

THE EFFECTS OF STUDY ABROAD ON LEADERSHIP

BY

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

When participating in a study abroad experience students develop skills such as increasing intercultural competence. These are skills that previous research has proven is vital to the development of globally minded leaders. Oddly, given this, researchers have yet to study how engaging in study abroad develops leaders. Our study found that while those who had studied abroad begin formal leadership training with a lower motivation to lead, their skills surpass their peers who had not studied abroad after engaging in a six-day LeaderShape Institute. There are a number of implications for these findings regarding the redesign of formal leadership training, as well as utilizing study abroad participants in a way never before considered.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

With the increasing technology now available in both professional and personal situations, the world is smaller than ever. The diverse society that populations now operate under means that it is more important than ever to be culturally competent. More than anything, it is vital to have culturally competent leaders. Changes on the global scale require decisions to be made from those who have experience interacting with other cultures.

A lack of cultural tolerance has caused more issues than ineffective leaders. Around the world, millions are being forced from their home to escape prosecution from those who have a bias against their beliefs, race, religion, etc. These actions had increased the number of refugees seeking homes in other countries. While some nations have done the best they can to help those forced from their home, others have issued bans or quotas. These refugees have now been turned away from their home and from neighboring countries who could provide safe aid. Perhaps more culturally minded leaders would be able to help eliminate or reduce these problems. Additionally, violence against oppressed populations is rampant across the world.

Considering the changing the dynamics of the world, it is essential to consider how one can become more culturally competent. Many students have engaged in a study abroad experience as one way to increase their cultural competency. Study Abroad is participating in studies in a country other than the one that the student attends school. Across the United States, the study abroad has become more important than ever before. In the 2015-2016 academic year, 325,000 American students studied abroad (NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2015). Additionally, in 2012-2013, 820,000 international students came to the United States to study abroad (Wang, Gault, Christ, & Diggin, 2017). These experiences can last from a few

weeks to a semester or more. Students make the decision based on a variety of things such as their budget, schedule, or any other number of things.

Some skills learned and developed from study abroad are skills that make one a good leader. Keating et al.'s "Ready, Willing, and Able" model looks at leadership from several angles (2014). "Ready" refers to one's leadership self-efficacy. Motivation to lead is considered in the "willing" part, and "able" refers to actual leadership skill (Keating, Rosch, & Burgoon, 2014). Without one leg of this three-legged stool of leadership, it will not stand (Keating et al., 2014). Throughout this study, leadership will be considered using this model.

Previous research confirms that many skills that learned during study abroad compliment those vital to leadership. With these skills and insight gained from study abroad, it should be considered the impact that leadership training has on those individuals that have studied abroad. The world needs more globally minded leaders, and the experience of having studied abroad may be just the necessary driving factor for future leaders to emerge.

Given the impact that this could have, it is vital that the relationship between study abroad and leadership be further analyzed. We used a sample from a formal leadership institute, LeaderShape, to study the impact that having studied abroad had on one's leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, and leadership skill. Using pre-tests taken before the six-day LeaderShape Institute and a post-test taken three months after the completion of the institute to get the participants results regarding leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, and leadership skill. Our study used a t-test analysis to compare the factors between those who had studied abroad and their colleagues who had not. The value of study abroad was confirmed by the findings of our study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

MONOCULTURALISM AROUND THE WORLD

The world today is seemingly smaller than ever before. Cultural boundaries once defined by geography have been made nonexistent by the ease of travel and communication. Despite this globalization taking place, monoculturism is still incredibly present. In many locations across the country, pride in one's own culture results in hatred of those that are different. Populations are driven from their home because of war, religious regions, political reasons, or other reasons. In 2016 alone, 10.3 million people fled their homes and became refugees (Beaubien, 2018).

In recent years, Syria has been the country producing the most refugees. Additionally, a large number of people are seeking refuge from Afghanistan and Iraq (BBC News, 2016). Twelve million people within Syria have been forced from their homes. Five million Syrians have sought refuge in other countries in Europe or near Syria; the remainder are considered displaced persons within the country (Beaubien, 2018). Many of these displaced persons are children being forced from their homes, often without their parents as "unaccompanied minors." The number of these children forced from their homes alone nears 75,000 (Beaubien, 2018). Many refugees are not granted asylum for a variety of reasons or because of quota caps. Across the European Union in 2015, only 292,540 asylum applications were approved (BBC News, 2016).

Countries across the world seem apprehensive to grant asylum to those seeking refuge. The United States recently lowered their quota for refugees to 45,000 for the fiscal year 2018. This is the lowest the allowance the United States has had in three decades (Galvin, 2018). Germany received the highest number of Asylum requests in the European Union in 2015. Germany received more than 476,000 applications, and only 140,910 people were granted

asylum (BBC News, 2016). The burden of refugees is still significantly higher in countries with smaller populations, notably Hungary, Greece, and Italy (BBC News, 2016).

In Myanmar, Muslim religious minorities are being shot down and buried in mass graves while enjoying a peaceful game. One survivor, Noor Kadir, recalled the horror of finding his friends' bodies in a mass grave (Klug, 2018). This kind of persecution and fear is partially what is forcing populations of people to leave their home country to seek refuge somewhere else. Even after fleeing to the safety of a new country, the journey is not over for many refugees. An Afghan teenager is currently fighting a legal battle after being denied access to safety in the United Kingdom (Taylor, 2018). Even those who believe they had found a new home in a different country are not free from the prosecution they felt in their home country. One man from Kuwait brought his family to America and opened a small, successful business. Changes in his business visa have forced Khaled Altarkeet to close his business and return home to Kuwait (Sulek, 2018). Despite the success of his business, Altarkeet was forced to close his café and endanger his family's well-being thanks to a change in the law that turned his once popular restaurant into an illegal enterprise.

With so many oppressed populations, violence is sure to occur. Many refugees find themselves the victims of massacres for no purpose other than their religion, the color of their skin, cultural boundaries, or so much more (Klug, 2018). These actions can quickly turn into motivations behind more violence such as terrorist attacks. If leaders around the world were more culturally aware, these problems could begin to be avoided. Promoting diverse minded and culturally competent leaders is more than a matter of effectiveness in the workplace, it has potential to save lives. One opportunity for intercultural learning for emerging leaders is study abroad.

STUDY ABROAD

An increasingly common experience for many college students across the United States is Study Abroad. These programs vary by location, time, location, etc. The University of Illinois Study Abroad website encourages interested students to consider how they learn best, what they hope to gain, their comfort with adapting, and many other things when picking a study abroad program (Illinois Abroad and Global Exchange, 2018). These programs can be a short-term experience to a semester or even yearlong program. Study abroad programs are can be faculty lead, or learners can spend a term at a partner university individually. Study abroad programs of any length and layout come with varying costs. Cost can be a significant deterring factor to study abroad for many students (Illinois Abroad and Global Exchange, 2018).

Study abroad is an incredible opportunity that exists for college students across the country. The motivations behind the choice to study abroad are numerous. Study abroad is an opportunity for personal growth that one can assume results in the development of leadership abilities. Despite the popularity of study abroad and leadership studies, very little research exists regarding this relationship. Based on current researching regarding the effects of study abroad and the factors that make a good leader, the impact of study abroad on leadership should be further evaluated.

There is not a sector of industry that has gone untouched by the increase of globalization seen around the world; education indeed follows this trend. “Globalization” can be defined as “increasing border-crossing activities of blurred national systems which are often employed to depict worldwide trends and growing global competition” (Teichler, 2004). No longer can national systems be as easily identified as they could with internationalization, a concept categorized by the crossover of distinct national structures (Teichler, 2004). This movement has

drastically increased the demand for individuals educated on internationalism; study abroad was education's reply.

Study abroad is a pivotal experience for many college students that shapes future ideas on globalism and provides the skills that will allow them to thrive in a changing environment (Carlson & Widaman, 1988). According to the Association of International Educators, over 325,000 students from the United States studied abroad in the 2015/2016 academic year (NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2015). In the 2012/2013 academic year, almost 820,000 international students studied in the United States (Wang et al., 2017). International education had reached a scope of immense potential. Effects of this experience can be further analyzed as well as the motivations that factor into the choice to study abroad.

Students' motivation for choosing to explore education internationally vary. One motivation behind studying abroad is the development of intercultural skills (Petzold & Peter, 2015). Additional considerations in the decision to study abroad were "intellectual and personal growth, career enhancement potential, ability to graduate on time, cost, and financial aid availability as the most important "program-related" considerations. Exposure to other cultures and desire to live independently served as key "non-program" factors" (Movassaghi, 2014). In other words, students are choosing to study abroad for the benefits it provides.

Having spent time in another country encourages students to grow regarding intercultural competency, a more substantial understanding of themselves, and increased interpersonal skills (Rosch & Haiber-Curran, 2013). Given the traits that make responsible citizens, experience within the international community is pivotal to the development of the world's future leaders (Rosch & Haiber-Curran, 2013). Pursuing education internationally provides a unique experience. Study abroad allows for learning outside of a traditional classroom setting. During

their time abroad, students can expect to be wholly absorbed in a culture unique to their host location. This experiences encourages previous conception to be let go of and promotes critical thinking in a way that may not have been possible before (Friedman, 2008). This increased open-mindedness is crucial to the forms of self-discovery that result in lasting change.

Non-experiential factors of those who study abroad should also be acknowledged. One who chooses to leave the country on their own demonstrates a certain amount of confidence and willingness to try new things. Those who engage in this also show an acceptance of the value of experience, cultural competency, and global knowledge. These students also have the means to study abroad which might also come with other strong influences such as familial support. In fact, Lou found that family members were the most trusted source concerning education in a foreign country (2006). Some students may be more able to utilize campus resources, dedicate time to their college experience, and have a willingness to make riskier investments in their future. Upper-middle-class students can depend on social and cultural resources already in place when deciding to study abroad (Stuber, 2007).

It is observable that some students are less likely to study abroad than others. When the benefits of study abroad are so numerous, no one should be left out. Research shows that Asian American men were less like to study abroad than their white counterparts. Additionally, Hispanic women were found to be more likely to have study abroad intentions than white women (Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010). The education level of a student's parents also had an impact on their intent to study abroad. Women whose parents had a higher level of education where more likely to have study abroad intentions (Salisbury et al., 2010). Interestingly, the research showed that high school involvement did have a slightly negative impact on men's likelihood of having study abroad intentions (Salisbury et al., 2010).

Many students are plagued with a narrow worldview defined only by boarding states versus the diverse global cultures that exist (Friedman, 2008). In this ever-changing society, this is not an adequate mindset for future leaders to have. One must be knowledgeable of and respect the cultures that make up the diverse global population. Without this, one will not fulfill their true leadership potential.

Diverse minded individuals with a background in cultural competency should be considered for leadership roles. Leaders who consider themselves outside of their own culture and how other cultures affect the world. It is not enough to select one with cultural competency; leadership potential should not be underestimated. When participating in a study abroad experience, many of the skills learned result in an increase in cultural intelligence. What has yet to be evaluated is how this experience effects leadership.

“READY, WILLING, AND ABLE” MODEL

This study evaluates leadership from Keating et al.’s “Ready, Willing, and Able” (RWA) model (Keating et al., 2014). The RWA model explores leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, and leadership skills (Keating et al., 2014). Leadership self-efficacy, “ready,” looks at the one's perceptions of their abilities regarding leadership potential (Murphy, 1992). Motivation to lead is the “willing” part of the model. It can be a combination of various leadership factors (Chan & Drasgow, 2001) that determine one’s willingness to lead when the opportunity is given. “Able” is leadership skills that result in one’s ability to lead. Questions asked in this study target leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, and leadership skill. The relationship between these factors compared to study abroad will be explored.

The “Reading, Willing, and Able” model operates under the idea that leadership is like a three-legged stool (Keating et al., 2014). Each aspect of the model is a leg of the stool, and if you

remove one, the stool fails to work as intended. No matter the skills a leader has if they lack the motivation to lead or a belief in their ability, the skills become worthless. Similarly, a leader may want to lead and think they are a good leader, but if they don't have the skills to support this idea, effective leadership will not occur. Viewing leadership based on this model ensures that a student can be the most effective leader possible.

Smith concluded that students with increased involvement in campus organization rated themselves higher on traits related to leadership such as, “confidence, honesty, optimism, persistence, and responsibility, with significant differences in optimism and persistence” (2015). The same was true for relational traits typically found in a strong leader. These traits ranged from interpersonal skills and serving as a role model to being able to handle conflict and failure (Smith, 2015). It could be assumed that the effects of campus involvement could be replicated by participation in study abroad. These effects could increase one's ability to lead. Additionally, the results of increased cultural competency are beneficial for leaders. Being able to respect the diverse cultures of the world is a positive step in leadership ability. Diverse ideas and perspectives come from those with different backgrounds. A leader with cultural competency is better able to realize this and utilize the concepts.

Skills gained during a study abroad experience have the potential to increase one's leadership ability (Carlson & Widaman, 1988). An increase in cultural competency and exposure to a new way of thinking would most likely improve one's leadership skills, or the “Able” part of the “Ready, Willing, and Able” model. Additionally, as study abroad participants experience new things, they may learn to have more confidence in their abilities and a desire to make changes. An accepting mindset is just what the emerging leaders of the world need. If study abroad does prove to have a positive impact on students when it comes to leadership, it should be

viewed as a valuable way to grow diverse minded leaders. As college students enter the workforce as leaders, they will take this mindset and encourage more accepting decisions that result in a decrease in the violence that is seen across the world today.

With the effects of study abroad being so numerous, it should be considered how they play out in situations once returning home. While studying abroad, students gain skills such as cultural competence, interpersonal growth, openness to new situations, etc. These are traits that would typically result in a more effective leader. Given the absence of previous research on the effects of study abroad on leadership, this study will explore the relationship.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The sample for our study was derived from a population of university students participating in the LeaderShape Institute at various locations across the nation. The institute took place during the 2014-2015 academic year and lasted a total of six days. In a partnership with postsecondary institutes and LeaderShape, a not-for-profit leadership education organization, students traveled off campus for six days. In groups of 40-70, students worked in small groups and with large group facilitators to develop student leadership through both formal leadership curriculum and activities. We chose ten sessions that represented a diverse national population. A total of 226 students completed surveys to be included in our analysis.

The participants who had reported having studied abroad were asked to state how long their study abroad experience had been. Of the 31 respondents who had studied abroad, 21 had studied abroad short term. Additionally, four reported having studied abroad for a semester, 2 for a year-long program, and four had participated in multiple study abroad experiences. Women made up a majority of both samples, see Table 1. As reported in Table 2, White was the predominant race that appeared in our sample; however, the non-study abroad population had a higher percentage of racial minorities than the study abroad sample. Participants were asked to report their class year in school (Table 3).

Table 1.
Reported Gender of Population

Reported Gender	Study Abroad Sample	Non-Study Abroad Sample
Man	32.3%	35.1%
Woman	64.5%	61.8%
Transgender	0%	0.5%
Failed to Report	3.2%	2.6%
Total	100%	100%

Table 2.
Reported Race of Population

Reported Race	Study Abroad Sample	Non-Study Abroad Sample
African American	3.2%	12.0%
Asian American	16.1%	5.2%
White	58.1%	56.5%
Latino	3.2%	14.1%
Middle Eastern	3.2%	0%
Multi-Race	12.9%	11%
Failed to Report	3.2%	0.5%
Total	100%	100%

Table 3.
Reported Class Year of Population

Reported Class Year	Study Abroad Sample	Non-Study Abroad Sample
First Year	16.1%	30.9%
Second Year	25.8%	32.5%
Third Year	32.3%	24.6%
Forth Year	9.7%	7.9%
Graduate Student	12.9%	1.0%
Failed to Report	3.2%	3.1%
Total	100%	100%

Given the profile of those who study abroad or who would attend a formal leadership training, questions were also asked regarding a variety of other leadership experiences (Table 4).

Table 4.
Reported Race of Population

Question	Study Abroad Sample “Describes Me”	Study Abroad Sample “Does Not Describe Me”	Non-Study Abroad Sample “Describes Me”	Non-Study Abroad Sample “Does Not Describe Me”
Able to identify a leadership mentor on campus	83.9%	6.4%	87.4%	7.3%
Involved in a student organization	100%	0%	92.7%	4.1%
Holds a formal position in a student organization	100%	0%	74.9%	17.8%
Leadership training in a student organization	71%	25.8%	64.9%	26.7%
Formal leadership training	67.8%	29%	62.3%	27.2%
Formal leadership course	35.5%	58%	35.1%	22%
Employed on campus	71%	25.8%	63.8%	32.9%
Supervise others at work	42%	51.6%	45%	51.8%
Participates in community service	77.5%	19.4%	71.7%	21%
Has engaged in career development	54.9%	45.3%	53.4%	37.7%
Classroom-based group project	74.1%	25.9%	49.8%	41.3%

VARIABLES AND INSTRUMENTATION

To investigate the effects of study abroad on leadership development, students reported whether they had participated in a study abroad experience as well as a variety of other experiences that relate to leadership. Examples of this include supervisory experiences, leadership roles within student organizations, community service, etc. To assess leadership capacity, students were asked to respond to four measures of capacity using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*does not describe me at all*) to 7 (*very closely describes me*). For assessing leadership skill, we used both the Transformational Leadership Scales and the Transactional Leadership Scales, a subscale of the Leader Behavior Scale (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Ethical leadership skill was determined by using the Ethical Leadership Scale (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). When assessing motivation to lead, we used the Affective Identity subscale of the Motivation to Lead Scale (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). These scales explored effective identity, non-calculative leadership, and social normative leadership. Additionally, the Social Issues Advocacy Scale was used. Finally, leadership self-efficacy was measured using the Self-Efficacy for Leadership Scale (Murphy, 1992).

DATA COLLECTION

Participants completed the surveys regarding their leadership capacity at two different times in a pre-test, and then a post-test emailed out three months after completing the institute. The pretest was collected before participation in the leadership program, often 1-2 weeks before the program began. The post-test collection took place immediately following the 6-day LeaderShape program completed before the participants left the Leadership Institute. Participation in the post-test was about 30%. Participants were eliminated from the sample if

they did not complete both surveys or completed less than 90% of each survey. This ensured that the data used was completed with effort.

DATA ANALYSIS

The goal of this research was to investigate the effects of having studied abroad on one's Readiness, Willingness and Ability to lead (leadership self-efficacy, motivation, and skill) and the ability to increase these during formal leadership training such as the LeaderShape Institute. We began by comparing the absolute value of means of the pretest scores between the two groups, study abroad and non-study abroad, to look for relevant differences. We then completed an independent sample t-test comparing pre-test scores on relevant scales between the two populations. Finally, we completed an independent sample t-test comparing post-test scores on relevant scales between the two populations.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Participants who had not studied abroad entered into the LeaderShape Institute with a higher level of motivation to lead than their counterparts who had engaged in a study abroad experience. When asked questions about their motivation to lead, those who had not studied abroad had a higher willingness to lead. After engaging in the six-day LeaderShape Institute, those who had studied abroad rated their transactional leadership skills higher than their counterparts three months after the institute ($t=-2.038$). This improvement of skill is an enhancement of the “able” sector of the “Ready, Willing, and Able” model. This suggests a value in study abroad as a driving factor for quicker retention of leadership related material. Not only does retention increase, but long-term utilization of these skills. See Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5.
Pre-Test Results

Question	Scale Score Mean Difference	T	Df	Significance	D
Motivation to Lead AI	.37975	1.992	220	.048	.27
Motivation to Lead NC	.26170	1.804	220	.073	
Motivation to Lead Social Normative	.30351	2.373	220	.018	.32
Transformational Leadership	.15515	1.490	220	.138	
Transactional Leadership	-.13934	-.967	220	.335	
Ethical Leadership Scale	.13332	1.241	220	.216	
Social Issues Advocacy Scale	-.08654	-.570	220	.569	
Self-Efficacy Leadership	.20877	1.480	220	.140	

Table 6.
Post-Test Results

Question	Scale Score Mean Difference	T	Df	Significance	D
Motivation to Lead AI	.10381	.844	220	.399	
Motivation to Lead NC	-.05026	-.468	220	.640	
Motivation to Lead Social Normative	.01266	.138	220	.890	
Transformational Leadership	-.07247	-1.002	220	.317	
Transactional Leadership	-.20386	-2.038	220	.043	-.27
Ethical Leadership Scale	-.09890	-1.307	220	.193	
Social Issues Advocacy Scale	-.09435	-.908	220	.365	
Self-Efficacy Leadership	-.10418	.586	220	.219	

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Statistically significant differences emerged with the transactional leadership skills of those who had participated in a study abroad program versus their colleagues who had not. When asked to report of motivation to lead in the pre-test, scores were statistically higher from those who had not studied abroad. These results seem to suggest that study abroad influences how well students can pick on and retain formal leadership training. Knowing this, programs can be appropriately adapted to model study abroad type experiences and another benefit of study abroad had emerged or designed to appreciate the experience study abroad gives these students. When considering the results for the “Ready, Willing, and Able” model, readiness, or motivation to lead was significantly higher among those who had not studied abroad during the pre-test that took place before the Leadership Institute (Keating et al., 2014). Why readiness was higher within those, who had not participated in a study abroad experience cannot be assumed based on previous research.

Leadership skills or ability were ranked higher by those who had studied abroad during the post-test sent out three months after the completion of the LeaderShape Institute. This suggests that having studied abroad may be a factor that fosters the development of leadership skills. Additionally, these skills were maintained after the course of the training for a period of at least three months. This lasting change is ideal when investigating potential solutions for cultivating globally minded leaders for the future.

Of the population of the study, 31 respondents, 13.7%, had participated in a study abroad experience. A majority of those respondents had only studied abroad short term suggesting that the benefits of the experience can be gained in a relatively brief amount of time. Additionally, of those who had studied abroad, 87% replied that they could at least somewhat identify a mentor

that they consulted regarding leadership. This may suggest that leadership is not a new concept to these students, even if it was not formally taught. Relating to this, all students who had studied abroad help a leadership position with a student organization. This is up from the 77% of students who had not studied abroad. This population is predisposed to score higher on leadership questions considering they are being surveyed at formal leadership institute. Very few participants had taken a leadership course suggesting that a majority of their leadership education had been informally done.

IMPLICATIONS

Implications of this research suggest there is an importance to having engaged in a study abroad experience when it comes to mastering leadership skills that are taught at a formal leadership institute. This has potential as a benefit for study abroad to be considered when making the decision as well as for leadership scholars to begin to explore the relationship and how to cultivate the same effects without having to send students abroad. When assessing students who will gain the most from formal leadership training, evaluators are better able to determine having viewed our findings.

Scholars should also study further what factors of study abroad are taking away from the motivation to lead. The lack of readiness from those who had studied abroad is interesting given how quickly leadership ability is improved. Without an aspect of every part of the “Ready, Willing, and Able” model, true effective leadership is unable to take place. Once determining what is causing this lack of motivation, plans to combat it can be created thus creating a complete leadership development curriculum (Keating et al., 2014).

It could be assumed that LeaderShape can unleash the experiential knowledge of those who had studied abroad and allow them to consider leadership in ways they never had before.

This had enormous potential when it comes to how LeaderShape designs curriculum. Knowing the effect that study abroad has, programs can be designed to acknowledge and target these experiences.

To increase the globally minded leaders, the results we found are incredibly promising. Past research shows that study abroad is a way to improve the cultural competency of students. Formal leadership training had proved to be more effective for those who had studied abroad. This means that not only can formal leadership training, like LeaderShape unlock leadership potential, but it does it even more so to those students who are globally minded. In the increasingly global society, this has benefits for future leaders.

Leadership scholars can also draw information from the population data for both the LeaderShape Institute and for those from the institute who studied abroad to form better-informed conclusions regarding leadership. Aspects such as race, gender, sexual orientation, etc., may impact the various aspects of leadership studied. Scholars should continue to study these aspects as potential variables of change. Additionally, questions regarding involvement would provide excellent variables for further studies regarding one's readiness, willingness, and ability (Keating et al., 2014).

Aside from advancing the curriculum, of LeaderShape, other leadership education can be largely affected based on the findings of our research. Knowing if one had studied abroad would allow formal leadership training to advance past certain aspects of the training or place an emphasis on others as it would provide value to the training. Leadership education research had previously not addressed topics such as study abroad despite the similarities of lessons learned and factors proven to be important aspects of leadership. Improving leadership training and education is a constant goal of leadership researchers. Including what we now know about the

value of a study abroad experience will change the way we approach educating leaders, especially those who had studied abroad.

Knowing the high cost of study abroad, it is unrealistic to expect that students could be sent abroad as part of their leadership training, at least in the near future. Rather, students could be asked to participate in a formal leadership course. These students would be better receptors of leadership material and would fulfill the purpose of creating more globally minded leaders. The course curriculum would be designed with our findings in mind and might even increase the results given the longer time placed on leadership development.

Completing a leadership course after having studied abroad is a lot to ask for many students. Future studies should explore the effectiveness of a short-term leadership training, such as online training. A study might ask half of a group who had studied abroad to engage in an online asynchronous leadership training. Their results regarding questions similar to the ones asked in our survey could then be compared to see if there is a value gained from what would be a low-cost, low time-consuming activity. The potential implementation of a program like this could be done across universities as a requirement for receiving the study abroad credit.

LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations to our study that future research should address. The sample size was smaller than ideal when making claims on a national level. The statistical models we were able to use for our study were limited by the size of the sample. With a larger sample size, not only would we be able to make more significant claims regarding our findings, but we would be able to conduct more advanced statistics to increase what was learned from our findings.

Additionally, LeaderShape is not representative of all formal leadership training. With the current data, estimates can be made on the effects of study abroad on leadership training, but

only speak directly to the population of LeaderShape. Similar samples could be found in formal leadership courses, student organizations, in other formal leadership training, etc. This would enhance the generalizability of our sample to speak more broadly about the effects of leadership training.

The LeaderShape Institute is not designed to take study abroad into consideration. While LeaderShape does a great job sculpting leaders and taking students on a journey to discover their leadership within, it does not focus on leadership in a global context which would provide immense value to those who are hoping to benefit from the partnership of study abroad and LeaderShape.

Future studies should target those who have studied abroad and place a portion of those students through a formal leadership training. That sample would consider study abroad as the primary factor rather than a side demographic question asked in a study build to determine leadership capacity. A sample of those who had studied abroad could be asked about their leadership and compared to a sample of those who had not studied abroad. This has the potential to increase the sample size by amounts not possible if using the same sampling method as we did.

CONCLUSION

Research shows that those who have not engaged in a study abroad experience are much more likely have a higher motivation to lead than their counterparts who had participated in a study abroad experience. After engaging in formal leadership experience, in this case, the LeaderShape Institute, those who had participated in a study abroad program were statistically better at leadership skills three months after the institute. It is important that leadership scholars

recognize the impact programs like study abroad have on material retention and begin to take advantage of the potential these students have.

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