

Constantly Connected: The Impact of Social Media and the Advancement in Technology on the Study Abroad Experience

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of the advancement in technology and convenience of social media on the study abroad experience. It tried to determine whether smartphones and their ability to remotely access the Internet on the go positively or negatively affect the study abroad experience. The results indicated that the advancement of technology has positively impacted the abroad experience because of the convenience it offers users in communicating and finding information while on the go. However, the study found that the pervasiveness of the social media negatively affected the study abroad experience; people often seem more interested in documenting an experience for the Internet instead of fully appreciating the moment while abroad.

I. Introduction

The increase in new media and communications has significantly impacted globalization in the recent decades. Traveling and communicating internationally are easier now than ever before. The popularization of smartphones and social media allows the world to be constantly and conveniently connected.

According to Guo-Ming Chen (2012), new media has brought human interaction and society to a highly interconnected and complex level. However, it challenges the very existence of intercultural communication in its traditional sense. It used to take a letter several weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Today, it takes less than a second to relay a message via mobile device. International travel isn't so lonely anymore with continuous conversation and interaction with the world.

Teenagers and young adults are pursuing their academic careers overseas through study abroad programs in various cities around the world. Sojourner is a term commonly used in study abroad literature to describe an individual who is temporarily studying and living in a foreign county, otherwise referred to as a "study abroad" (Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut & Klute, 2012). Thousands of miles away from home, access to the Internet and social media remains in the sojourner's pocket due to international cellular data plans on smartphones. Within seconds, taking a tour through Vatican City can switch to an interactive online experience with friends and family back at home. This instant communication allows a transparent and comforting experience for both the senders and the receivers. Because of this connection, the distance while abroad ap-

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appears less intimidating. Through access to new media, friends and families are able to live vicariously through these young sojourners and vice versa.

Studying abroad is a valuable and enriching experience, but it can be easily lost due to the distraction of new media. According to Copeland and Hatcher (2007) this generation has never been more wired, yet so less connected. Zemmels (2012) states that traditional media research views young people as a special group in need of protection from media and especially their potentially negative influences. As early adopters of new digital technologies, young people tend to be at the forefront of new media interaction, thus shaping it through their practices.

This paper tried to answer questions: What impact does the adoption of social media and smart-phones has on the study abroad experience? Why do students abroad feel the need to be constantly connected?

II. Literature Review

There has not been much academic research on the effect of modern technology and social media on the study abroad experience. Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine the study abroad phenomenon in relation to the recent advancement in digital technologies and the popularization of social media. The globalization of technology has enabled digital users to access and upload information immediately, thus resulting in a constant connectivity among users.

The Study Abroad Phenomenon

Because this study looks at the impact of social media and new technologies on the study abroad experience, it is necessary to first understand why students study abroad. By providing students the opportunity to earn course credits in another country, study abroad programs have positioned themselves as institutional activities on college and university campuses across America (Twombly et al., 2013). Although prevalent today, the idea of earning an education in another country is far from new; students have been studying abroad for centuries. In colonial times, there were few colleges in America, thus fewer options for higher education. Additional training had to be completed through an apprenticeship or education abroad. In the 1800s, religious programs were created in order to send their students abroad as missionaries to achieve their higher education. Institutions soon understood the impact that students could make as enriched global citizens (Mistretta, 2008).

According to Mistretta (2008), only white wealthy males were able to study abroad prior to the 20th century. The Rhodes Scholarships were established in 1903 to encourage international study for all students, no matter their economic status. The most intelligent students from around the world were invited to study at Oxford University in London, England. After World War II, Senator J. William Fulbright continued to promote international study and research in hopes of building ties between nations and preventing future hostility among nations. The Fulbright program provides scholarships for graduate students and scholars with a desire to study and conduct research abroad (Mistretta, 2008).

By 2008, more than 90% of all colleges and universities in the United States offered study abroad programs. The number of U.S. students studying abroad continues to increase regardless of the fluctuating economy. Between the years of 2010-2011, 271,000 students studied abroad (Twombly et al., 2013).

Study abroad is now a trend in the tourism market (Yu, 2008). However, there is a lack of diversity among those who are able to study abroad. The majority of the U.S. study abroad population is “white, female, young, single, financially comfortable, and without diversity.” (Twombly et al., 2013, p. 37). The female to male ratio is 2:1 and this statistic has stayed consistent over time (Twombly et al., 2013).

According to Twombly et al. (2013), students who have studied abroad are more globally aware and academically driven. “To continue to compete successfully in a global economy and to maintain our role as a world leader, the United States needs to ensure that its citizens develop a broad understanding of the world, proficiency in other languages, and knowledge of other cultures,” said Bill Clinton (p. 23) in 2001. Those who study abroad value intercultural interaction as part of their college education. Students who express interest in improving their understanding of other cultures and countries are twice as likely to study abroad as those who do not. Improving one’s foreign language skills, exposure to diversity, and cultural understanding are all

motivations for students to study abroad (Twombly et al., 2013).

In order to examine the effect of the study abroad experience, a case study was performed on eight former participants from Buffalo State College that spent a semester in Siena, Italy between the years of 1962 and 1991. Through in-person interviews, the study showed that there are varying effects of study abroad. While abroad, students are exposed to new learning and experiences, which can have life-changing effects on the individual. Furthermore, students learn more by becoming involved and engaging themselves in the culture around them. The stronger the involvement or effort, the more the student will learn; thus, the larger the effect will be (Mistretta, 2008).

According to Twombly et al (2013), a number of positive outcomes result from participating in studying abroad. Research supports that studying abroad improves retention and academic performance. The experience broadens the students' horizons by helping them learn the language and immerse themselves in the culture. It deepens the student's openness to diversity and assists them in developing into adulthood.

New Media and Digital Technologies

Young people are innovative leaders when it comes to new media interaction, Zemmels (2012) stated. Media formats have transformed into a mobile phenomenon, including personal computers, cellular phones, tablets, etc. International data plans and wireless mobile connectivity allow telephone and Internet access anywhere (Zemmels, 2012).

Access to excellent mobile service is available all around the world. Cell phones with simple features, such as calling and texting, allow users to work and play on the Internet. Smartphones, such as iPhones, BlackBerrys and Androids, have enabled users to roam the world while staying in touch with anyone at almost any time. In 2009, sales of smartphones were up by 70% in North America (Levinson, 2012).

According to Chen (2012), innovations in digital media continue to change the way we think, act and live. New media has taken communication to a higher interconnected and complex level. Mobile access allows communication to be readily available and convenient. The users are in control of what is viewed and shared. This freedom empowers the process of human communication (Chen, 2012). Users are free of the "the constraints of physical proximity and spatial immobility" (Buckingham, 2008, p. 147). By increasing both the amount and quality of interpersonal communications, these interconnected devices are able to make communication faster and easier (Adler et al., 2012).

In relation to study abroad, Huesca (2013) believes that new communication technologies take time away from indulging in the local culture. Levinson believes that "humans are inherently multitasking organisms" and perceive new media to be an extension of our lives (p. 20). Smartphones satisfy the human need to have any information at any time or place.

Levinson (2012) states:

The fact that you can disseminate whatever information you please, to whatever portion of the world you like, from your smartphone, iPad, or any other mobile web-connecting device at hand, means that your access to the world, and its access to you is as much a part of you, as close at hand, as your hand itself" (p. 29)

Applying Social Networking Sites to Abroad Experience

Decades ago, face-to-face communication was essential in maintaining most personal relationships. However, according to Adler, Rosenfeld, and Proctor (2012), proximity isn't a requirement anymore. Personal relationships can now be maintained through the Internet and social media on any mobile device. Social media collectively describes all the channels that make online personal communications possible. From sending a text message to posting on Facebook, there are endless uses of digital media (Adler et al., 2012). According to Zemmels (2012), since 1997 social networking has established itself as a common method of communication because of its ability to constantly generate new information. More and more individuals have developed an active presence on social networking sites, creating a valuable and universal platform for communication. Social networking sites (SNS) are web-based services that allow individuals to create a profile and create a community through shared connections. These platforms create a culture for sharing creations. Sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. have allowed users to build and maintain social connections through creation and distribution of information.

Today, a conversation over social media can be compared to going over to a friend's house, or meeting a friend for coffee. This accessibility was not available prior to the Internet-based forms of communication (Zemmels, 2012). At the beginning of 2010, almost 75% of Americans under the age of 20 used social networking sites (Adler et al., 2012). New media technologies have made online communication platforms and immediate international communication possible (Zemmels, 2012).

"Life takes place on screen," wrote Mirzoeff (as cited in Zemmels, 2012, p. 13). Social media gives its users a sense of identity and community. Users are able to become active agents in new media environments and produce their own content (Zemmels, 2012). SNSs allow users to maintain connections with friends. "Social voyeurism" is a term used to describe social media users browsing through SNSs and interacting with other users in order to catch up on the goings-on in society (Buckingham, 2008, p. 122).

Through uploading information immediately, the mobile device becomes the key tool for capturing moments, storing information and documenting experiences to relay back home. Access to social media on mobile smartphones represents a "lifeline to self-perception, a means of documenting a social life, expressing preferences, creating networks and sharing experiences" (Buckingham, 2008, p. 158).

Lin, Peng, Kim M., Kim, S., & LaRose (2012) believe that SNSs continue to receive attention for their effects on social capital and psychological well-being. Social capital describes the resources and benefits received from relationships with other people. With the advancement in technology, the ability to gain social capital has transitioned to social media. Used to maintain pre-existing relationships as well as create new ones, social networks have revolutionized the way friends and families connect. Social networks take the place of face-to-face communication. SNSs provide the information and support that sustain relationships during transitions to a new environment. When individuals enter a new environment, such as studying abroad in a new country, they must adopt different social and cultural patterns. Establishing a social network in a new environment is important for adjustment (Lin et al., 2012). According to Hendrickson, Rosen, & Aune (2011), students who study abroad may experience homesickness or discontent, which is why they remain constantly connected to their social networks.

Sojourners are on the move, constantly processing, absorbing and exchanging information. Smartphones make it possible for these students to access and share information independent of physical location. "The mobile is a ubiquitous, pervasive communication device which young people find difficult to be without, whether they like it or hate it, or feel something in between" (Buckingham, 2008, p.146).

Chen (2012) states that this high interaction of online social activity challenges the way reality and personal identity are perceived. According to Buckingham (2008), when talking on the phone or having a text message conversation, the outside world is shut out. Buckingham uses a term, absent presence, to relate the distance created when using technology in a distracting manor. Absent presence is being physically present in one space, but mentally present in another. "Our use or refusal to use social media, says something about us as individuals" (Buckingham, 2008, p. 145).

Based on the literature review, the following three research questions were asked and two hypotheses were established.

RQ1: Why do study abroad students use social networking?

RQ2: How often do study abroad students utilize social networking?

RQ3: If "Life takes place on screen," how does the constant connection to social communities affect the study abroad experience?

H1: The constant connection to social media platforms while abroad benefits students' relationships in home country.

H2: The constant connection to social media platforms while abroad creates distance from the culture of the students' surroundings.

III. Methods

This study examined how new technology and access to social media abroad have impacted the student study abroad experience. The researcher investigated the topic through an online survey and a focus group, which provided well-rounded explanations to research questions.

In April 2013, 100 people participated in an online survey through SurveyMonkey (surveymonkey.com). The researcher invited all of her Facebook “friends” to complete the survey. Users were able to complete the survey by clicking a link. The survey was directed towards university students that have previously studied abroad. The researcher chose a survey because it enabled the researcher to collect data from a high number of representatives.

The survey included a variety of questions regarding how participants communicated with their friends/family at home, how often participants used social media while abroad and what kind of impact new technologies had on their overall study abroad experience (Refer to Appendix I for survey questions). The participants also had an opportunity to express their opinion on whether or not the advancement in technology and the convenience of social media positively or negatively impacted their abroad experience. These questions will further identify the benefits and setbacks of the use of social media by today’s sojourners.

The focus group was conducted in April 2013 with eight Elon University students who have previously studied abroad. The focus group lasted 30 minutes. In order to provide a greater, more in-depth perspective on the use of technology and social media while abroad, the focus group participants were selected from different groups in terms of their study abroad location and year.

In the focus group, questions were asked about the use of cellphones abroad, Internet access, how the participants utilized social media and the positive/negative impact this had on their study abroad experience (Refer to Appendix II for focus group questions). The researcher chose to do focus a group in order to receive personal opinions, stories and experiences from previous study abroad students. The focus group also gave participants an opportunity to answer open-ended questions about important/unimportant aspects of new technology and social media during the study abroad experience.

IV. Findings and Discussion

The goal of this study was to assess the impact that social media and advancement in technology have on the study abroad experience. Questions in the survey and the focus group gathered specific information about the respondents and their relationship with technology and social media while studying abroad in a foreign country.

Demographic Information

Survey participants were recruited from former study abroad students through a snowball sampling technique to reach various age groups. A total of 100 respondents participated in an anonymous survey. The majority (88%) of the participants were female. Only 12% were male, reflecting the national trend of women representing the majority of the study abroad population (Twombly et al., 2013). Thirty-nine percent of the respondents were 21 years old and another 39% were 22 years old. This data shows that majority of students do not study abroad until they are in their early twenties.

The participants of the focus group consisted of eight senior Elon students that had studied abroad in the past: three males and five females. Their answers and opinions provided further insight into the implications of student’s use of social media and digital technology while studying abroad.

Cellular Devices Abroad

Eighty-six percent of the survey participants owned a cellphone while overseas. Of those that owned a cellphone abroad, 42% owned smartphones that had access to the Internet and social media. Those without smartphones used basic devices that offered only calling and text messaging capabilities.

Regarding the question “How much time did you use your phone each day?” the majority (73%) of the survey respondents said they used their cellphone less than 30 minutes a day. While 13% said they used it one to less than two hours a day, followed by 11% for 30 to less than 60 minutes a day, and 3% for two to less than four hours a day. This information is significant because it shows that the majority of students kept their phone usage to a minimum each day. This included phone calls, text messaging or any other amenities their phones offered.

Of those who had access to the Internet and social media on their cellphone, a sweeping majority of

them studied abroad in 2012 or 2013. This is significant because it shows that smartphones and international data plans are growing more convenient and accessible with each passing year. In fact, according to the survey, 75% of the student that studied abroad in 2013 brought a smartphone with them overseas.

Communication and Social Media Use

When asked “How much time did you spend on social media daily?” the majority (62%) of the survey respondents answered that they spent less than 60 minutes a day on social media. Twenty-three percent spent one to less than two hours on social media. Twelve percent spent two to less than four hours a day on social media and 3% spent four or more hours on social media a day. These responses indicated that a vast majority of the participants spent less than an hour on social media daily.

Sixty-two percent of the participants communicated with family and friends in the United States two to six times a week. Thirty-one percent communicated with their family and friends at least once a day and 7% communicated with their family and friends once every two or three weeks. The majority of the students were in contact with their friends and family on a daily basis. This exemplifies the convenience and accessibility that the advancement in technology has brought to international communication.

In order to gain a perspective on the mobile accessibility of cellular devices, the participants were asked, “Did you ever utilize social media while walking around a city abroad? For example, uploading a picture to Facebook while in a museum or sending a tweet or a text message while sightseeing?” The majority (78%) of the survey respondents said they did not have access to the Internet and/or social media while on the go. However, 22% did utilize social media while walking around a city abroad.

The thirteen participants that did utilize social media on the go said that it enhanced their experience. They were able to sustain their relationships via social media. Students enjoyed the ability to communicate with their loved ones in America as things were occurring. The Internet was also a valuable resource for guidance and information, especially in a foreign city. One participant stated, “It enhanced my cultural experience. I liked to share messages and photos with my friends and family as it was all happening.” Along the same lines, a participant wrote, “People were interested in what I was doing and where I was, so I would then go into detail about what I was uploading or posting. It really made me realize how lucky I was to be seeing these things.” As Lin et al. (2012) stated, these responses supported that with the rise in digital technologies, students were able to gain social capital and sense of identity through social media communities. Students are able to access the Internet, get their questions answered and find local spots to visit. Additionally, students believed they “felt safer” knowing they had access to calls and information at any given time.

However, 11 students believed mobile access to the Internet and social media hindered their cultural experience, saying, “I wish I hadn’t had such easy access to free Internet.” Students felt they were too focused on updating their social media sites instead of focusing on the world around them. “If you are constantly using your phone/social media and not experiencing the sites, you are living less in the moment,” said one participant. According to Twombly et al. (2013), students study abroad to develop an understanding of the world, a proficiency in other languages, and knowledge of other cultures. However, these objectives cannot be met if students allow technologies and social media to interfere, thus creating absent presence (Buckingham, 2008). As a witness to such behavior, one student said, “It bothered me that other people were using their smartphones and Facebook while we were visiting historical sites.” This remark signifies the extensiveness of such actions. Not only does it distract the user from their education and their immersion with the surrounding culture, but it also disturbs learning and immersion for bystanders as well.

Embarking on a new idea, one participant in the focus group added, “I think that people use social media in terms of jealousy; social media gives them a platform to show the world all the fun they’re having.” People are “*over-sharers*” when it comes to social media. In today’s world, people are becoming active agents on social media. This insight gives reasoning behind the sojourner’s need to keep their online communities up-to-date by consistently uploading statuses and photos in a timely manner. Because other online users are able to view, comment and share the sojourner’s study abroad information, it can be used as a promotional device. Their pictures, blogs, etc. can positively influence other students to study abroad.

Those users who did not have mobile access to the Internet and social media on their phones believed that no access had a positive effect on their experience. “Not having social media meant I spent more time with others which led to deep and meaningful conversations,” stated one participant. Enlightened by the world around them, sojourners are able to soak in their surroundings and hold intellectual conversations

without any digital distractions. "I didn't have access to the Internet or social media while walking around. This greatly helped my experience because I was living in the moment, not online," said one survey respondent. Study abroaders value intercultural interaction, and distancing themselves from technology allows for more learning opportunities and cultural immersion (Twombly et al., 2013).

Impact of Technology and Social Media

When asked whether the advancement in technology and the convenience of social media had an overall positive or negative impact on their study abroad experience, 47% percent of the survey respondents answered "positively" and 38% answered "negatively." Seven percent reported technology and social media had both negatively and positively impacted their abroad experience. The answers to this question assessed the participant's personal perception of the impact of technology on their study abroad experience.

Of the 47% that answered positively, there was a resounding appreciation for the Internet's ability to connect the sojourner to their loved ones at home and friends abroad in a quick and easy fashion. Students embraced the international access and immediate communication. Not only did it allow easy communication, but also aided in day-to-day needs. For example, one student wrote, "We were able to utilize maps, find directions, and look up good restaurants and sights to see." Those with smartphones were able to constantly keep their families up-to-date on their whereabouts. "It was nice to have that option to let my family know I was okay. It kept my parents from worrying too much." A number of students were able to keep blogs to inform friends and family about their activities abroad. "Now you can share everything you see in such a short manner of time, in a way that is fun to engage in," said one student. All in all, these students believed that having access to the Internet and social media positively impacted their study abroad experience and made it easier to adjust to a new culture. Whether it was for their benefit, or for the benefit of those back home, there was an abundant source of dependency on their technological devices.

The students made it clear that utilizing the Internet and social media can have its perks, as long as it is used sparingly. "I wasn't connected all the time. I'd snap pictures during the day and then spend time on social media at night," said one participant in the focus group. By setting time aside each day, students had to make an extra effort not to let technology interfere with their cultural experience.

Contrastingly, 38% of the students believed the advancement in technology and the convenience of social media had a negative impact on the ability for study abroad students to fully immerse themselves into the culture. "People get so preoccupied with staying connected to people back home that they don't fully live in the moment and experience their time abroad to the fullest. Even if they're not looking at it; they're thinking about it. It's always on their mind. It's toxic and distracting," said one participant in the focus group. The distance created through the constant communication through the Internet and social media was a common denominator amongst those who thought negatively of the act. One student said, "Instead of enjoying the experience and fully soaking in what they're seeing, students are wondering what picture they're going to upload next or if someone is going to text them back." Social media enables students to latch onto home; therefore, hindering their ability to further immerse themselves in their surroundings. Students in the focus group and in the survey valued the opportunity for spontaneous exploration while abroad and felt that mobile Internet access seemed artificial and took away from the adventure. "I like that grassroots adventure; Just kind of forging your own way," said one participant in the focus group.

Some students pointed out that the advancement in technology and the convenience of social media both positively and negatively affect the study abroad experience. "Positively in that I didn't feel so far away from home, but negatively in that I probably spent time on social media when I could have been out and about exploring the city and enjoying my time." For those that rely heavily on social media on their mobile devices, this constant distraction can deprive students of getting involved and engaging themselves in the culture around them. The student's indecisiveness embodies the subconscious need for that sense of comfort: the Internet. Students realize it can be distracting, yet they seek to stay connected regardless.

Given the valid reasoning behind the respondent's opinions, it is clear that there are both positive and negative effects of social media and the advancement in technology. The advancement of technology has positively impacted the abroad experience in that it's much more convenient to communicate and find places to go and things to do while on the go. The pervasiveness of social media has negatively affected the experience; people often seem more interested in documenting an experience for the Internet to see instead of fully appreciating the moment as it happens.

V. Conclusion

The study took a critical look at the impact of the advancement in technology and social media on the study abroad experience. Advancement in technology positively impacted the study abroad experience because it is now easier for students to communicate and navigate on the go. However, social media negatively affected the experience; people wanted to remain connected to the online communities, yet their use of media device prevents them from full cultural immersion. The survey and focus group responses demonstrated that study abroaders' need for mobile Internet access (smartphones) is growing due to the constant desire to stay connected. The amount of time spent on social media depended on individual personalities.

This study was limited because of the convenience sample of the survey, which was heavily skewed to women (88%), even though it allowed the researcher to access many of her student organizations and friends in a short amount of time. The same goes for the focus group. As a result, this study should be replicated with a more balanced sample.

The survey was distributed through social media, which garnered highly active social media users as respondents. When replicating this study, researchers should use other methods to include non social media users.

To study this topic further, more research should be done to investigate the increase/decrease in the number of American study abroad students if technology were unavailable while studying abroad. Additionally, assessing how students' Internet usage and cultural immersion while abroad changes each year, may provide insight into how the advancement in technology and social media impacts their overall experience. This could be accomplished by interviewing and creating a case study following a group of current study abroad students in one country for three months and then following another group of study abroad students in the same place a year or two later. The researcher should study and analyze the students' social media activity both in their homes and on the go.

Future sojourners must be informed of the potential negative effects of overusing social media while studying abroad. With an increasing number of students choosing to complete academic courses in foreign countries, more research should be conducted on the effect of technological advancements on the study abroad experience. It is also important to conduct further research on the correlation between personality types versus social media presence. The researcher hopes that this study will lead more people to study and assess the power of social media and its ability to impact the study abroad experience.

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Appendix I: Survey Questions

1. Age
 - a. 18
 - b. 19
 - c. 20
 - d. 21
 - e. 22
 - f. 23
 2. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 3. What year did you study abroad?
 4. Where did you study abroad?
 5. How long did you study abroad?
 6. Did you have a cellphone with you overseas?
 - a. Yes
 - b. no
 7. If so, how often did you use it a day?
 - a. 0-30 minutes
 - b. 30-60 minutes
 - c. 1-2 hours
 - d. 2-4 hours
 - e. 5+ hours
 8. Did you have access to the Internet/social media on your cellphone?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 9. How many hours a day did you spend on social media while abroad?
 - a. 0-30 minutes
 - b. 30-60 minutes
 - c. 1-2 hours
 - d. 2-4 hours
 - e. 5+ hours
 10. How often did you communicate with friends/family in the US?
-

- a. Once a month
 - b. Once a week
 - c. 2-5 times a week
 - d. Every day
11. Did you ever utilize social media while actively touring a city abroad? For example, upload a picture to Facebook while in a museum or send a Tweet or text message while site seeing?
 - a. If so, did this enhance or hinder your cultural experience? Explain.
 12. Do you think the advancement in technology and the convenience of social media has positively or negatively impacted the abroad experience? How so?

Appendix II: Focus Group Questions

1. What year did you study abroad?
 2. Where did you study abroad?
 3. How long did you study abroad?
 4. Did you bring a cellphone with you overseas? If so, how often did you use it?
 5. What kind of Internet access did you have abroad?
 6. While you were abroad, how many hours did you use social media a day? On what device?
 7. What device(s) or platform(s) did you use to communicate with friends/family in the US? (Cell phone, iPad, laptop, etc. or Facebook, Twitter, email, Skype, etc.) Which one did you use most often?
 8. How often did you communicate with friends/family in the US?
 9. Did you ever utilize social media while actively touring a city abroad? For example, upload a picture to Facebook while in a museum or send a Tweet or text message while site seeing? If so, did this enhance or hinder your cultural experience?
 10. Do you think the advancement in technology and the convenience of social media has positively or negatively impacted the abroad experience? How so?
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