

Short-term Study Abroad: The Motivations of American University Students and the Expansion

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Abstract: *Only by blending into the culture of a country can one understand the foreign context and gain as many personal experiences as possible. Short-term study abroad is a shortcut to familiarize with local culture of the destination in the relatively shorter time. In the traditional concept, studying abroad is a “huge” thing because it engages multiple involvements from different parties. What’s more, needed contributions toward studying abroad such as trade-offs, application preparation, living arrangements can be complex and daunting for potential participants. Today, short-term study abroad however has become a mainstream choice for students who want to obtain multicultural and language learning or to become global citizens, along with the development of study abroad processing framework and practices. By critically analyzing students’ motivations to participate in faculty-led short-term study abroad, the primary purpose of this case study is to bring up the approaches to expand the programs for American university students who are the major object of analysis.*

Keywords: *Short-term study abroad, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, policy, expansion*

1. Introduction

With the development of internationalization and globalization in the education landscape, more students at different ages are seeking for opportunities to get multicultural experience and to foster global citizenship. American university students currently are one of groups among study abroad participants with the enlargement of study abroad programs during the decades in U.S. higher education institutions to increase students’ participation; meanwhile the United States foreign policy has dictated the terms for support of international education during the past 60 years, and government funding as well as legislative developments for international education have become the foundation in the expansion of study abroad as well. (Lane-Toomey, 2014). Even though there were roughly 1 million students from other countries studying abroad in the United States compared to 304,467 students from the U.S. who study abroad in the 2013-2014, the number of American students who go abroad has more than tripled in recent two years (Kinloch, 2018). These numbers not only explain the strong condition of U.S. education that attracts more international students, but also indicate the constantly growing “going-out” trend among American students.

Among all study abroad programs, the short-term one which strongly connects to coursework and an integral part of a larger learning experience that lasts less than eight weeks is most attractive according to the statistics that 63% of U.S. students who used to go abroad in the 2015-2016 spent 8 weeks or less in the foreign country. (Spencer & Tuma, 2002; Statistia, 2018). One common format for short-term programs is the January or winter-term course which is primarily provided for students who cannot travel abroad for a longer time to experience international education. Summer programs offer similar options for in-depth study as the other format of short-term study abroad programs. The summer programs can be ranging in length from one week to one month. Students’ next common option for short-term study abroad programs are those in which the international experience is required in a larger, semester- long academic course, and students are about to take classes before their trip and write a reflection paper after they come back to home country. The last uncommon option for students is short-term domestic study-away programs, and this is typically for students who are not able to afford international airfare but still want to get educational benefits of learning out of their element. (Donnelly- Smith, 2009). In 2018 Opendoor Fast Facts from the Institute of International Education, the percentage of American university students who study abroad in short-term has increased to 64.6 in the 2016-2017, and Europe, Latin American and Asia become top three destination choices for them to go. The rising demand for short-term study abroad not only symbolizes U.S. university students’

eagerness to obtain international experience, but also means short-term study abroad programs have essential values in terms of academic credit earning, time saving, intercultural learning and multicultural competency fostering.

In this case study, I will primary focus on the analysis of U.S. university students' rationale in decision making to participate in short-term study abroad programs because understanding students' objectives will help with determining further practices and interventions on program development as well as expansion. In addition, an analysis on two affecting factors– U.S. governmental and school-based policies and safety challenges in short-term study abroad – that play vital roles in program expansion will also be conducted. This case study will provide takeaways about initiatives, rationale, procedures, risks and expansion of short-term study abroad programs for American university students who are currently planning on short-term study abroad, study-abroad advisors and program developers in higher education institutions, and other countries' universities/colleges that are seeking for partners in the United States. Through this case study, readers may also obtain more objective thoughts on the value and effect of short-term study abroad experience.

2. Key Terminologies

To better obtain implications from this case study, below is the explanation toward the terminologies exist in the paper:

Integrative motivation refers to “identification and desire to interact with another ethnographic group”; While instrumental motivation “involves learning a second language or understanding a foreign culture for a practical purpose such as furthering a career, improving social status, or meeting an educational requirement”. (Gardner & Lambert, 1959)

Intercultural learning is defined as “the acquisition of general (transferable) intercultural competence; that is, competence that can be applied to dealing with cross-cultural contact in general not just skills useful only for dealing with a particular other culture”. (Bennett, 2010). Students' intercultural competency, which is an “ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions”, could be fostered through accepting valid intercultural education. (Mckinnon, 2013).

Transformative learning outcomes are generated through “a process of perspective change, or a shifting worldview To gives students the potential to become more engaged scholars and professional citizens” (Volunteer and Intern Abroad, 2017).

Generation Z is a group of people “who were born from 1995 onwards and is comfortable with technologies that are fairly recent for older generations, and has grown up in the current environment of ubiquitous mobile communications”. (Rouse, 2018).

3. The Review of Literature

Besides the general advantages of short-term study abroad given above, Nyaupane, et al (2011) and Kavakas (2013) indicated that participants would able to better learn social ties, social norms, local language and get academic achievement in different countries to get global citizenship fostered through short-term study abroad experience. Getting transformative learning outcomes is the other rationale for university students in the United States to participant in short-term study abroad programs. (Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011). University students are encountered with employment challenges after graduation, thus correctly transform and implement what they have learnt from study abroad into the real career and society is important. What's more, as a group who live in a developed country, U.S. university students prefer to study in developing countries because they expect to learn diverse historical and geographical knowledge through studying and living in a country where has different national condition. (Horn and Fry, 2013). The rationale of U.S. university students was examined to be changed by school-based and governmental policies in Smith (2016) and Kavakas' (2013) researches. For example, students preferred to participate in short-term study abroad programs because of academic requirement, employment requirement and the overall diplomatic trend in the United States. Additionally, financial situation slightly influences students' rationale in decision making of short-term study abroad because U.S. higher education institutions are normally being need-blind which means students are able to participate in their schools' all study abroad programs regardless of their financial aid situation. (Horn & Fry, 2013; Smith, 2016). The second affecting factor to change

students' motivations is safety challenges. Due to the growing number of diverse locations to be chosen by short-term study-abroad participants, students are encountered with increasing risks when they are abroad, thus it's significantly important to think about the negative influences that short-term study abroad programs will bring to students. The motivations or eagerness toward studying abroad hence would be eliminated if safety challenges could not be positively controlled by both home and host institutions. (Rhodes, 2016; Aresi, et al, 2016; Vossen, 2016).

4. The Motivations of Students

4.1. Integrative Motivation

The objectives of U.S. university students to participant in short-term study abroad programs have been discussed in many ways by professionals. While discussing what the biggest expectation of students is once they have initiatives to be short-term study abroad program participants, the answer to this question also symbolizes the biggest value of short-term study abroad – intercultural learning. Given the university students' who are passionate with learning different languages and cultures in a relatively shorter time, Intercultural Integrative Motivation can be listed as one of the most influential factors that promote U.S. university students' participating rates.

Nyaupane, et.al (2011) conducted a study on a group of an American university students who just short-term studied abroad in South Pacific or Europe. Through taking a survey of 136 participants before the departure from the USA for the program on questions of social ties, previous travel experience, motivations as well as personal attitudes toward destinations, the researchers found that social motivation which is included in integrative motivation refers to the American university students who are eager with interacting with and being accepted by other humans who live under different circumstances in a foreign country contributed the most toward the U.S. university students' rationale of participating in short-term study abroad programs. Besides the social motivation, language skills improvement as the other most influential factor shaped U.S. university students' rationale in decision making, and participants were expected to get learning outcomes that could be transformative and collective in terms of perception toward different cultures. (Kavakas, 2013; Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011).

On the other hand, Lane-Toomey and Lane (2012) suggested that the trend of intercultural learning between the United States and the MENA region got strengthened nowadays, as Arabic language is one of the critical-need languages targeted by the world. In addition, Lane -Toomey and Lane's study results gained from analyzing data collected from a cross-sectional survey and focus groups with current U.S. university study abroad studies also indicated that study abroad students in MENA took a greater number of classes to improve language skills, and students' previous travel experience made them seek for a better cultural understanding by studying abroad in certain regions. From Lane-Toomey and Lane' study, it's not hard to conclude that interculturally integrative motivations play the crucial role in encouraging U.S. university students to be short-term study abroad participants who are passionate with learning diverse culture and local languages.

4.2. Instrumental Motivation

As Toomey-Lane and Lane (2012) mentioned, the constant growth of the demand on Arabic language experts, U.S. university students were more likely to study abroad in MENA region in order to ensure the success of their future career. In other words, employment and social status improvement included in instrumental motivation can also be regarded as two important factors that push students to participate in short-term study abroad programs. Today, developing countries have become the top choice for university students in U.S. to study abroad because participants want to learn more historical and geographical knowledge by studying and living in a country where has different national condition to pursue a development of individual competition especially in job searching. In this era, establishing positive relationships with developing countries is prioritized for some of developed countries such as the United States in terms of promoting international economic, trade and cultural communication. (Najafi & Askari, 2012). Hence, job seekers are generally required to hold previous experiences with studying abroad, speaking second language, being familiar with foreign cultures and having ability to conduct intercultural communication. Therefore, in order to being more competitive, university students who will be faced with intense employment opportunities right after graduation have gradually started to seek for short-term study abroad experiences to further facilitate their personal quality

development.

Also, according to IIE's 2018 Fast Facts, U.S. university students who study abroad prefer to study science, technology, engineering & math, followed by business, social sciences, foreign languages & international studies, and fine or applied arts. Looking through the major selection of U.S. university students, understanding why STEM major students should study abroad is an urgent necessity when analyzing the instrumental motivations of students. Under a multicultural world, the companies that have set themselves apart are the ones that are able to and willing to work with international agencies, and STEM fields are not excluded from innovation and creativity that businesses try to come out ahead along with the breaking down of cultural and language barriers. STEM major students in the United States are expected to make themselves more marketable because finding work after graduation can still be a difficult task for some especially at this moment when working opportunities are constantly shrinking due to the inevitable economic recession. Therefore through studying abroad, STEM major students are more competitive in job searching with multicultural learning and new social experiences. (Hurt, 2015).

Horn and Fry's research (2013) examined the relationships among destination, type and duration of study abroad programs by analyzing survey responses from 2250 college alumni who used to study abroad between 1995 and 2005. The results indicated that studying abroad in a developing country and engaging in international service-learning were two issues that tightly associated with the odds of development volunteerism and duration of study abroad. Based on the survey results, the fact of why university students preferred developing countries was that students who had studied abroad in developing countries, which were particularly facilitative of growth in the dimension of cognitive engagement, actually scored higher than those students in developed countries. The authors also mentioned that regarding to the obtaining of international service-learning, students reflected that they had more opportunities to get practical experiences as they were provided a large amount of chances to work or intern in a different country context. Moreover, studying in a developing country where has totally different national condition than home country's, the participants are inclined to spend more time on social engagement as well as intercultural learning because of a certain curiosity. The outcomes from pre-mentioned experiences of short-term study abroad thus can be positive for the participants to obtain better employment opportunity and position in the future. In terms of meeting an educational requirement as one of the instrumental motivations, however, European countries actually are the top choices for U.S. university students to study abroad. (IIE, 2018). Even though there are some students whose main purpose to study abroad is learning diverse culture and local language of the destination, matching educational requirement from home institution as the other motivation still cannot be ignored. Today, Europe has long been a classis destination for study abroad students from studying French in Paris to business in London, thus U.S. university students may find it easier to be socially engaged, culturally accepted and test scores improved by studying in European countries without certain language barriers. (European Commission, 2018). Moreover, European countries invest in their higher education systems to help make education affordable for students while maintain high quality standards. Therefore, choosing European countries to easier match educational requirement can be regarded as one of the reasons for students to study abroad in the short-time.

5. Existing Expansion Approaches

5.1. U.S. Government Factor

The question of "why study abroad" starts to seem plausible when overseas returnees are no longer exactly equivalent to high salaries or prestigious academic backgrounds in the workplace. Nevertheless, some of students who plan to study abroad and parents who is in charge of financial affairs still regard "why study abroad" as a crude and stupid question to be answered because If study abroad was not for personal success in academic field, career journey or a paper of diploma, what would that be for? However, the reasons for studying abroad are varied such as intellectual development, gilded experiences, or even immigration. The charm of study abroad is self-evident, and the advantage of short-term study abroad is not only a chance to feel unfamiliar teaching concept and method, be familiar with the new academic system, obtain the experience of domestic course, contact new academic thinking mode, or make like-minded foreigner friends, but can be another culture cognition mode and an accurate feeling of cultural information in a relatively shorter time, in order to thus generate more comprehensive insights into cultural differences and diversity. Regarding to the advantages of study abroad that reflect on individuals, U.S. government and higher education institutions step on the journey of short-term study abroad programs expansion, and endeavor to widen

the way for local American students to go overseas to understand and absorb in another language, improve the ability of critical thinking, and understand the similarities and differences between home countries and host countries.

The ways for U.S. government to support students to participate in study abroad programs are shown in different ways. First of all, there are plenty of grants and scholarships available for participants. For example, U.S. university students have different primary sources such as Federal Student Aid, Diversity Abroad Scholarships & Grants and etc. to apply for scholarships that directly offered by the government. (U.S. Dept of Education, 2011; NAFSA, 2018). What's more, Lane-Toomey (2014) and Whalen (2015) indicated that U.S. government also provided the large amount of federal funding for higher education institutions for enlarging study abroad programs for students especially in Formal Area Studies. The federal funding was used to support Area Studies programs as well as the following potential participation in study-abroad programs at U.S. universities.

According to the information given by U.S. Department of Education (2011), in terms of the relevant policies and practices, U.S. government enacted the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act to enhance the important of study abroad for U.S. students. The purpose of this Act is to increase mutual understanding between American people and those in other countries by educational and cultural exchange. The 100 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund, as a dynamic public-private sector partnership between the U.S. Department of State, Partners of the Americas and NAFSA, is also an important tool of U.S. government to encourage study abroad programs for American students, aiming to increase U.S. university students' study abroad opportunities between the United States and countries in the Western Hemisphere. (100,000 Strong In the Americas, 2018). The U.S. governmental policy prioritizes require all policy leaders not only from the national and state, but also at the institutional level to use their platforms to articulate the importance of knowing other cultures and languages and should encourage students to seek out international learning opportunities. For example, colleges and universities should exert greater leadership to make sure that every student is able to seek a path to an international learning experience, tailor study abroad programs to nontraditional students' needs, make learning abroad accessible, affordable and attractive, and integrate global learning into the curriculum. (NAFSA, 2018).

5.2. Higher Education Institution Factor

With the instruction and requirement from the U.S. government, American universities and colleges make large efforts to expand short-term study abroad programs for students as well. In general, U.S. higher education institutions often depend on study-abroad-provider organizations which are both nonprofit and for-profit and overseas universities, thus it's significantly important for them to generate international education partnerships in the global scale. (Loberg, 2012). As institutional internalization has become an embedded and widely accepted part of the higher education sector, the development of strategies to promote and manage international engagement is increasingly being important for U.S. higher education institutions to concentrate on. Through sending students out and accommodating incoming students from other countries by establishing reliable international educational partnerships as well as using strategic framework to design and monitor study abroad programs, U.S. higher education institutions may find it easier to expand the internalization on campus. (Eckert, et al, 2013). For example, as the Heiskell Award winner of 2018 among all U.S. higher education institutions in international partnerships, West Virginia University and the students obtained a lot of benefits from partnering with Royal University for Women in Bahrain. The broad partnership has grown to include both universities, their alumni, and the local and regional business and industrial sectors. The ultimate positive outcomes of building such partnership between two universities can thus be shown through student exchange like short-term study abroad in either the United States or Bahrain to foster students' intercultural competency in both home and host institutions.

Nowadays, besides the establishment of international educational partnerships, U.S. higher education institutions also focus on using strategic framework to design short-term study abroad programs for students to participate in. Planning, marketing, conducting and evaluation are four primary steps to achieve the ultimate success of programs. (Eckert, et al, 2013). Regarding to the funding and financial aspects, Bothwell (2015) indicated that U.S. universities and study abroad organizations have already committed to spend \$185 million over the next five years to make study abroad more accessible, through the Institute of International Education's Generation Study Abroad initiative. The money will be used to provide comprehensive support to students, faculty and programming and is aimed at students who are typically under-represented in study abroad programmes. There are around 350 U.S. colleges and universities that have signed up to the initiative,

and 84 percent said that they plan to create or expand study abroad scholarships for under-represented students such as minority, ethnic and first-generation students. With intentional initiatives and strategic framework used to expand short-term study abroad programs, U.S. higher education institutions have inevitably generated a large amount of efforts in study abroad expansion for American university students.

6. Limitations in Expansion

6.1. Study Abroad Safety Challenges

When home institutions, parents and students who are considering participating in study abroad programs, safety issues are primarily commonly concerned. Even though U.S. government and higher education institutions have made efforts to expand short-term study abroad programs for American university students, safety challenges faced by participants can still be one of the biggest barriers that partially avoid such expansion because students may prefer to stay at home institution to ensure their personal safety. What's more, with the destinations of study abroad constantly growing, students' safety gets less controllable. For example, quality assurance and accreditation are fundamentally important in short-term study abroad programs designed for students but pose significant challenges at the same time. When home institutions have internal quality assurance procedures in place to ensure teaching quality, integration of curriculum, and students' safety, quality review requirements for their own components can be met; however, it's more difficult to assure the quality of students' academic learning and safety when they study abroad where locations are varied in different countries. (C-Insights, 2015). In short-term study abroad period, students are inclined to be more mentally and physically dangerous, as they may find it hard to quickly and exactly adapt into a new experience. (Gonsalvez, 2013). Even though some of participants already have had related travel experience, studying and living alone in a foreign country with study stress and cultural shock is actually much more challenging. In other words, if students themselves didn't have any motivations to participate in short-term study abroad programs due to safety risks, the expansion approaches conducted by U.S. government or higher education institutions wouldn't generate any positive outcomes.

In today's study abroad programs, there are four primary safety challenges for participants: transportation safety, alcohol and drugs, mental health issues, and sexual harassment and assault. Looking through these challenges, none of them is under the control of both home and host institution even though program leaders or local faculty/staff should take the main responsibility of taking care of the participants; instead, it would be difficult for faculty and staffs to thoroughly control over the daily life of university students who study abroad because they have been regarded as adults who have rights to determine their behaviors. (Rhodes, 2016; Aresi, et al. 2016; Vossen, 2016). Additionally, the liability distribution sometimes could be hard to optimally achieved, as there is rarely a benchmark to clarify whether safety challenges posed on students are incurred by staffs and faculty's default. Generally speaking, safety challenges are inevitable when students are abroad especially when international university partnerships have been constantly encouraged and destination choices get enlarged, thus we still couldn't deny the negative impacts generated by safety issues that will slow down the speed of short-term study abroad expansion. Without the potential participants' motivations, the expansion procedures may encounter with more challenges on the way to achieve the goal of expansion.

6.2. The Economics

Because of difficult economic times faced by American colleges and universities, higher education budgets are being slashed and some of institutions are even forced to justify and maintain their budgets, expanding short-term study abroad opportunities for students is still facing with financial problems. For example, the University of Californian funding was reduced \$1.2 billion in 2012, following a \$695 million cut in 2010, and Florida has seen state funding for higher education drop 24 percent in four years. In the countries where are the popular destinations such as Greece, Ireland, Spain, Italy, and Portugal for American university students to short-term study abroad, America is seeing the same type of drastic cuts. (Pulley, 2012; Alvarez, 2012; Labi, 2012). As what mentioned above, U.S. higher education institutions and relevant international institutions have committed to spend \$185 million to promote short-term study abroad programs for American university students in next five years from 2018 but recovering from previous current economic climate and its impact on budgets is still a continuous process. Therefore, high administrative costs but low funds for study abroad programs in

higher education institutions may impose negative impacts on the expansion.

For students who expect to participate short-term study abroad, the high cost of study abroad is discouraging students from participation even though some literatures indicate that financial status of a student slight influence his/her rational in decision making and some of higher education institutions intentionally open the door for students with financial challenges by removing restrictions from financial aid when they applying for the participation, there are still many study-abroad programs completely funded by the students and faculty because

The programs have been zeroed on the budget because financial supports from U.S. government may be typically used to support different types of programs in other study areas. (Pulley, 2012). For example, U.S. government is financially supportive for developing Area Studies and STEM Study Abroad Programs in U.S. higher education institutions, but meanwhile doesn't concentrate too much on financially helping American universities and colleges to expand short-term study abroad program typically for students majored in History. (Lane-Toomey, 2014; Whalen, 2015). Hence, without federal aid as well as financial support from home institutions, the students with financial problems may be lack of motivations and thus limit the expansion of short-term study abroad.

7. Recommendations:

7.1. Government

Playing in a leading role in the expansion of short-term study abroad programs for American university students, the government should first commit to understand the diverse needs of students regarding to participants different background, academic and career interests. After comprehensively understand what the global trend of studying abroad is and what American university students' common expectations from participating in short-term study abroad are, the U.S. government needs to wisely give financial and policy supports to U.S. higher education institutions. Second, federal aids and scholarships for students who are currently have financial problems are also very necessary. Even though students with federal aids don't encounter with restrictions when they apply for participating in short-term study abroad, it's better for them to have aids from the government to cover their living expense when they are abroad. At the same time, the obtaining of financial aids should be based on students' academic performance, extracurricular participation and overall personal quality. What's more, the government should also conduct strict regulations and polices aiming to monitor each procedure in the expansion process of short-term study abroad programs.

Providing American university students who have study abroad experiences with more work opportunities will also help with the expansion of short-term study abroad. In terms of students' instrumental motivations, getting better job opportunities is one of the biggest reasons for American university students to participate in short-term study abroad programs. According to Lane-Toomey (2014), students who have study abroad experiences are more likely to prefer to work the U.S. government in the future because they have language skills as well as intercultural competency that can make them much more competitive in the job market. Therefore, U.S. government can expand short-term study abroad by enhancing students' instrumental motivations and offering them more work opportunities within governmental institutions.

7.2. U.S. higher education institutions:

First of all, when higher education institutions are trying to expand short-term study abroad programs for students, they need to strategically pose program-related information on school websites, posters or social Medias to attract more potential participants. Study abroad advisors should also be responsible for giving students helpful suggestions or advising students in program, course and destination selection, application, and follow-up period. Second, on-site faculty and staffs should obtain pre-departure orientation from home institution to learn how to effectively ensure participants' positive learning outcomes as well as safety especially in an uncontrollable situation, and a full preparation is necessary to success. After program leaders and faculty arrive at the host institution, teacher education should be constantly conducted during students' short-term study abroad period. For example, a group of experts either from home or host institution should be able to answer questions from staffs and faculty related to students' academic learning or daily life. The questions can be curriculum-related that are answered by professors, or how to adjust managing methods through listening to students' feedback. Regarding to the pedagogy used in short-term study abroad programs, the professors need to

be responsible for providing students comforts and a sense of security through combing local language and culture into academic classes, orientation sessions and out-of-school activities in order to release students' nervousness and anxiety coming from absolute unfamiliarity with the new environment. According to the study of Ye, et.al (2017), a mutual impact existed between study abroad programs, teachers and students as well. In general, a comprehensive study abroad program was one of the most effective ways for teachers to be multicultural and global, so teachers would have not only intercultural competence development, but also teaching beliefs and practices improvement once they attended well-designed pre/in service trainings. Students' safety especially mental and physical health could then be positively ensured because of teachers' high capacity and well performance in the short-term study abroad programs.

Third, when U.S. higher education institutions are running study abroad programs for students' mutual exchange with international partners in other countries, a series of quality assurance procedures needs to be negotiated by home and host institution to make sure that curriculums match students' needs and teaching quality is positive for students' learning outcomes. A good reputation of a short-term study abroad can thus be generated by ensuring the quality of programs, which may be helpful for U.S. higher education intuitions to better expand short-term study abroad programs for their students in the future. What's more, in-person communication is very important for schools to develop the quality of programs. For example, international partnered schools should mutually send faculty and staffs to do on-site visiting to exchange and learn teaching and managing experience. Meanwhile, students' reflections are also for schools to further develop all aspects of the programs. Therefore, it's an urgent necessity for U.S. higher education institutions to pay attention to students' feedbacks during and after their participation of short-term study abroad programs. Listening to students' thoughts and expectations to the programs, faculty, staffs, curriculums, campus, extracurricular activities and etc., schools will have a more objective evaluation on those short-term study abroad programs that available for their students. Even though the expansion of short-term study abroad is very crucial because more students may be able to access to intercultural learning, quality assurance and accreditation are also regarded as the priority.

Forth, in order to help participants with cultural adjustment and adaption in the short time, home institutions, faculty members, study abroad administrators and program leaders should agree with providing students with more opportunities to get in-depth experience through working or studying with host country participants and host communities. Engaging with host communities is important for schools because students would either benefit or face challenges if the role played by host communities couldn't get instructed and verified by home institutions. According to Donnelly-Smith (2009), there are some program directors still recommend limiting the number of sites visited to one or two instead of visiting many countries within a short-term study abroad programs that last less than 6 weeks because the main purpose of studying abroad should still be focused on improving students' academic learning, along with the development of intercultural competency. In addition, spending the entire program in one place can allow students to interact with host country communities and residents more authentically, and being true residents, however, has been the major way for students to best and fastest adapt into a new culture.

7.3. Study-Abroad Institutions

With the expansion of short-term study abroad programs, Pulley (2010) indicated that there are still many programs that are totally funded by students and faculty, therefore the expansion or participating rate of such program may be less satisfying. Study abroad institutions, at this moment, are playing a significant role in organizing programs and sending participants out. For instance, when university students find it difficult to participate in the programs held by home institutions because of the limitations on majors, GPAs, or destination selections, they may be inclined to ask supports from study abroad institutions outside of their universities. To expand short term study abroad programs and improve opportunities for American university students to be participants, study abroad institutions should first be able to take advantage of the utilization of technology. As the dominated group on Internet as well as the main service target who study abroad, Generation Z's expectations should be considered seriously by study abroad agencies when catering its flavor. Through collecting and analyzing data left by Generation Z on Internet such as social medias, student abroad institutions could thus strategically design and expand their programs by matching service targets' academic and cultural interests.

Second, same as for higher education institutions, a good reputation is also highly significant for study abroad agencies. All procedures used to expand short-term study abroad programs should be

aligned with the instructions, regulations and policies of U.S. government. Even though most of study abroad agencies are profit companies, students' demands are supposed to always be the priority when considering the expansion. Agencies need to take the main responsibility to take care of students when they are abroad: students' safety, academic performance, host community engagement should all be monitored. Also, study abroad agencies need to train program leaders efficiently and effectively. Meanwhile, study abroad agencies would have to establish good relationships with students, students' parents, host institutions, and to fully understand all legal issues and immigrant regulations of foreign embassies and governments when they advise students and train students before departure. Again, listening to students' feedbacks and frequently following up with students' academic and health situation are necessary as well.

7.4. American University Students:

Standing on the point of expanding short-term study abroad, students seem to be less important than program developers, school administrators or governments. Nevertheless, students' reflections and expectations can drive expansion process into a more positive direction. Therefore, if American university students who used to benefit from short-term study abroad would love to make efforts in program expansion, they might need to share their personal perspectives and experiences with schools or when doing peer-coaching. Their experiences, opinions, suggestions and expectations are extremely important for government, higher education institutions as well as study abroad agencies to understand what their service targets need through participating in short-term study abroad programs, and to create and develop better programs in the future. Second, students may validly show their competencies obtained from short-term study abroad in their further academic learning or in the workplace to help with conveying the positive value of studying abroad. American university students should be able to fully engage in host communities when abroad and be willing to challenge cultural reciprocity by attending home institutions' timely communicating with study abroad ambassadors or peer counselor groups to provide objective advice.

8. Conclusion

At present, the degree of internationalization of higher education institutions has become an important indicator to measure the modernization of colleges and universities. International exchanges and cooperation that contain short-term study abroad are one of the significant characteristics of the internalization, and also the main channel for higher education institutions to further foster students' better academic achievement by ensuring students' transformative learning outcomes, and to thus cultivate students' intercultural competency. Students' integrative and instrumental motivations are extremely important for students themselves, higher education institutions, the government and study abroad agencies to be navigated on the path of short-term study abroad expansion. The barriers such as safety challenges and financial status that negatively influence students' motivations and slow down the process of expansion should be dealt with by involving relevant stakeholders together by prioritizing students' demands, along with strategic short-term study abroad programs design and development framework. Last but not least, as the product of internalization of education and an important criterion for measuring the modernization of higher education institutions, short-term study abroad has its advantages and optimal prospects in the further development and expansion, which worth to be dig its essential value deeper and wiser.

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