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Studying abroad: Learned lessons from outdoor adventure in Costa Rica**Jeremy Lackman**

Monmouth University, USA

Statement of the Problem: Thousands of students study abroad every year. Many students return saying they felt like the trip had a positive impact and changed their life. However, what that means for each person is different, with students experiencing the same program in different ways and changing in different ways. The purpose of this study is to describe student experiences from a study abroad program to Costa Rica and to explain how those experiences changed their lives.



Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Using students' blogs, journals, videos and photo albums, the researcher conducted a document analysis to find emerging themes.

Findings: The lessons learned varied from cultural awareness, diversity, protecting the environment, poverty, overcoming fears, teamwork and the interconnectedness and interdependence of other nations to the USA.

Conclusion & Significance: Students all had different experiences and lessons learned, while participating in exactly the same program, the key being how each student internalized their experience in relation to their previous life experiences. Further studies should continue to try to understand the impact a study abroad program has on its participants after they return stateside.

Recent Publications

1. Lackman J and Chepyator Thomson J R (2017) Reflective voices: Understanding university students' experiences of urban high school physical education. *Physical Educator*; 74(4): 672-700.
2. Lackman J, McNeill E B and Smith M L (2015) Freshman college students' reasons for enrolling in and anticipated benefits from a basic college physical education activity class. *Frontiers in Public Health-Public Health Education and Promotion*; doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2015.00162.
3. Lackman J and Chepyator Thomson J R (2014) Urban high school physical education: A synthesis of the literature in academic journals. *Educational Research Journal*; 29(1 and 2): 69-90.

Biography

Jeremy Lackman has his PhD from the University of Georgia in Kinesiology and is interested in Physical Education, Teacher Education. He is an Assistant Professor at Monmouth University and teaches a variety of courses in health and physical education including an outdoor adventure study abroad program. His research areas include PE teacher image, urban PE and study abroad experiences.

JLackman@monmouth.edu

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