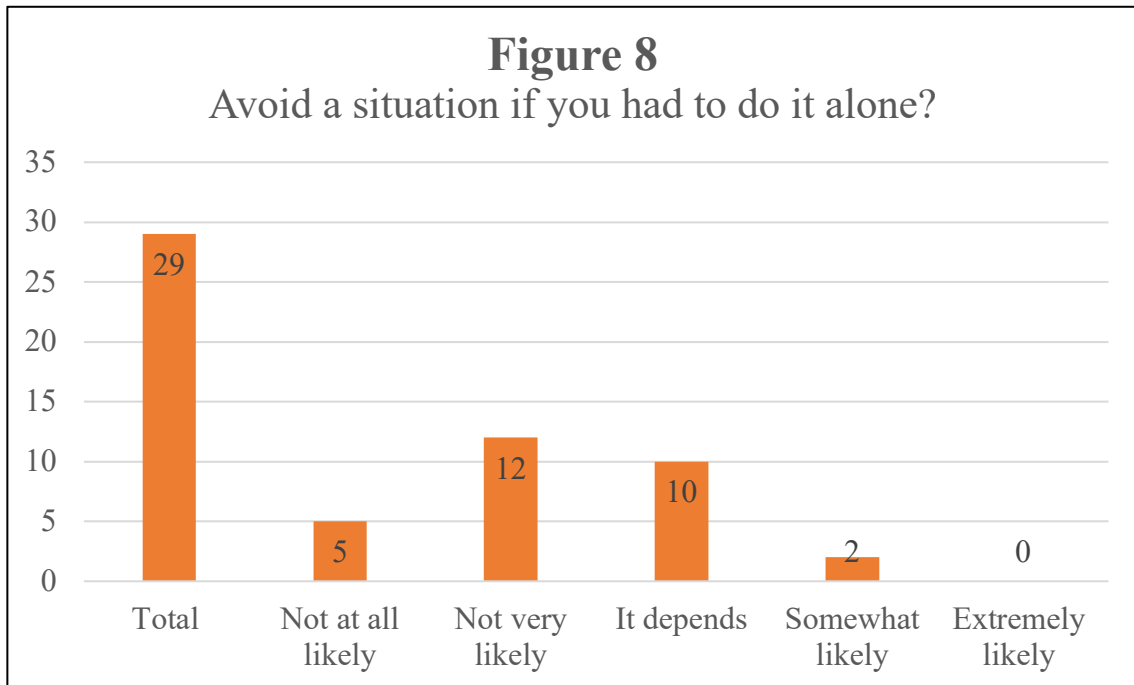
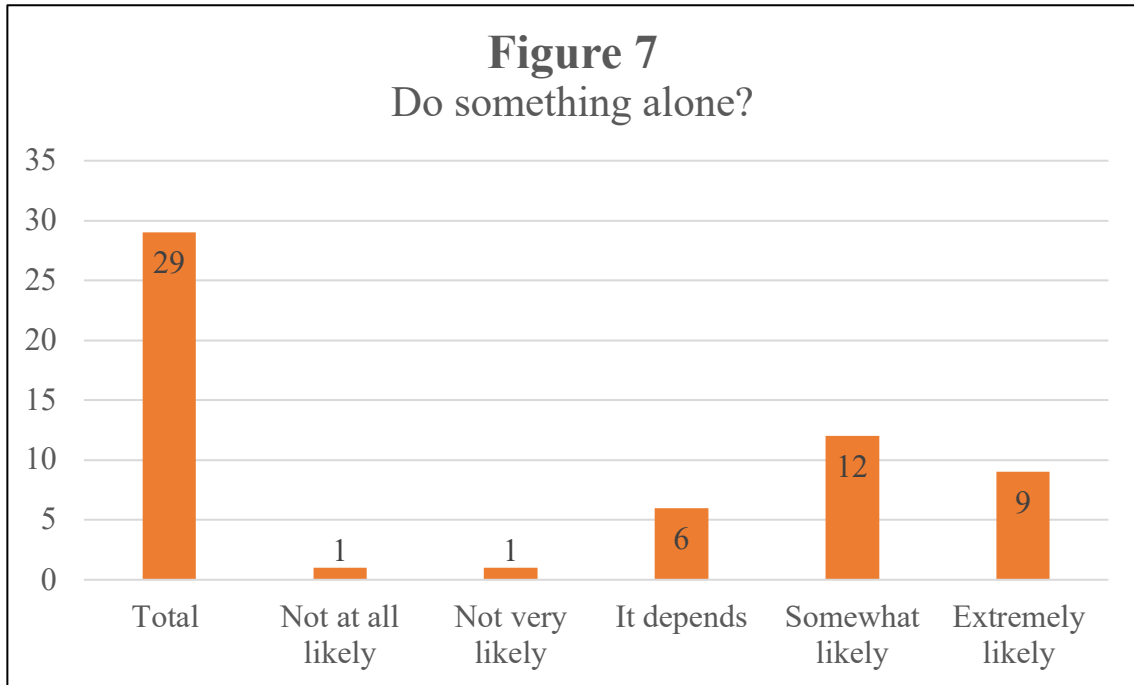
You have all participated in a short-term study abroad experience through the ISU CSD department. Because of your experiences, how likely are you NOW to...

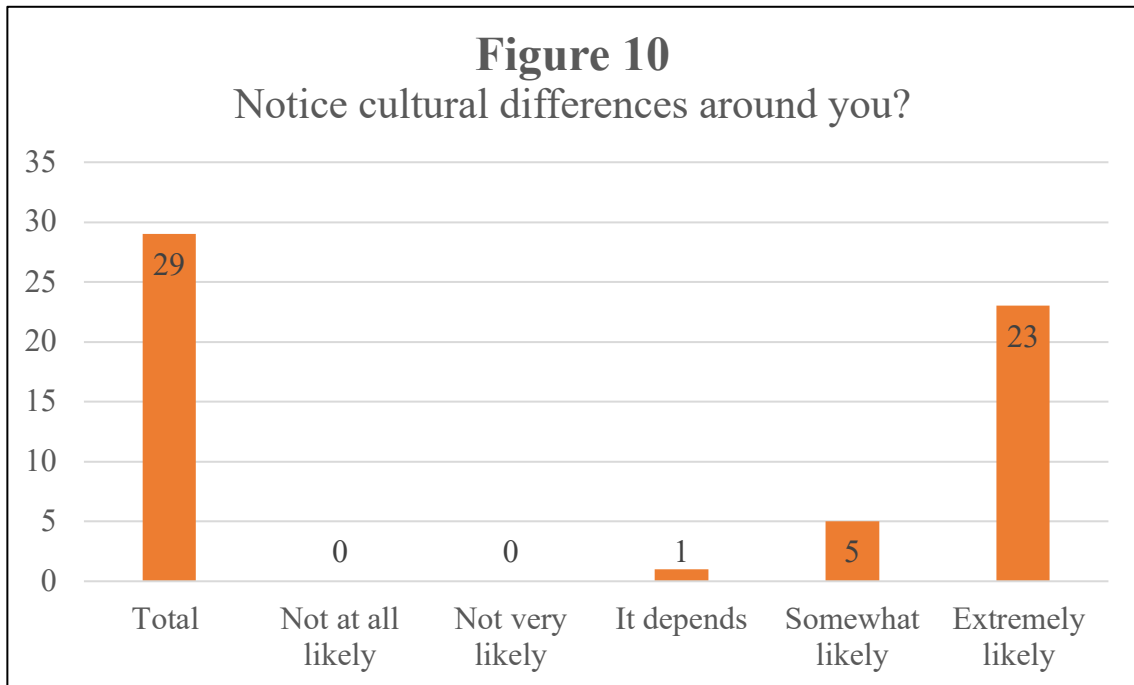
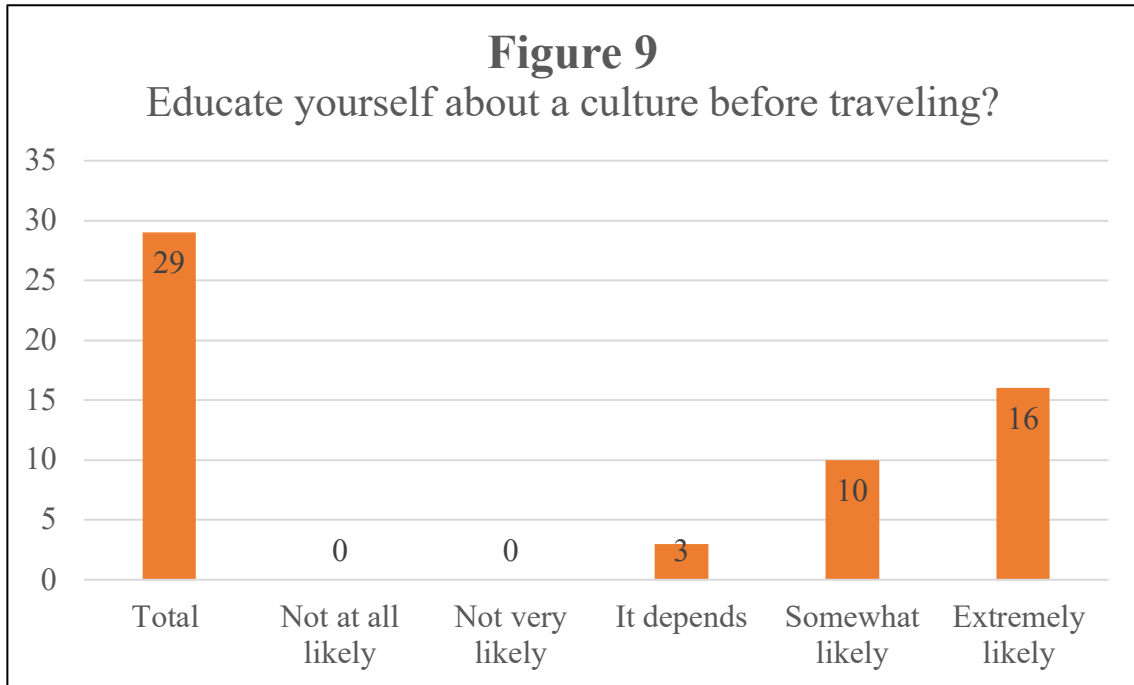




If you were to go on another study abroad trip or travel again, how likely would you be NOW to...







Appendix A

Survey

Are you currently a student?

- Yes
 - No
-

You have all participated in a short-term study abroad experience through the ISU CSD department. Because of your experiences, how likely are you NOW to...

Persevere through personal challenges?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Persevere through professional challenges?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

View failure as a negative (mistake)?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Set a goal and stick with it until you have reached it?

- Not at all likely
 - Not very likely
 - It depends
 - Somewhat likely
 - Extremely likely
-

Have you traveled outside of the United States since your short-term study abroad experiences with the ISU CSD department?

- Yes
- No

If so, approximately how many trips have you taken?

- 1-2
 - 3-5
 - More than 5
-

If you were to go on another study abroad trip or travel again, how likely would you be NOW to...

Give up when faced with a challenge?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Do something outside of your comfort zone?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Do something alone?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Avoid a situation if you had to do it alone?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Educate yourself about a culture before traveling?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

Notice cultural differences around you?

- Not at all likely
- Not very likely
- It depends
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

We would like to know your thoughts on how the study abroad experience has changed you. Please write as much or as little as you would like.

How has the study abroad experiences changed you?

Appendix B

Initial and Secondary Letter to Participants

Initial

Hello,

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Heidi Harbers in the program of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) at Illinois State University (ISU). I am conducting a research study to gain a better understanding of the mindset of individuals who have previously completed a short-term study abroad experience with the ISU CSD program.

You are invited to participate in an online questionnaire study because you have traveled with the ISU CSD program on a short-term study abroad experience within the last 6 years. The online questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes or less to complete. Your responses will be anonymous. Your participation will be completely voluntary. You may decide not to answer any question, and you can stop the questionnaire at any time without penalty. Your consent will be completion of the survey. We are only seeking your opinions, therefore there are no correct or incorrect answers.

Please direct any questions and/or comments to Dr. Heidi Harbers (hmharbe@ilstu.edu) or Madasyn Hofstedt (mmhofst@ilstu.edu).

If you would like to take the survey, please access it here:
https://illinoisstate.az1.qualtrics.com/.../SV_8kPb2w79aaziZ5X

Sincerely,

Madasyn Hofstedt
Graduate Student, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Illinois State University
mmhofst@ilstu.edu

Secondary

Hello,

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Heidi Harbers in the program of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) at Illinois State University (ISU). I am conducting a research study to gain a better understanding of the mindset of individuals who have previously completed a short-term study abroad experience with the ISU CSD program.

You are invited to participate in an online questionnaire study because you have traveled with the ISU CSD program on a short-term study abroad experience within the last 6 years. The

online questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes or less to complete. Your responses will be anonymous. Your participation will be completely voluntary. You may decide not to answer any question, and you can stop the questionnaire at any time without penalty. Your consent will be completion of the survey. We are only seeking your opinions, therefore there are no correct or incorrect answers.

Please direct any questions and/or comments to Dr. Heidi Harbers (hmharbe@ilstu.edu) or Madasyn Hofstedt (mmhofst@ilstu.edu).

This will be the final post and the survey will close on Monday, April 8th, 2019.

If you would like to take the survey, please access it here:
https://illinoisstate.az1.qualtrics.com/.../SV_8kPb2w79aaziZ5X

Sincerely,

Madasyn Hofstedt
Graduate Student, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Illinois State University
mmhofst@ilstu.edu

Appendix C

Content Analysis

- 1 Pushed me outside my comfort zone as far as trying something new. I had never left the country until our trip.
- 2 Made me more confident as an individual as it forced me to try new things and step outside my comfort zone.
- 3 I learned that uncomfortable is not always a negative feeling, uncomfortable can be liberating. A wise woman (Dr. H) once said, "if you are comfortable, you aren't growing". Study abroad proved that in so many ways. I enjoy being uncomfortable and pursuing new areas of my career, and of course other countries!
- 4 The study abroad experiences truly changed my life. It was through this experience that I realized I wanted to change my major from Speech Pathology to pursue my dreams in the fashion industry. I am beyond thankful for my study abroad experiences.
- 5 It has made me more confident in myself. I am pushing myself more throughout life.
- 6 It made me more aware of other cultures and how they view life. I learned it was not like American culture but that doesn't make their culture "wrong".
- 7 I was able to travel more after this experience while understanding that the difference in cultures is why flourishes a growing mind.
- 8 I had never before been outside of the country or traveled anywhere without my parents. Study abroad pushed me completely outside of my comfort zone and has helped shape me into the independent person that I am today.
- 9 I seek more opportunities to challenge myself and learn about my world around me!
- 10 My study abroad experience changed my perspective on blending my professional and personal lives - I now know I can take any personal opportunity to travel and use it to learn about various aspects of communication in other cultures and settings, which strengthens my professional competence.
- 11 I think it has given me an insight into what my personal priorities are when traveling. (Bonding with locals, appreciating nature, and learning about history). It has also given me more confidence to travel independently.
- 12 It gave me the perspective I was looking for. I know I can do things on my own now which helped me gain more independence. I was more aware about the financial aspect of traveling and it started to help me focus on budgeting not only when traveling long but in my personal day to day activities.
- 13 I value culture and experience more.
- 14 In a positive way
- 15 After going on my study abroad experience, I have gone out of my comfort zone multiple times during experiences that I never would have done before.
- 16 It has given me the confidence to be more independent and do things on my own.
- 17 My study abroad experience allowed me to experience a new culture while also exploring my own self and going outside of my comfort zone.
- 18 I participate in multiple short-term study abroad trips through the ISU CSD program. With each trip I learned a great deal about myself as well as the varying cultures that I was able to experience. My first study abroad trip I was the youngest traveler and knew no one else on the trip. Boarding the plane in O'Hare I was so nervous as I was unsure of

how the trip would go. By the end however, I had made amazing friends and went outside my comfort zone. Studying abroad ignited a passion to travel and see the world and experience opportunities that I may at first feel are uncomfortable. I learned to appreciate the moment, take in my surroundings, and not always worry about what is going to happen in the future, but instead focus on the now. I became comfortable going off on my own, asking questions, and trying new things. Choosing to study abroad was one of the greatest decisions I made during my time at ISU and I have since encouraged everyone I know to go outside his/her comfort zone and see the world.

- 19 More than changing me, it increased the beliefs and ideas I already had. I was already willing to step out of my comfort zone, but now I am MORE willing and more confident to. I am also MORE willing to do things alone and more curious about what is out there. It really bit me with the travel bug to learn new things through hands on experiences.