

The Relationship Between College Study Abroad and
Perceptions of Self-Confidence and Confident Behavior

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Abstract

Study abroad participation is growing more common among college students in the U.S. but research on its effect on personal growth constructs such as confidence is limited. This study focused on the relationship between students who studied abroad and their perceived self-confidence and confident behavior compared to students who did not have a study abroad experience. Participants included 81 undergraduates, 48 who did not participate in a study abroad program (No Study Abroad) and 33 who did participate in a study abroad program (Study Abroad). Participants were assessed on levels of perceived self-confidence and confident behavior with the Personal Evaluation Inventory (PEI) and the Confident Behavior Scale (CBS), respectively. The Study Abroad (SA) and No Study Abroad (NSA) groups were compared on their total PEI and CBS scores as well as on the Speaking and Social subscales of the PEI, but no significant differences were found. Implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research are discussed.