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STUDENTS' PRE-DEPARTURE EXPECTATIONS AND POST-SOJOURN OBSERVATIONS IN A SHORT-TERM INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM ABROAD ON THE CULTURE, MUSIC, AND ART OF BRAZIL

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Globalization has certainly had an impact on how young adults are educated. Over the past three decades, higher education institutions have developed and offered educational experiences that acknowledge the inherent values of cultures around the world. In order to provide first-hand learning experiences, many universities have initiated numerous international programs with related course work.

Traditionally, U. S. universities offering such programs have focused attention on courses that are related to Western European cultures. Recently, however, universities have developed and are offering long- and short-term international programs in a number of countries in Asia, Africa, and South America. This more expansive approach provides greater possibilities for appreciation of non-Western European cultures.

Globalization fosters a greater demand for people who understand and can apply the complex processes of global communication. It is expected that today's world citizens will be proficient in foreign languages, familiar with economic systems, aware of political and social structures, and show an appreciation for the historical, cultural, and artistic traditions that have molded the thoughts and behaviors of those with whom they will interact on the international scene. Study abroad programs have had a significant role in accomplishing this goal (Carlson, Burn, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1990).

Many of the benefits provided by study abroad programs are based upon convictions and assumptions administrators and faculty have made over the years. Until the 1980s, little hard evidence and comprehensive research existed that documented the actual contributions such programs made to students and their educational growth. The Study Abroad Evaluation Project (SAEP) conducted in 1982 was one of the first attempts to pro-

vide a comprehensive research document that proposed future guidance to the role of study abroad programs. The project is divided into two parts. The first is devoted to study abroad programs; the second to their impact on students (Burn, Cerych, & Smith, 1990). The SAEP revealed that since the 1980s, universities and colleges across the United States have made substantial investments in international education. It seems that university administrators and faculty alike recognize that study abroad programs provide invaluable contributions to students' foreign language proficiency and understanding of the world's cultures.

Burn et al. (1990) categorized the study abroad programs surveyed in the SAEP and found some shared characteristics. For instance, programs may be unilateral or bilateral, entailing reciprocal exchange of students; offered in a single field of study or open to students from all fields; mandatory or elective; short or long term; and so on.

The findings of the SAEP (Carlson et al., 1990) seem to support the conventional wisdom about study abroad programs and show the impact they have had on American students. For example, study abroad students tend to be financially more independent. Students enrolled in foreign language courses also progress with greater success from the intermediate to the advanced level in language proficiency. Furthermore, low interaction with American peers is positively correlated with international learning, integration into the host culture, strong academic performance, and lower incidences of problems while studying abroad.

The Study Abroad Articulation Project (SAAP) was launched in 1987 and grew out of the SAEP (Burn, 1991). Its overall objective was the identification of factors, conditions, and attitudes that might prevent American undergraduates from making study abroad a central and integral part of their total degree program. It also focused on the identification and encouragement of institutional strategies and policies aimed at eliminating and reducing these obstacles. These objectives were based upon earlier findings by the SAEP revealing that most American undergraduates are under the impression that a study abroad program "is in addition to, not part of, their degree programs and would prolong their degree studies - and even cost more" (Burn, 1991, p. viii). Somewhat disturbing was the realization that faculty members not only are seldom a source "of information and encouragement for undergraduate study abroad but tend to discourage it" (Burn, p. viii). Furthermore, students coming back from their study abroad programs frequently encounter difficulty having academic courses recognized by their home institutions.

A comparison between American study abroad programs and their

European counterpart, Expanded Regional Action Scheme for Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS), indicates significant differences between them. The great majority of U. S. study abroad programs are in the fields of the humanities and social sciences while ERASMUS programs are mainly in professional fields such as law, business, engineering, and the sciences. Most U. S. students studying abroad take elective courses while ERASMUS students take courses in their major fields. Also, ERASMUS students do not dedicate time studying foreign cultures but focus mainly on professionally relevant subjects in their specializations (Burn, 1991). While one may see this as an advantage, it seems essential that students understand how world cultures can be integrated into the academic training and experience they receive abroad. Even the academic instruction settings are an expression of culture and values embedded in a particular society.

For Swinger (1985), the benefits of studying abroad are heavily based upon the understanding of foreign cultures. She maintained that such study promotes personal flexibility that, in turn, develops understanding of varying lifestyles, different approaches to problem solving, and cultural differences in family relationships and time concepts. She also believed that studying abroad promotes political awareness, helping students to see politics in their own countries from a new perspective, that of the host country. In her view, the benefits of studying abroad are centered on the first-hand understanding of foreign cultures.

Empirical researchers have also investigated the outcomes of studying abroad. These studies have shown that programs abroad enhance students' world view (Carlson & Widaman, 1988), interest in foreign languages, art, travel, history, and architecture (Carsello & Creaser, 1976), development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding (Kitsantas, 2004), and openness to diversity when students are fully integrated into the host culture (Wortman, 2003).

Students' pre-departure expectations and attitudes toward a specific culture or people may significantly influence outcomes. In a longitudinal analysis of pre-departure expectations and post-sojourn accounts Martin, Bradford, and Rohrlach (1995) reported students consistently expressed that their expectations were validated. These positive outcomes were somewhat related to gender and location but not to previous intercultural experiences.

Although study abroad programs, for the most part, have been designed as long-term experiences, short-term international field study has become an attractive alternative for many students. Shorter-term courses are a means to achieving the active and engaging learning benefits of

conventional subject areas while offering a somewhat internationalized program of study (Stanitski & Fuellhart, 2003). Pre-departure expectations and post-sojourn accounts need to be investigated in these less traditional settings.

It seems that studying abroad is an important component of one's idea of a complete education. In fact, in a survey administered by Marcum and Roochnik (2001), the vast majority of adults interviewed believed that international study is essential to one's education and many potential university students surveyed expressed the idea that international opportunities are important to education. Although in another survey by Selingo (2003) 56% of Americans believed it is "important" or "very important" for colleges to encourage students to study abroad, statistics indicate that the number of students who participate in such programs is extremely small, between 1% and 3% (Wheeler, 2000; Chronicle of Higher Education, 2001). While studying abroad seems important to today's mobile citizens, Goldstein and Kim (2006) advise that participation in international study might be made easier in part by interventions that seek to alter expectations, reduce ethnocentrism and prejudice, and assist students in understanding the significance of language study.

Stanitski and Fuellhart (2003) believe that academic requirements, financial issues, changing of students' priorities over time, lack of international course offerings relevant to students' fields of study or a combination of factors might be barriers to greater enrollment in international programs. They stated that "traveling to experience diverse cultures, interpreting the physical landscape by 'seeing it with one's own eyes' and learning about sustainability issues through meetings with representatives abroad enlighten students in a way not possible in a traditional classroom setting" (p. 203). The same could be said about the study of music. While understanding and incorporating world's musical cultures have become crucial to the education of every music educator and musician in general, listening to music with one's own ears is an invaluable experience. A short-term program involving active music listening by native performers in their respective countries would provide a musical experience that is whole: music immersed and experienced in its cultural context as opposed to what students experience in a "world music" ensemble offered at an American institution.

Little is known about the benefits of short-term international programs that concentrate specifically on the subject matter found in the fields of art and music. Therefore, to investigate the benefits of such short-term programs, a program in Brazil was developed to focus upon Brazilian music,

culture, and art. This particular program design allowed for non-structured activities as suggested by Langley and Breese (2005) when they examined travel as a means of learning culture. They reported that

Direct travel provided more explicit knowledge of the facts of the culture and it was more efficient in providing the best use of time to see highlights. Serendipitous travel, on the other hand, offered opportunity for more informal observation, for development of self-esteem, and independence. (pp. 316-317)

When looking for effective ways of collecting data on site observations, Jacobson's (1963) recommendation that each student keep a journal of site observations seems to provide the most potential for learning given the experience's short length. Keeping a daily journal while abroad may help students to be both observers and participants and acquire empirical evidence to learn about the host culture (Spradley, 1980). The current study employs such a practice within its design to allow its participants learning opportunities centered on the host culture while they are engaged in the short-term visitation.

METHOD

The short-term international program abroad on the Culture and Art of Brazil was designed and developed at a major U.S. northeastern university. Two music faculty members, one native of Brazil and the other American, taught the course. The university's Division of International Programs Abroad managed the logistics such as applications, housing, transportation, meals, passports, and so on. A Brazilian music professor located in Rio de Janeiro organized the land portion of the trip in both Brazilian cities under the guidance of the professors in the U.S.

The course structure combined on-site lectures, discussions, and readings with a 10-day trip to two Brazilian cities: Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, exploring the music, relationship between colonial architecture and history, Afro-Brazilian studies, and capoeira. The course concentrated on the native music of Brazil of European and African heritage providing hands-on performance experiences with Brazilian instruments. In Salvador there were visits to the Pelourinho (former slave trade market), colonial churches crafted in gold dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, the Instituto de Educação Musical, the Afro-Brazilian museum, Mercado Modelo (City Market), and a workshop with a cappella group *Banda de Boca*. In Rio de Janeiro, students attended workshops with a local choro group *Sururu na Roda* and live music shows at the choro and samba clubs *Centro Cultural Carioca e Carioca da Gema*, visited the Escola de Música da Rocinha (largest

shanty town in Rio), the Christ Redeemer statue, historic downtown Rio, Sugarloaf, and the famous Ipanema and Copacabana beaches.

Priority for student selection was given to students who were currently enrolled or had completed a semester in the university's Brazilian Music Ensemble, some level of Portuguese language, and Brazilian and/or Afro-Brazilian studies. The participant group (N=15) was composed of lower and upper division undergraduate music students (n=2), non-music undergraduates (n= 6), graduate music students (n=5), and graduate non-music students (n=2). The selection process was administered by the Division of International Programs Abroad, which is standardized to all international study abroad programs. The two professors at the university, the director of the school of music, and a representative from the Division of International Programs Abroad screened and selected the candidates.

In the first meeting in the U.S., before any information could be taught regarding Brazilian culture through on-campus lectures and meetings, participants expressed in a one-page essay what they believed and expected they were going to experience during the trip to Brazil. This information was used later to compare with participants' journal entries of what they actually experienced in Brazil.

On-campus lectures and meetings in preparation for the short-term program were structured to facilitate participants' understanding of certain social, cultural, and artistic characteristics of the host country prior to departure. Participants in the program also selected research topics and wrote essays to be presented in Brazil. Topics included African slavery in Brazil, history of Brazil, Brazilian music and poetry, community-based music groups, capoeira, Brazilian cuisine, Bossa Nova, Choro or Chorinho, Brazilian architecture, African influences on Brazilian music, race relations in Brazil, and Samba. While engaging in every site activity, all participants were expected to keep a personal academic journal with daily entries. All journals were turned in post sojourn so data from participants' entries about site observations could be recorded and analyzed.

RESULTS

Fifteen students participated in the program, twelve female and three male, whose ages ranged from 20 to 37 (M=23.2). Among the participants, seven were graduate students (five in music education, one in higher education, and one in English) and eight were undergraduate students (one in each major: music education, music composition, African American studies, psychology, English, marketing, international relations, and commu-

nication and rhetorical studies). Regarding ethnicity, one was Hispanic, three were African American, and eleven were Caucasians.

When asked to state their pre-departure expectations in a one-page essay, students described how they thought they would benefit from the program, both academically and socially. Their expectations were then grouped into 17 categories. Results and comments are arrayed in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Students' Pre-departure Expectations

Pre-Departure Expectations	No. Students	Percentage
2. Brazilian culture	10	67%
4. Go to the beach to swim, get a tan, surf	9	60%
6. Communicate in Portuguese	6	40%
8. Brazilian landscape	5	33%
10. Social interaction with native Brazilians	5	33%
12. See laid back people	3	20%
14. Authentic Brazilian instruments	2	13%
16. Be treated as a tourist	2	13%

Participants' comments for each category were the following: **1. Brazilian music:** "I want to see as many musical performances as possible from a wide range of performance media (vocal, instrumental, etc.)." **2. Brazilian culture:** "I hope to take as much as the culture as possible." **3. Traditional food:** "First and foremost I want to eat everything I come across. I love experiencing new tastes. I love food"; "I expect to try food I've never even heard of." **4. Go to the beach to swim, get a tan, surf:** "Oh, yeah, I'm pumped to soak up some rays on the beautiful beaches"; "Oh, and seeing a nice beach would be awesome." **5. Visit churches, monuments, significant places:** "I hope to be able to visit various historical

places throughout the cities we visit." **6. Communicate in Portuguese:** "I plan to learn some Portuguese as well and be able to communicate with the people of Brazil." **7. Race relationships:** "I've been learning about racial tensions and I would like to see how it has impacted the society"; "The racial dynamics is something that everyone has warned me about so I don't know how that will influence my trip"; "What I know of Brazil is that it has the second largest concentration of Africans (outside Nigeria)"; "I assume people will be much darker in color overall"; "I expect crowds of people, many variations of dark skin, dark hair." **8. Brazilian landscape:** "I think it will be the most beautiful places combining sunshine and beaches in an urban lifestyle"; "I've been told that traveling to other places after being in Brazil is like drinking a flat soda"; "Beautiful beaches: landscapes (mountains, etc)." **9. Learn about Brazil's history/geography:** "I want to learn about the history of the country itself"; "Learn about the history of Brazil." **10. Social interaction with native Brazilians:** "Finding a very beautiful Brazilian man won't hurt either!" **11. Education systems:** "I hope to gain musical and cultural experiences that will assist my future teaching... I'll hopefully learn concepts and cultural practices that I in turn can teach in conjunction with multi-cultural music"; "As a music education major, I hope to learn more about the education system." **12. See laid-back people:** "Find a very relaxed atmosphere"; "See very laid back people." **13. Experience nightlife and dancing:** "Most of all, I look forward to the music and dancing"; "I would like to leave knowing how to samba." **14. Authentic Brazilian instruments:** "I want to buy my own cuíca and have a real cuíca player sign it." **15. Experience things first hand:** "I'm hoping to learn about music, food, and culture by being there and experiencing it first hand." **16. Be treated as a tourist:** "I expect to feel and look like a tourist"; "I expect people to treat us with friendliness as tourists, to ask us where we are from." **17. See a colorful country:** "I want to see (what I perceive as) very colorful country. Bright colors on clothing and on the buildings"; "I expect more color in art and architecture due to African influence."

Data regarding participants' site observations were obtained from the post-sojourn academic journals. Through analysis responses were grouped accordingly into 19 categories in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Students' Post-sojourn Observations

Post-sojourn observation	Students	Percentage
2. Social interaction with native Brazilians	15	100%
4. Education Systems: Instituto de Educação Musical	15	100%
6. Be familiar with Brazilian culture	13	87%
8. Brazilian Beaches	12	80%
10. Authentic Brazilian instruments	10	67%
12. Communicate in Portuguese	8	53%
14. Physical Tiredness	6	40%
16. Bonding with friends and roommates	4	27%
18. Treated as tourist	4	27%

Post-sojourn comments for each category follow. **1. Traditional food:** "Absolutely delicious"; "drinking *guaraná* and *caipirinha*." **2. Social interaction with native Brazilians:** "Everyone was more carefree"; "It was nice to hang out with Beatriz's sister and her parents"; "It was great to meet Joana's cousins; I had a lot of fun at her house." "I met some crazy Brazilian men"; "I saw some smashing lads"; "Flirting has language barriers"; "The men were gorgeous." **3. Brazilian landscape:** "The view of the ocean was unbelievable"; "I felt like I was in paradise"; "I noticed such a different constellation in the sky"; "The building architecture was awesome"; "Beautiful landscapes"; "Place breathtaking"; "I am settled into my hotel room and I have fell absolutely in love with this city [Salvador]. I wish I could grab my family and bring them here now to see all that I am seeing." **4. Education systems:** "A very exciting day"; "see that Brazilians breath music"; "children's attitudes toward life,

music, and unfamiliar people was inspiring"; "I was blown away by the talent of these kids." **5. Experience nightlife and dancing:** "We all nearly danced ourselves to death"; "we danced until we had to leave"; "we tried dancing and joined the natives." **6. Be familiar with Brazilian culture:** "Rio was more Americanized, Westernized than Salvador"; "Rio lacked diversity"; "laid-back life"; "nice to see how music affects people"; "Rio was very New York-esque"; "I also noticed that it is customary to touch everything [food, snacks] with a napkin"; "It was amazing to see how music is part of their lives"; "The first thing that struck me during my first hour in Brazil was the juxtaposition of poverty and wealth." **7. Visit churches, museums, monuments:** "Absolutely incredible"; "really cool churches"; "beautiful churches"; **8. Brazilian beaches:** "It was the best beach I had ever been to. The water was absolutely perfect"; "absolutely gorgeous"; "breathtaking." **9. Shopping:** "bought a jersey for me and my brother"; "I needed to buy souvenirs." **10. Authentic Brazilian instruments:** "Nice to buy and play authentic and handmade instruments"; "I finally got my *cuíca*"; "I bought a *cavaquinho*"; "I bought a *pandeiro* because I really want to learn how to play it." **11. Brazilian music:** "The unique and inspiring aspect of this particular music school [*Escola de Música da Rocinha*] was that its students came from the poor shanty town or *favela* very close by"; "Best a cappella group [*Banda de Boca*] I have ever seen in my life"; "These six young musicians were creating sounds and imitating instruments like I have never heard before"; "They were so good"; "I was completely speechless and jealous"; "Phenomenal"; "I was blown away by how in sync the group [*Sururu na Roda*] was with one another despite fast tempos and demanding parts"; "Their sound was tight, their playing often virtuosic"; "They absolutely rocked the house"; "This was by far my favorite part of the trip"; "This was one of my favorite parts of the trip." **12. Communicate in Portuguese:** "We quickly began to realize that we were going to have to learn Portuguese fast in order to buy anything or communicate with people"; "I speak Spanish with an Italian accent. That seems to be working for me"; "They taught me Brazilian slang"; "We couldn't understand each other at all so I just tried to be polite and smiled a lot." **13. Did not want to leave:** "I'm sad I will be leaving tomorrow. But I'll be back"; "This experience in Brazil will never leave my heart"; "At that moment, I never wanted to [leave]"; "Our spirits were down as we had to leave this country we truly felt in love with." **14. Physical tiredness:** "We were so exhausted because we didn't sleep"; "I was exhausted"; "We were all exhausted from the day before." **15. Local Brazilians' English:** "I only later found out that he had never actually been to America before. All of the English that he had learned and used he had pretty much learned in school. It was very impressive." **16. Bonding with friends and roommates:** "I looked around

and realized not only did I have a great trip with amazing experiences, but I also made some very close friends." **17. Capoeira:** "The men [performing] were unbelievable." **18. Treated as a tourist:** "He called me a gringo"; "That was the first time I understood that being an American whether I like it or not and whether good or bad separated me from the rest of the world"; "We totally looked like a clan of college-aged students"; "I must be perfectly honest and admit that I was somewhat uncomfortable there for various reasons. Mainly it was because we were/are in a foreign place and foreign people were approaching us from all over." **19. Laid-back people:** "Again, we were late"; "We nearly missed the workshop because we were late."

A few other comments are worth reporting. A male participant wrote: "Was Brazil all I expected it to be? I don't even remember what I expected. All I know is that I loved it. I loved the people, the laid-back attitude, the customer service, the scenery, the food, the exchange rate... And then there is the music. The music! The country *lives* music." A female participant reported: "It was officially the end of our time in Brazil. I almost cried because if I had the option to stay there, I would have in a second." Yet another female participant remarked: "I have fallen in love with Brazil, culture and arts. I knew it would be great, but I never anticipated how great."

There were 17 categories of participants' pre-departure expectations and 13 of them were also present in their post-sojourn journals. These findings show that for the most part what participants expected to see and do in Brazil was indeed what they encountered. Those categories that did not reappear in the post-sojourn journals were: understanding race relationships, history and geography of Brazil, experiencing things first-hand, and seeing a colorful country. However, participants did mention five new categories in their post-sojourn entries including shopping, seeing capoeira, physical tiredness, and the quality of Brazilians' English. Participants also reported that they had bonded with their roommates during the trip and that they did not want to leave Brazil.

DISCUSSION

Although, typically, study abroad programs are designed as long-term commitments (Burns et al., 1990), the benefits of the short-term program such as "seeing it with one's own eyes" and understanding things in a way not possible in a conventional setting (Stanitski & Fuellhart, 2003) are supported by this study. The level of appreciation the participants in this program developed for Brazil, its culture, and music could not have been achieved only through a traditional classroom experience.

Findings in this study are consistent with previous research in which students studying abroad enhance their world view (Carlson & Widaman,

1988) and openness to diversity (Wortman, 2003). Participants were able to compare and contrast their social structure at home with Brazilian society, where the difference between the poor and the rich is grossly evident. Students enrolled in this program also showed great interest in learning Portuguese, Brazilian art, history, and architecture. These findings are consistent with Carsello and Creaser (1976) who previously found that studying abroad enhanced students' interest in foreign languages, art, travel, history, and architecture.

The study also suggests that pre-departure on-campus lectures and meetings in preparation for the short-term program helped participants anticipate and understand certain social, cultural, and artistic characteristics of the host country prior to departure (Goldstein & Kim, 2006). Participants in the current study particularly treasured the non-structured activities, which included social interaction with Brazilians. Findings in this study are in agreement with previous findings (Spradley, 1980) in which students studying abroad can function both as observers and participants while acquiring empirical evidence that teaches them about the host culture. Results from this study also suggest that short-term study abroad programs should encourage students to experience spontaneous, non-structured activities and allow those experiences to happen by designating time and space for free and personal time.

A comparison of the categories in the pre-departure expectations with the post-sojourn observations indicate that, although participants already had some ideas of what they were going to experience, those expectations were not influenced by the on-campus lectures and meetings since they were stated prior to any structured teaching. Most likely, students already had previous knowledge of Brazil's culture because they had taken a course in Latin American or Brazilian history, had participated in a Brazilian Music Ensemble, or just had informal cultural knowledge about Brazil.

Results in this study support the need to continue to provide higher education students with first-hand experiences that reinforce cultural, social, and historical contexts of world cultures (Swinger, 1985). It also recommends the study of music and art in a much broader sense, one that surpasses the performance of world music throughout the United States. It is vital for students to understand the social, cultural, and artistic content of these performances. In that sense, this program proved to be an effective tool to inspire students to learn the traditional music and art of Brazil. It also became a catalyst in generating interest in race relationships, language, geography, history, cuisine, and other aspects of the Brazilian culture.

Although results in this particular study are highly encouraging re-

garding students' pre-departure expectations and their site experience abroad supporting the value of short-term international programs abroad, more investigation needs to occur so these programs may be structured in a way that it will maximize the students' experiences abroad.

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