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Experiential Learning Theory: Evidence from a Study Abroad Program

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Email: [mshrikhande@gsu.edu](mailto:mshrikhande@gsu.edu)**ABSTRACT**

We propose an integrated model for the design of study abroad programs in RCB, and strategies to measure the effectiveness of such programs. Our integrated design of the study abroad program is based on the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) proposed in the literature. Effectiveness of the program was measured in terms of cognitive and affective domain learning objectives, using several measures including case analyses, surveys, reflection papers, and team projects. The instructional innovation contained in this integrated approach was successful by all measures. Implications for faculty members involved in designing experiential learning programs, especially study abroad programs, are discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** Experiential Learning Theory, Study Abroad Programs, Program Design, BEVI Survey, Cognitive and Affective Domains, Instructional Innovation, Integrated Approach

**INTRODUCTION**

Employers today expect business schools to ensure that students are exposed to some practical “real-world” experience before graduation, so that they are ready to enter the workforce without requiring too much additional training. There is a perceived gap between theory and practice in business education curricula in general. Johnson (2014) identifies a perceived gap in accounting education and practice, while Stringfellow, Ennis, Brennan & Harker (2006) discuss a similar gap between marketing education and practice. Sullivan and Rosin (2008) suggest that the goal of higher education is to provide a link between theory and practice. To achieve this goal, the educational environment needs to create rich connections between the theoretical and experiential curricula (Bass, 2012).

Experiential learning can help bridge the gap between theory and practice. This refers to any approach that helps students in applying their knowledge and conceptual understanding to real-world. This helps students learn to think critically and achieve a higher level of learning. Experiential learning can be achieved either through immersion in a real-world situation, or through a simulation of a real-world problem in a classroom. Simulations in the traditional classroom could include activities such as cases and problem-based studies, projects, or other active learning initiatives (Wurdinger & Carlson, 2010). However, when students are immersed in authentic environments such as internships, field placements, clinical experiences or

research projects, the learning becomes significantly more real. Study abroad programs offer a great opportunity for real-world education via immersion in a foreign, unfamiliar culture. It provides a rich source of experiences for students that are difficult, if not impossible to mimic in a classroom.

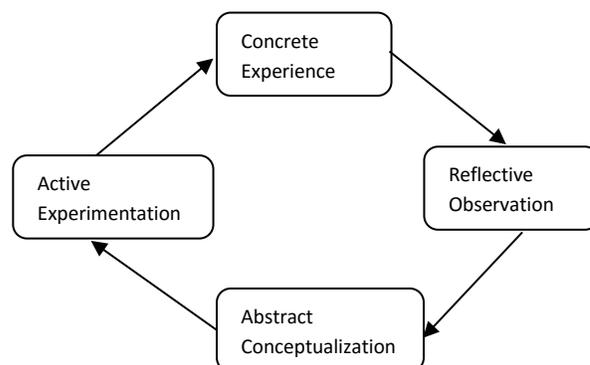
In order to ensure higher level learning, however, a study abroad program must be designed appropriately, based on sound theoretical foundations. Measuring the effectiveness of such programs through valid instruments is necessary to ensure that the program does not become a glorified vacation (Passarelli and Kolb, 2011). The fundamental question we address is whether higher level learning in both the cognitive and affective domains (Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) can be achieved through a study abroad program that is designed in keeping with the tenets of an underlying theory. We use Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) as the basis for our study abroad program design. Our research is based on one study abroad program that took undergraduate students to India.

The paper is organized into the following sections. In the next section, we briefly describe the basic tenets of ELT, followed by the design of the instructional innovation in our study abroad program to take into account this theory of learning. We then discuss the methodology used to measure student learning, the results achieved, and the discussion and conclusion.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY

Kolb's (1984, p. 41) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) sees learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience". The grasping, or gathering of knowledge, is divided into two related modes, that of concrete experience (CE) and abstract conceptualization (AC), while the transforming of knowledge consists of reflective observation (RO) and active experimentation (AE). According to ELT, the four stages of learning begin with concrete experiences that form the basis for reflections, which allow a person to generalize the learning by forming abstract concepts and models of how the world functions. These concepts can be put to the test by acting upon them in real life. These actions test the concepts and also create new experiences to continue the learning cycle. Figure 1, adapted from Passarelli & Kolb (2011), depicts the learning cycle.

**Figure 1:** The learning cycle, adapted from Passarelli & Kolb (2011)



In order to help students go through this learning cycle, the study abroad program must be designed in a holistic way that permits the integration of experiences into meaningful change in

the students' perception of the world, as opposed to a shallow, skimming experience that is enjoyed but soon forgotten.

The role of the instructors here is to ensure that the right kind of experiences are made available, time and resources provided for reflection on the experiences, guidance in the formation of abstract concepts, and the setting of boundaries and goals to actively experiment with the newly developed ideas. This requires flexibility on the part of the instructor to function occasionally as the subject matter expert, while at other times stepping back into the role of facilitator or coach. Equally important is the role of a standard setter and evaluator to ensure the quality of experiences delivered to the students as well the expectations regarding the quality of student contributions. Unlike in a traditional classroom, where the instructor is generally the sole provider of knowledge, a study abroad program requires co-ordination between multiple sources of information, such as company executives, faculty members at partner educational institutions in the foreign country, as well as trained tour guides. Further, study abroad programs require the instructors to build relationships with students that go beyond mere exposition of content, to act as catalysts for transformative experiences.

## **THE INNOVATIVE DESIGN OF OUR STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM**

Keeping in mind the elements of ELT, we incorporated specific ideas in our design of the study abroad program. Experiences provided to the students were aligned with tasks that permitted immediate reflection and abstraction, followed by an opportunity for active experimentation, to complete the learning cycle depicted in Figure 1. Several such learning cycles were incorporated into the two-week program. One such cycle, the design thinking workshop, is illustrated here.

### **Design Thinking Workshop**

Students were first given a day long city tour of Hyderabad, India, where they visited several locations of historical and cultural significance (the city tour was organized by the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad). This was their first exposure to India, beyond the airport. During the course of the day, students visited a Hindu temple, an old fort, and an Indian bazaar known for bangles and pearl jewelry, and a museum known for rare collections gathered by a single person from around the world. Besides the obvious learning from these visits, students experienced the chaos, noise, and color of the streets, which was in their words "unlike any we have experienced before". The juxtapositions of modern and ancient, and the rich and the very poor were also evident to them on the streets of Hyderabad in India. This was the concrete experience (CE) phase of the learning cycle. In the evening, they were asked to reflect on what they experienced, and make notes for their reflections paper (RO) that was due at the end of the trip.

The next day, students attended a day-long Design Thinking Workshop (conducted by Mr. Rajib Ghosh and Shipra of DLabs in Hyderabad), which began with an introduction to the concept of design thinking (Brown, 2008). Students were encouraged to think about the needs of the people of India and possible products or services that would help solve some of the problems in that society. Students came up with various ideas for possible products. For instance, having observed that women in India commonly wear ornamental nose rings, one suggestion from students in order to alleviate the effects of air pollution in Indian cities was to wear air filters disguised as nose jewelry (AC).

By the end of the day, students were assigned the task of analyzing consumer personalities by examining the contents of their wallets (an in-class simulation where neighboring students exchanged their wallets and analyzed each other). This was followed by an analysis of the service that a wallet provides, and how the underlying needs that are addressed by the wallet

could be better addressed by a redesign of the wallet. Students worked in teams to develop ideas for alternate designs of the wallet to address one specific shortcoming each, such as lack of ease in accessing cards, or a desire among people to have a variety of wallets without buying new ones often. The teams then created a prototype of their new designs using materials like paper, clips, string, tape and scissors (AE). They then presented these ideas to the cohort along with a demonstration of their prototype product.

Through this two-day experience, students went through the entire learning cycle of CE (city tour), RO (reflection in the evening), AC (new way of thinking about the needs of the consumers in this culture), and AE (designing and building a prototype of a new product idea).

Several other learning cycles provided to students included: 1. Company visits followed by related analysis, 2. an active learning session on business negotiations, with instruction on the differences in negotiation methods and norms between the US and India. The students got an opportunity to put this new knowledge to practice the very next day during a visit to a market of Indian handicrafts known for negotiation and bargaining as the expected way of shopping. Thus, the program design repeatedly ensured that students went through the entire learning cycle in a meaningful way, rather than a haphazard collection of activities and sightseeing.

## **MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INNOVATION**

The following items were used in assessing student learning and transformation as a result of the program.

1. Pre-departure assignments to evaluate baseline cognitive ability.
2. Surveys to measure perceptions of learning and overall satisfaction with the program.
3. BEVI survey to measure changes in attitudes, beliefs, and values about life in general.
4. Evaluation of reflection papers completed individually by students, to evaluate the program objectives in the affective domain, by assessing student perceptions of their entire experience.
5. Evaluation of capstone projects completed by teams. This helped us assess the level of critical thinking as well as student understanding of the new cultural environment.

### **Pre-departure Assignments**

Students worked on some assignments individually to analyze cases of business that entered the Indian market, such as Oreo's ad Fiat, to illustrate two major industry segments – consumer goods and consumer durables. They were given an orientation lecture on the history, political structure, and socio-economic factors pertaining to India. Students were also introduced to the CAGE (cultural, administrative, geographic, and economic) framework to help analyze international business ventures. Students were selected into the program based on their majors (typically Finance and Managerial Sciences) and high GPAs. Twenty two students were selected out of about 50 applicants to the program. They were thus expected to perform well, and we used their case analyses to gauge how well they could apply their understanding of the history and culture of India from classroom experience alone.

### **Effectiveness Surveys**

Effectiveness of a study abroad program can be assessed in two different domains. First, the traditional methods of setting course learning objectives in the cognitive domain, and assessing student performance on assignments, projects and cases, as well as using survey instruments to gauge student perception of their own learning. This was achieved in our program by having them complete a session-by-session feedback form where they rated the effectiveness of each

session on a 5-point Likert scale. Appendix A shows a sample set of questions from the survey. The entire survey has not been included due to its length. However, it is available upon request. All 22 students that went on the trip completed this survey. Averages were computed for each question on the survey, and any open-ended comments were noted. Students were also administered a survey by the University Study Abroad Programs (USAP) office on overall program effectiveness, which included questions on the organization of the trip and the instructor responsiveness throughout the trip, in addition to overall academic quality of the program. Appendix B shows a sample set of questions from the USAP survey. In addition, individual reflection papers and team projects were evaluated by the instructors to gauge their learning as it related to the cognitive student learning outcomes set out in the syllabus (Garth and Niu, 2010). Sixteen of the 22 students completed this survey. Once again, average scores were computed for each question and comments aggregated.

### **BEVI Survey**

The second, perhaps higher level of learning, that ought to take place in an experiential, immersive program is the changing of attitudes and beliefs about life in general (affective domain), leading to a new world view that can help them adapt better to a changing global environment, as well as the building of relationships with their fellow travelers. The BEVI survey was used to assess these kinds of learning outcomes in the affective domain. The BEVI instrument has been developed and refined by various researchers over several years, and has been validated in many studies (Shealy, 2004; Shealy, 2005). The survey contains 185 questions that represent 17 scales related to beliefs, life events, and values. Some of the scales include, for instance, demographic information, Negative life events, Needs fulfilment, Emotional attunement, and Socio-cultural openness. For a detailed discussion on the BEVI survey, along with a list of the 17 scales and information on the reliability and validity, please see the following website - <http://www.thebevi.com/aboutbevi.php#aboutShort>. We administered the survey to the students both before and after the trip, in order to measure the changes in the affective domain. We further plan to have the students take the survey one more time, 3-6 months past the trip, to gauge longer-term, transformative changes in their beliefs or values.

Twenty two students went on the study abroad trip. Twenty of them completed the BEVI survey before departure, while 14 of the original 20 completed it post trip. Among the 14, four were dropped from the analysis due to inconsistent answers. The pre/post comparison was done for the 10 valid responses.

### **Reflection Papers**

Students were asked to keep a journal to record the highlights of their daily experiences, and turned in a reflections paper individually at the end of the program. These papers helped us assess some of the affective level learning outcomes. Based on Bloom's (1956) taxonomy, we wanted to gauge whether students went beyond the basic levels of receiving and responding to the higher levels of valuing, articulating and being personally transformed by the experience.

### **Capstone Projects**

Students worked in teams of three on capstone projects at the end of the study abroad trip to create a plan for an existing or new business to enter the Indian market, with an analysis of the financial feasibility and a marketing plan that took the culture into account. The projects helped us gauge their critical thinking ability, as well as how their experience helped them understand

the Indian market and consumers beyond their pre-departure understanding from classroom lectures alone.

## RESULTS

The results from each of the three surveys are summarized below.

### Survey 1: Session-by-session feedback

Feedback on each session conducted during the study abroad program. This included a couple of sessions before departure to India, to provide perspectives on India regarding the political, socio-cultural, and economic climate for business. Some of the survey questions and their results are shown in Appendix A. Table 1 below shows the overall evaluations based on this survey.

OVERALL EVALUATION	AVERAGE SCORE
Quality of academic program	4.96
Quality of lodging (ISB-Hyderabad and ISB-Mohali)	4.91
Quality of Food (ISB-Hyderabad and ISB-Mohali)	4.90
Quality of lodging (ITC Mughal, Agra and The Lalit, New Delhi)	4.95
Quality of Food (ITC Mughal, Agra and The Lalit, New Delhi)	4.95
India study-abroad: Overall experience	5.00

n=22 (100% response rate)

The average score on each of the above 5 elements was over 4.90, indicating a high level of satisfaction among students with the overall experience.

As illustrated earlier, one of the learning cycles involved included a city tour of Hyderabad followed by the design thinking workshop the next day. The average scores for the city tour and the workshop were 4.9 and 4.7 respectively. The high scores reflect the benefits the students perceived from the combination of activities that helped create a richer learning experience. The other example of a learning cycle involving the session on business negotiations received scores of 5.0 and 4.9 respectively.

### Survey 2: Evaluation of program directors by study abroad programs office

The results on the key items in this survey by the study abroad office are shown in Table 2.

PLEASE RATE YOUR PROGRAM DIRECTORS (FACULTY) ON THE FOLLOWING:	AVERAGE SCORE OUT OF 5.00
Support and guidance provided throughout the program	4.94
Ability to handle emergency situations	4.72
Insight into the host country's culture provided by the directors	4.94
Were the directors available when needed	4.81
Courses you took abroad	5.00
Pre-departure schedule	4.69
Daily Schedule	4.54
Excursions/Travel arrangements	4.94
Living arrangements	5.00

### Survey 3: The BEVI survey

The BEVI survey results begin with some demographic information on the sample. Some of the results are shown in Table 3 below.

DIMENSION	DISTRIBUTION
Gender	Females 6, Males 4
Nationality	US Citizens 6, Others 4
Ethnicity	Caucasians 5, Others 5
Religion	Christian 5, Others 5

Several of the BEVI scores are reported in three segments, representing the top 30%, the middle 30%, and the lower 40% in terms of the overall scores on the complete scale. The overall scores represent how well-adjusted people are emotionally in their lives. Interestingly, those who scored in the top third had a family income of only \$13,000 per year, the middle third reported \$53,000 on average, and the lower 40% reported \$70,000 on average. Those in the top 30% of BEVI scores reported three times as many negative life events as those in the bottom 40%. They, however, reported a much higher value for fulfilment of basic needs, indicating that those students with a difficult background in terms of economic hardship and negative events in their life were more resilient than their peers.

As discussed in the description of the BEVI survey earlier, the results of the survey are summarized as scores on various scales, such as *Negative Life Events*, *Self-Certitude*, and *Ecological Resonance*. A comparison of the before trip and after trip scores on the various scales for the three segments shows some interesting changes in the scores of students on these scales after the trip. The direction of changes in scores for this and a few other scales after the trip are shown in Table 4 below:

BEVI SCALE	LOWEST 40%	MIDDLE 30%	TOP 30%
Negative Life Events	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged
Identity Diffusion	Increased	Decreased	Decreased
Self-Certitude	Decreased	Decreased	Decreased
Socioemotional Convergence	Decreased	Increased	Increased
Gender Traditionalism	Decreased	Increased	Decreased
Ecological Resonance	Unchanged	Increased	Increased

For instance, *Self-Certitude* scores decreased among all three segments of students. In other words, students' perception of who they were and what life is like became less certain after the trip. This is an interesting but expected finding. When exposed to a new, unfamiliar culture in a developing economy, fundamental assumptions about life get challenged. It is therefore not surprising that students' certainty about their understanding of life went down.

Similarly, *Negative Life Event* scores (perception of negative life events experienced) went up among the lowest 40% (the ones with the lowest scores overall and the highest family income levels), while decreasing among the middle 30%, and remaining unchanged among the top 30% (the ones with the highest scores overall and the lowest family income levels). In other words, students who had already faced challenges in their lives (the top 30%) were not as strongly affected by the exposure to the poverty and challenges faced by the people in India, as students that had not faced similar challenges in their lives (the lowest 40%).

## Qualitative Feedback

Besides the quantitative responses to the surveys reported above, students made several comments in writing on the surveys and their reflection papers. We also got feedback verbally, both during the trip itself, as well as during a debriefing meeting within a few weeks of returning from the trip. Since the trip ended on Christmas Eve, the debriefing session was held around the end of January when the next semester was underway.

A few of the comments from the students:

1. *This was a life changing experience that I have recommended to everyone that I can. Overall it was incredible and my only real complaint is that we couldn't stay longer!*
2. *I learned more in 10 days than in a (typical) semester. The last night there I cried because I didn't know why I hadn't taken advantage of these opportunities earlier.*
3. *Truly fantastic program. Would like to see slightly more briefing before meetings/lectures.*
4. *Build more rest days into the program and don't be hesitant to extend the trip beyond Xmas. Few American families would have a problem with postponing Xmas for a trip to India.*
5. *Overall, every professor (GSU included), tour guide, student, etc. were all clearly passionate and genuinely interested in the well-being of our group. Amazing to see such personal behavior in an academic program. Hope to see this program continue, as emerging markets are incredibly important, especially now.*

## Excerpts from Reflection Papers

1. *When we arrive in Hyderabad, the first thing that strikes me as we step out of the airport is the constant buzzing in the humid sticky "winter" air. The traffic noise follows us around India and never completely settles, except for the quiet moments we get to spend on the ISB campus. My first encounter of the "perfect chaos" of the Indian traffic happens the very same day when we take a taxicab to the mall. It is a trip to remember – the traffic is fast-paced, appears to have very little structure, and in the absence of rear-view mirrors honking is the only means of communication on the road. Most roads are somewhat underdeveloped, in need of major repair – they are an ongoing concern in India, which is growing too fast and seriously lacks infrastructure to accommodate the high-paced growth of the industries, and distribution of goods and services. It can be a major setback that will put any business venture in jeopardy by causing significant delays in distribution and delivery. However, where one may see only limitations, another may see countless business opportunities. Indeed, India appears to have an unexplored niche for logistics services that will only strengthen as the infrastructure continues to grow.*
2. *It's hard to visit India without any presumptions. Everyone who knew I was going thought that I was going to have some sort of "spiritual awakening." That I would find my inner peace, or my personal god, or any other cliché westerners might attach to an eastern country with such a deep history. This is not to say that people do not experience this in some way when they visit India. As we learned, India is a very large country with 236*

*different types of people (as consumer segments for marketing efforts) just in New Delhi. This means a person could have any combination of experiences when visiting. Personally, I saw our visit as a full lifetime in two weeks. There were times when our lives were full from the beauty of it all, and there were times when life hit hard. In this paper, I hope to reflect on my experience with Indian education, business, and culture.*

### **Capstone Projects**

Students worked in seven teams of three students each (one team had four students) and turned in projects where they chose a product or service for which they developed a business plan for entering the Indian market. The selection of their products or services alone helped us gauge how the in-country experience deepened their understanding of the needs of the market. We had expected them to write reports on large, branded, multinational firms' products or services. Instead, students' ideas included some of the following:

- a. Bariatric oxygen chambers in hospitals for diabetes patients, given the high incidence of diabetes in India and the high rate of long term disability.
- b. Wearable air-filters, given the severe air pollution in major Indian cities.
- c. A recycling company partnering with a local firm to launch a pilot project in the city of Mumbai.

Students directly tied their product/service ideas to their personal experiences within the country, and quickly identified some of the key needs of people there. Their reports also showed empathy for the problems faced by the people, and their economic limitations. Overall, the projects demonstrated the level of critical thinking expected of the level of students in the program, but went beyond our expectations in the affective domain. They were able to clearly articulate the unique circumstances of the Indian market, and plan accordingly. Their writing demonstrated the extent to which they had transformed their worldview from a US centric perspective to one that showed awareness of the differences in emerging markets.

### **DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

The quantitative results from the basic evaluation surveys clearly indicated that students rated the program highly, both in academic content as well as the overall experience of travel and living arrangements. The BEVI survey results are a little more complex to interpret. First, since the sample size is small in just one travel abroad program, it is hard to generalize the results too much. We see this as a first step, with follow up studies to be conducted with future study abroad programs from our college to various countries. Second, there is some evidence that immediately after a trip, there tends to be a bit of a backlash effect in terms of students attitudes. A trip to a completely foreign culture can be overwhelming, causing students to occasionally "retreat" into more narrow worldviews, contrary to the expectation of expanding horizons. However, around six months after the trip, a third survey can reveal the true long term changes. The third survey will be conducted within the next few months, and may provide additional insights.

A couple of interesting and unequivocal changes in the students as seen on the BEVI include a decrease in Self-certitude scores, and an increase in Ecological resonance. Self-certitude indicates a strong sense of will and a lack of patience with others' difficulties, and disinclination towards deep analysis. A person with a high score would be the kind to say "don't make excuses, think positively and get the job done." A lowering of the score implies an increase in compassion towards others' situation, and greater thought regarding life, and less certainty about one's opinions. Seeing the abject poverty among some of the people in India, as well as a

very different culture could have had this effect on students. This is a positive change that indicates a growth in critical thinking ability as well as emotional maturity. Ecological resonance deals with one's concern for the environment, and the fate of the earth or natural world. An increase in scores here indicates a greater concern for the earth. Once again, experiencing firsthand the level of air and noise pollution in Indian cities, the lack of infrastructure to deal with urban problems adequately by western standards, likely had a positive impact on the students' concern for the environment in general.

While the BEVI report is too detailed to report in full, the above excerpts suffice to indicate that the study abroad program did more than simply create academic, discipline based value. There are clear indications of change in beliefs and values held by the students.

Our evaluation of the students' reflection papers as well as their team based capstone projects also confirmed for us that they were engaged fully in thinking critically about business and culture. Students demonstrated a professional ability in developing business plans with an appropriate entry mode, marketing strategy, financial feasibility, and analysis of the cultural, social, and other issues the business may face. Some of the teams came up with innovative ideas for products/services that further lent credence to the increase in ecological resonance found in the BEVI survey results.

### **Implications for Faculty conducting study abroad programs**

Unlike in a traditional classroom, a study abroad program places a greater burden on the faculty members who conceive of and implement such a program. Careful planning is needed, and thought must be given to how the academic goals will be achieved. Far too many programs are run without a good theoretical underpinning in the design of the activities. Often third party companies organize tours of various countries and take care of travel and living arrangements and company visits. However, there is often no host institution, and the trips can be hit or miss. The company visits and travel are good experiences, but without careful planning, students do not get the opportunity to complete integrated learning cycles as described in the ELT. The reflection, abstraction, and testing phases are often not thought through sufficiently, and the learning can remain incomplete. We believe it is important to design all four activities of the ELT into the program in different ways. To this end, it is beneficial, in our opinion, to have a host institution as a partner in the country you are visiting, to provide a base for academic discussion with local faculty who are experts in doing business in that cultural setting.

This level of planning does place a burden on the faculty doing the planning, especially in the first couple of iterations. A couple of hundred hours were spent by us over a year to plan and implement this study abroad. The planning involves several key aspects:

1. Academic content, including designing the courses, getting them approved in the college, and communicating the content delivery needs to the host institution.
2. Travel arrangements to the host country and travel within that country, including excursions, company visits, and travel between cities as needed. As mentioned before, the mix of academic sessions, city tours, and company visits must be carefully planned, taking into account the learning objectives and learning theory. Travel guides, for example, must be knowledgeable and certified. The guides that accompanied our students to the historical sites, for instance, were certified by the Archaeological Society of India.
3. Attracting and recruiting the right students. This may involve several rounds of talking to various classes to publicize the program, coordinating with the college and university to follow their procedures, interviewing students to ensure that they are motivated enough, and to alleviate any concerns they may have about foreign travel. Putting students in

touch with scholarship opportunities is important. Students also may need help with getting a passport and the appropriate visa to visit the country in question.

4. Making sure students understand expectations for the trip, including emergency procedures, other policies to be followed during travel, as well as a general orientation to the host country prior to departure.
5. Managing the budget and ensuring that the program breaks even. The pricing of the program is a key decision that must be made to ensure that it is low enough to attract enough students and high enough to cover the costs.

### Implications beyond study abroad programs

While this paper focused on the design of a study abroad program using ELT, the same idea can be used for experiential learning within a local setting. For instance, a factory visit or a field trip could form the basis for creating the learning cycle espoused by ELT. Making sure that students have time to reflect on the concrete experience, create abstractions, and actively experiment with the learning is the broader implication of this innovation.

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Study abroad programs are a rich source of learning for students, and have the potential to be life changing experiences with effective design and implementation. Such programs are one instance of immersive, experiential learning where faculty have an opportunity to build relationships with students that go beyond dissemination of knowledge, and move into a mentoring or coaching role.

How generalizable are the results of this study? This research demonstrated the effectiveness of a program based on ELT in achieving both cognitive and affective goals. We believe that designing a study abroad program using the ELT as a theoretical underpinning and creating a rigorous process to select students will achieve the cognitive goals of helping students think critically. The direction of changes in the affective domain as described by the BEVI results will depend on the backgrounds of the students and the country visited. However, we believe that the experience of a study abroad program will transform students in significant ways.

For future research, collecting data across multiple such programs over multiple years can help us examine specific country effects, as well as permit longitudinal analyses.

## APPENDIX A

Session by Session Effectiveness Survey (This is a sample of the questions on the survey). The boldfaced numbers show the average scores received on each question.

Atlanta: <u>November 7<sup>th</sup></u>					
<b>Introduction to program (3 hours)</b> Emily Caskey (Travel, GSU expectations), Satish Nargundkar (Geography, languages, arts, Hindi lesson)	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Felt rushed, the geography and language session</li> <li>• Especially language, more time for practice needed</li> </ul>	<b>4.5</b>				
<b>India – History and Political economy (3 hours)</b> Milind Shrikhande (History since ancient times, Political regimes since independence, Societal changes, Financial implications).	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>4.6</b>				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyed use of videos and lecture format</li> <li>• Overall lot of information, well structured</li> <li>• Great information for visits later in India</li> </ul>	
Atlanta: November 14 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>India – Culture and Management (3 hours)</b> Satish Nargundkar (Modes of Entry (Oreos case), CAGE model, Segmentation/Excel, Process Innovation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful for projects</li> <li>• Overall good practical information</li> </ul>	1    2    3    4    5 <b>4.8</b>
<b>India – Economy and Growth (3 hours)</b> Milind Shrikhande (India as an economic superpower, International comparison, Growth indicators, Fiat/Tata joint venture case) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good lecture – important for course objectives</li> <li>• A lot of information – very condensed</li> </ul>	1    2    3    4    5 <b>4.6</b>
Hyderabad: December 14 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>City Tour: Birla mandir, Salar Jung museum, Charminar, Golconda fort (8 hours)</b> Miss Raiza <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All places really beautiful, educating and worth visiting</li> <li>• Could be devoted more than one day</li> <li>• Incredible, eye-opening introduction to India</li> </ul>	1    2    3    4    5 <b>4.9</b>
Hyderabad: December 15 <sup>th</sup>	
<b>Design Thinking Workshop (8 hours)</b> Rajib Ghosh and Shipra <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fun learning creative ways for emerging markets</li> <li>• Knowledge gained definitely will be applied lot</li> <li>• Speakers were great, thoroughly enjoyed the session!</li> </ul>	1    2    3    4    5 <b>4.7</b>

## Appendix B

University Study Abroad Programs (USAP) office Survey  
 (This is a sample of the questions on the survey)

1. How satisfied were you with your Program Director's ability to provide guidance and support before & during the program?
2. How satisfied were you with the insight into the host country's culture and/or history that your Program Director provided?
3. Please describe how your Program Director provided insight into the host country's culture and/or history (ex: pre-departure orientation, classroom discussions, cultural excursions, etc):
4. How satisfied were you with the course(s) you took abroad?

5. Please rate each of the following as it applied to your program:
  - a. Pre-Departure preparation
  - b. Daily schedule
  - c. Program-related excursions, visits,tours, activities
  - d. Arrangements of group travel
  - e. Living arrangements
  
6. If applicable, how satisfied were you with your Program Director's ability to handle any emergency situations?

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