BLACK AMERICAN UNDERGRADUATES STUDYING ABROAD: WHAT ARE THEIR INTENTIONS AND BEHAVIORS?

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Black American undergraduates are not studying abroad at the same rate as their white counterparts. Research generalized students' experiences abroad, ignoring the specifics that could influence the actions and behaviors of a student of color interested in a study abroad program. This study identified the behavioral intentions (desire or intention) and subjective norms (elements that influence decisions) of Black American undergraduate students interested in studying abroad. A quantitative survey was used to examine the background, source of information, institutional factors, personal characteristics, outcomes of study abroad, barriers to study abroad, and demographic information of Black students. The findings revealed that Black students have a positive attitude and desire to studying abroad. However, factors that influence the decision making to study abroad is the ability to align studying abroad to the academic major, understanding the professional benefits gained for employability, and the ability to finance a study abroad program. The author used the results of this study to develop recommendations to increase Black students' participation in study abroad programs. Recommendations included actively recruiting black students to study abroad programs, align academics and career aspiration, educate on the racial dynamics abroad, and train advisors to inform study abroad education.

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PREFACE

First, I would like to thank my advisor for continually pushing me and keeping me on track. Your guidance was unparalleled, and I would not have graduated on time without you. Second, I'd like to thank my fantastic committee. I appreciate the time you put into reviewing my project and providing advice to help me clarify my thoughts. Not only that, I'd like to thank you all for passing me and allowing me to become Dr. Key.

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Third, I would like to thank my grandparents, for believing in my future and education. You have helped me find my voice and the strength to follow my own path. Thank you for investing in me and for your continuous love.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for always cheering me on and believing in my future. I love you all so much. Thank you for your encouragement and always encouraging me to be my very best.

1.0 OVERVIEW

In 2000, President Bill Clinton signed a memorandum to encourage the federal government's support of international education (Dessoff, 2008). In 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a proposal to allocate over $100 million towards studying abroad scholarships and created a seventeen-member Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (Foreign Relations, 2011) to expand study abroad opportunities within higher education. With each action, the U.S. government recognized that engaging in any aspect of international competence would improve interpersonal relationships, attitudes, and skills for U.S. college students and provide a more informed perspective of the world and the people around them (Salisbury, An, and Pascarella, 2013; Brux & Frey 2010).

International competency is a comprehensive approach to education that intentionally prepares students to be active and engaged participants in an interconnected society (Amporful, 2012). Institutions of higher education conceptualize international competence as studying abroad and mastering multiple languages beyond one's native language. Experts believe that studying abroad and gaining a global perspective will be the next evolution of American higher education (Lincoln Commission 2005; NAFSA: Association of International Educators 2008; Institute of International Education 2017). As the world's population continues to grow and as technology improves, expanding international competence is imperative to grasp an increasingly changing and interconnected society fully.

The need for higher education to develop methods to increase international competence is urgent. The Institute for International Education's deputy vice president of international partnerships, Daniel Obst (as cited in Schmelzer, 2015), has stated, "International education has become one of the most important components of a 21st-century education. All students need global skills, not just some." Anne Ryan (as cited in Schmelzer, 2015), assistant secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), has opined at the White House Travel Bloggers:

> It is crucial for our country's next generation of leaders to travel, live, work, intern or volunteer abroad to gain the skills needed to understand and operate within the global political and economic landscape of the 21st century. It is in America's national interest… to build and sustain a globally minded and internationally literate workforce. (p. 1)

Unfortunately, the reach of international competence, especially in study abroad programs, is limited to a small percentage of people within the United States.

The percentage of those who participate in study abroad programs is staggeringly low, considering that only 9% of U.S. undergraduate students study abroad before graduation (Institute of International Education, 2017). Moreover, these students are primarily white. According to the Institute of International Education (2015), 5.6% of study abroad participants in 2014/2015 were Black or African American. In comparison to other ethnicities that studied abroad in 2014/2015, 72.9% were white; 8.8% were Hispanic or Latino(a); and 8.1% were Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander. While over the course of ten years the quantity of students of color studying abroad from the U.S. has increased modestly, these numbers are still drastically low, as is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile of U.S. Study Abroad Students, 2010/11-2014/15 (Institute of Education, 2015

Race/Ethnicity	*2010/11*	*2011/12*	*2012/13*	*2013/14*	*2014/15*
White	77.8	76.4	76.3	74.3	72.9
Hispanic or Latino(a)	6.9	7.6	7.6	8.3	8.8
Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	7.9	7.7	7.3	7.7	8.1
Black or African-American	4.8	5.3	5.3	5.6	5.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5

In comparison, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that the number of students of color enrolled in postsecondary education is higher than the number studying abroad.

Table 2. Postsecondary Education Fall Enrollment Percentages by Ethnicity (US Department, 2016)

Race/Ethnicity	*2010/11*	*2011/12*	*2012/13*	*2013/14*	*2014/15*
White	62.6	61.2	60.3	59.3	58.3
Hispanic or Latino(a)	13.5	14.3	15.0	15.8	16.5
Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.4	6.6
Black or African-American	15.0	15.2	14.9	14.7	14.5
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8

In 2014, Black Americans made up about 15% of the higher education population (US Department, 2016), yet only 6% of the total population participated in study abroad programs. These statistics suggest that Black Americans are missing the opportunity to expand their global perspectives through studying abroad at the same rate as their white counterparts, who are overrepresented in study abroad programs with 72.9% of all study abroad participants identifying as white.

The benefits of studying abroad are abundant. Studying abroad allows for multiple benefits: the development of cross-cultural understanding and communication, a deepening of one's perspective on issues facing the world, an increase in foreign language skills, and interactions with other cultures and people (Norris & Gillespie, 2009). The skills gained through studying abroad also help students to be more marketable to employers (Matthews, 2015; Iman, 2014). During a trip to China, former first lady Michelle Obama acknowledged, "The benefits of studying abroad are almost endless. …it is going to make you more marketable in the United States… More and more companies realize that they need people with experience around the world" (Iman, 2014, p. 2). The Global Employer Survey Report, which surveyed more than 10,000 employers on five continents, discovered that 80% of employers sought graduates who studied abroad while in college. The larger frequency and length a student spent abroad, the more favorable higher management and human resource departments viewed their experiences (Murphy, Sahakyan, Yong-Yi, and Magnan, 2015). With the demographics changing within the United States, employers are seeking individuals who can engage with others from different cultural backgrounds (Dishman, 2015).

1.1 PURPOSE OF STUDY AND INQUIRY QUESTIONS

With the benefits of studying abroad seeming so clear and practical, I wanted to know why Black American undergraduates do not participate in study abroad programs at the same rate as their white counterparts. Therefore, the purpose of this problem of practice was to explore Black American undergraduates' intentions and behaviors concerning studying abroad; which was guided by the following inquiry questions:

1. What are the behavioral intentions of Black American undergraduates with regard to studying abroad (do they have a desire/intent to study abroad or not)?
2. What are the subjective norms that influence Black American undergraduate students' decision to study abroad or not (what elements influence the decision to study abroad or not)?

These questions were developed because there is a lack of understanding and research regarding the intentions and influences of minoritized students' study abroad behaviors, particularly Black Americans. Most research in the field of international competency has focused on the barriers and benefits of studying abroad as well as the experiences of students of color who have gone abroad during their undergraduate years. Fewer researchers have looked at the intentions and behavior of Black Americans considering study abroad opportunities.

As a Black American who has studied abroad, I found my experiences isolating. During my undergraduate years, I felt overwhelmed when trying — and failing — to receive resources related to, and perspectives from, other students of color who were interested in studying in the same countries that interested me. Eventually, I gave up trying to get answers from other people and decided to go through the experience blindly.

In my junior year, I applied for a study abroad experience at my institution's sister school, Kansai Gaidai University, in Osaka, Japan. My major was international studies, and I needed to travel abroad to complete my course requirements. In the beginning, many of my family members opposed my decision to go abroad. Safety was their biggest concern, and my friends could not comprehend why I would want to go to a homogenous country without the ability to communicate in their native language. Regardless of my friends not understanding my interest and my family's concern, I felt confident in my decision. However, throughout my travels and other international experiences, I quickly noticed it was rare for me to encounter other Black Americans abroad.

As a professional working in the field of international education, I have found that there are even smaller numbers of Black Americans working in the field. Although my past and current employer believed diversity and representation was important in international education, not much has been done within the organizations' leadership to spearhead diversity as a significant initiative. I have found this to be a recurring theme at many higher education institutions and organizations.

As a response, I have created my own company (URep Abroad, LLC) that encourages studying abroad to underrepresented populations. The desire to strengthen my own business triggered my inquiry into my problem of practice. Using the theory of reasoned actions, I specifically looked at the factors that influenced Black American students to study abroad or not. Using the data collected, I developed recommendations for study abroad offices and international education organizations to use with the intention to provide strategies to increase the representation of Black students in study abroad programs.

1.2 DEMONSTRATION OF EXCELLENCE

Based on the findings of this inquiry, I have developed a resource document for other professionals in the field that highlights my recommendations to increase the participation of Black Americans in study abroad programs. As an attempt to encourage more involvement in study abroad programs, the document was created to be shared on my business' website and at international education conferences. Also, I presented my findings at a poster fair at the 2018 NAFSA Annual Conference in Philadelphia. Therefore, this inquiry not only assisted in developing content for my business but it allowed me to move beyond research, putting what was learned throughout this doctoral program into action.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF METHODS

I surveyed Black American undergraduate students who have and have not studied abroad using two quantitative surveys created by Dr. Jinous Kasravi (2009). Kasravi's (2009) surveys were based on her 2009 dissertation, *Factors Influencing the Decision to Study Abroad for Students of Color: Moving Beyond the* Barriers, which happened to be a similar focus of my inquiry. Similarly, Dr. Kasravi used Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action to explore the personal, social, and institutional factors that have influenced undergraduate students of color's decision to study abroad, which was the basis of her survey's development. With Dr. Kasravi's permission (Appendix A), I used the survey with minor adjustments added to reflect my research site and population.

The site for my problem of practice was the University of Pittsburgh. This institution was selected because of my professional and personal connection to the University. I worked as the

international program coordinator and advisor at the University of Pittsburgh from 2012-2016; therefore, it was easy for me to navigate the location and identify resources because of my familiarity and relationships with faculty, staff, and students.

The inquiry sample included Black undergraduate students who have studied abroad and those who have not. The first survey was given to Black undergraduate students who have studied abroad during their undergraduate years; and examined the background, source of information, institutional factors, personal characteristics, outcomes of study abroad, barriers to study abroad, and demographic information for undergraduate students of color who have studied abroad. The second survey, was given to Black undergraduate students who have not participated in a study abroad program and examined the obstacles faced when considering study abroad opportunities, in addition to the background information, the source of information, institutional factors, personal characteristics, and demographic information for students who have not yet studied abroad. Administrating two quantitative surveys allowed for a comparison between the two groups. Both surveys included questions that measured a student's attitudes and opinions towards study abroad programs. Moreover, both surveys provided measurable data that uncovered behavioral patterns.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Over the years, low participation rates of students of color studying abroad have led to misinformation that students of color are not interested in studying abroad (Acqyaye & Crewe, 2012); however, this is false, and students of color are interested in studying abroad opportunities. Research generalizes students' experiences, ignoring the specifics that can influence the actions and behaviors of a student of color (Brux & Fry 2010; Talburt & Stewart

1999). Fortunately, higher education institutions are learning that groups of students from more diverse backgrounds need to participate in study abroad experiences if understandings are to be developed within the study abroad programs themselves (Carter, 1991).

Stakeholders include undergraduate students of color (particularly, Black American students), higher education institutional faculty and staff, and society. For Black students, studying abroad will assist in their personal growth; education and career attainment; and intercultural development (Dwyer & Peters, 2004). Black students are stakeholders because studying abroad is an essential component in developing global competence as well as multicultural competence, which assists in understanding the world around them (Craig, n.d). With more Black students participating in study abroad programs, global perspectives can change their understanding of their identity (Covington, 2017). Black students' abroad experiences nurture learning; and how to work efficiently in and with diverse groups while questioning themselves and society in a separate environment outside of their realm of experience (Cressey, 2005). Cressey (2005) believed that "through interactions between and among diverse groups of Americans, students can help one another progress in their various stages of identity development" (p. 1). Study abroad programs need to be diversified to better foster cultural understanding.

For higher education institutions, many faculty and staff feel that studying abroad is not essential to students who may face challenges while in college; as a result, the lack of administrative support becomes a significant weakness for institutions (Carter, 1991). According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), only 44% of faculty view study abroad as an essential part of a student's experience (NSSE, 2007), whereas only 60% of faculty and staff refer students to the campus' study abroad office (Norfles, 2003). Faculty and staff are

stakeholders as they can affect study abroad participation by implementing more strategies to attract more students. With institutional leaders facing external pressures to create strategies to improve graduation rates (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009), enrollment in study abroad programs can generate stronger graduation rates and can ignite more in-depth learning in students (Redden, 2012).

The world is becoming more globalized, and society has sought ways to adjust to become more globally conscious (Hudzik, 2016). With more individuals traveling the world, "an appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures" (Hudzik, 2016, p. 6) is developed, and the benefits of cultural understanding are shared through discussion and shared values (Hudzik, 2016).

Understanding each stakeholder is central to remedying the obstacles facing Black students. Understanding the stakeholders allowed me to gain insight as to what higher education institutions are doing to promote study abroad but also allowed me to analyze the student perspective of studying abroad. For study abroad to become a student of color's experience, joint efforts from faculty mentors and higher education institutions (Lewin, 2009) are needed. With this combined support, students will receive motivation, experience an environment to guide global thinking, and enhance cross-cultural awareness curricula that would mesh with these goals (Penn & Tanner 2014; Talburt & Stewart 1999).

1.4.1 Delimitations of Study

This study provides a glimpse into studying abroad from undergraduate Black Americans at one institution, the University of Pittsburgh. This study does not guarantee that any recommendations developed can be implemented at all higher education institutions beyond the University of

Pittsburgh; however, general conclusions were provided. My inquiry does not examine outcomes and benefits for Black students who have studied abroad. Instead, it examines the intentions and behaviors of Black undergraduate students. This inquiry is limited in that it does not explore the intentions and behaviors of other racial groups, such as Latinos, Native Americans, or Asian Americans, and it does not make any comparisons to white students, which are currently the dominant group studying abroad.

1.5 CONCLUSION

Black American undergraduates are not studying abroad at the same rate as their white counterparts. Although there are significant claims regarding the benefits of studying abroad, only 5.6% of undergraduate students studying abroad are Black, compared to 15% of Black undergraduate students who identify as Black at postsecondary educational institutions. As a Black professional in the field of international education, I wanted to learn why Black Americans do and do not engage in study abroad programs during their undergraduate years so that I could be more effective in my practice and my business.

The theory of reasoned action guided this study, which included a sample of Black American undergraduates from the University of Pittsburgh who have and have not studied abroad. The implemented surveys examined the background, source of information, institutional factors, personal characteristics, outcomes of study abroad, barriers to study abroad, and demographic information of Black students. This study was significant to the field because there have been generalizations regarding why students of color do not study abroad, yet there is hardly any information available that solely examines the reasons why Black Americans study abroad. The goal of this inquiry was to create recommendations for study abroad and

international education organizations who want to increase the number of Black American students while creating an environment that is welcoming and enhances global thinking.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Research in the field of international competency has mostly focused on two areas: (1) the benefits and barriers of studying abroad, and (2) student experiences within study abroad programs. The purpose of this problem of practice, however, is to expand the practical knowledge base about Black American undergraduates' intentions and behaviors about study abroad programs. To develop the inquiry the literature review explores three main topics: the benefits of studying abroad, the barriers of studying abroad for students of color, and the experiences of students of color in studying abroad programs. Then, there was an examination of the theoretical framework that guided this exploration.

2.1 BENEFITS OF STUDYING ABROAD

There is little doubt that studying abroad can improve students' cultural competency (Salisbury, An, & Pascarella, 2013) and can foster national and international interests (Acquaye & Crewe, 2012). Moreover, studying abroad during the undergraduate years can influence the career outcomes of students (Brux & Frey, 2010). Therefore, this section highlights the benefits of studying abroad through those two primary areas of focus.

2.1.1 Cultural Competency

Cultural competence (NAFSA, 2003) is defined as the ability to understand different cultural norms while building one's understanding when communicating between different cultural contexts ("Why Cultural Competence," 2015). Matz (1997) believed that when students study internationally, they are necessarily "confronted with a new sense of history, a widening of horizons, and an appreciation of other cultures as 'not right or wrong, but simply different,'" (p. 120). Within higher education, then, increasing internationalization is important to fully prepare students to engage in global opportunities (Brux & Fry, 2010). Researchers have found that undergraduates experience noteworthy "improvement of foreign language skills, the acquisition of cultural knowledge, [and] a desire to travel" (Talburt & Steward, 1999, p. 163) when engaging internationally. Inherently, then, studying abroad fosters involvement in a global society that expands even after undergraduates return home.

The experiences of students who have engaged in international learning environments allow them to "work more effectively in and with diverse groups and students separated from their usual environment will ask new and/or deeper questions about themselves and their societies" (Brux & Frey, 2010, p. 509). Also, white students who study abroad can reflect on their feelings of being different or an outsider in a foreign country (Jackson, 2005), which may enhance their ways of viewing the world.

It is not only U.S. students whose opinions about the world expands from study abroad programs. It is true that studying abroad increases multiple cultural competency dimensions by allowing students to acquire a more positive view of a host country (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004) while increasing cultural sensitivity (Williams, 2005). It also allows individuals in host countries to gain a nuanced perspective of the diversity of U.S. citizens (Brux & Frey, 2010). Allowing

individuals in host countries to challenge their perspectives of the U.S. through engagement promotes a reduction in prejudicial feelings between individuals (Mendelson, n.d.; Allport, 1954; Brux & Frey 2010; Salisbury et al. 2013).

2.1.2 Career Benefits

Studying abroad suggests clear benefits to a student's career prospects. These experiences fall within the five selected criteria employers find essential (Orahood, Kruze, & Pearson, 2004): multiculturalism, diversity, innovation, engagement, and information technology. Multiculturalism is defined as a global understanding of cultural differences, which is fostered by studying abroad (Salisbury et al., 2013). Diversity is the ability to be diplomatic and possesses an ability to be sensitive to different ways of communicating, another skill inherent to communicating and traveling in a new, international environment (Orahood & Kruze, 2004). Innovation is the ability to find new explanations and ways of functioning through the world, which becomes a survival skill for students who travel abroad (Orahood & Kruze, 2004). Engagement concerns the ability to be eloquent and adaptive to a holistic approach and awareness to the world, which studying abroad necessitates (Orahood & Kruze, 2004). Finally, information technology is needed to stay in touch with a home country, which requires confidence in using new or existing technology (Orahood & Kruze, 2004).

The time, financial investment and increase in skills obtained through study abroad programs are a benefit when considering the future objective of gainful employment (Posey, 2003). Studying abroad allows for the exchange of increased power, earnings, and occupational status (Becker, 1993). According to the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) (2013), 56% of study abroad respondents asserted that their international experiences contributed to

obtaining their first job after graduating, and 80% reported that study abroad contributed to their ability to adapt in a diverse workplace environment.

Studying abroad provides long-term benefits, such as being more marketable to employers because of their intercultural experience. Franklin (2010) conducted a qualitative and quantitative survey examining how undergraduate participation in study abroad programs has had long-term impacts on professional development. A list of 189 study abroad alumni compiled from a class of 435 graduates, all of whom passed their 10-year anniversary of graduation. Franklin's (2010) study concluded that "study abroad [had] a significant, long-lasting career impact and professional applicability" (Franklin, 2010, p. 186). The study revealed that 71% of participations agreed that their study abroad experience helped them understand situations in a cultural context. 73% stated that their study abroad experience helped them be more competitive in the job market; and 88% agreed that their experience allowed them to present a self-awareness that could be applied to their professional work (Franklin, 2010, p. 186).

2.2 BARRIERS OF STUDYING ABROAD

Traditionally, studying abroad has been perceived within the U.S. as a middle or upper class, a white privilege that did not represent the broad spectrum of U.S. society (Booth 1991; Brux & Fry 2010). The Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE) (1991) conducted numerous studies and conferences examining why students of color are less likely to participate in a study abroad program. Through these discussions, CIEE developed a list of barriers that students of color deemed as obstacles to studying abroad. This section outlines those barriers within the research along three dimensions: personal, racial, and institutional barriers.

2.2.1 Personal Barriers

Personal barriers include any constraint that could affect a student's finances or family dynamics. For many students of color, the most significant constraints pertain to finances and family perceptions (Brux & Fry 2010; Acqyaye & Crewe 2012; Washington 1998). The lack of appropriate finances is the primary concern for students of color interested in traveling abroad ("Increasing Diversity Abroad," 2016). Many students of color are unaware of study abroad scholarships and free opportunities, financially speaking (BaileyShea, 2009). Although the Higher Education Act of 1992 mandated that students could use financial aid for study abroad programs, if enrolled via their home institutions (NAFSA, 2003; Stroud, 2010), many students of color are uninterested in taking out loans for international travel because of the perception that studying abroad is available only to the wealthy (Southwick, 2016).

The attitudes of parents also appear to be a significant barrier for many students of color (Brux & Frey, 2010). For many families, concerns regarding safety, health, and racism in visiting countries are evaluated continuously (Cole, 1991). Also, some students of color are financially supporting their families; therefore, they do not have the luxury of traveling or “wasting income” on a trip (Woodruff et al., n.d).

2.2.2 Racial Barriers

Racial barriers include fear of racial conflicts or being targeted because of one’s racial identity. The fear of racism is a reality for many students of color, one that is often not understood by their white counterparts. Brux and Fry (2010) hosted a discussion with a group of Black students regarding topics related to studying abroad. Many expressed fear of racism and being the only

Black student in a group while abroad. One student described the experience as a 'double whammy,' recognizing the fact that students of color would not only be different from the people in their traveling group but also from people in the host country (Brux and Fry, 2010).

Many Black Americans contend with racism on a daily basis in the U.S., raising the question as to why they should travel abroad and experience racism in a country or culture they may not fully understand (Dessoff, 2006). Researchers have found that students of color feel that the study abroad experience was not created for them; not seeing someone who looks like them can be a deterrent to go (Tensley, 2015).

2.2.3 Institutional Barriers

Institutional barriers include accessibility to study abroad information, the difficulty of managing academics for studying abroad, and the lack of academic mentorship that would dissuade a student of color from traveling abroad. Brux and Fry (2010) emphasized that "inadequate program offerings and inadequate information" (p. 8) limits students' ability to access study abroad programs. For example, institutions do not display efforts towards making students of color aware of study abroad programs and services. In Brux and Fry's (2010) study, more than half of their responding students knew of study abroad programs at their institutions, but 85% indicated that no faculty or staff member encouraged them to participate in these programs.

Many students who have studied abroad have also considered their academic progress and how studying abroad could affect their employability (Posey, 2003). Some researchers conclude that students of color do not participate in abroad programs because they do not see a relation between studying abroad and their future employment (Brux & Fry, 2010). Mazyck (2014) determined that access to study abroad programs for students of color have been mainly

inadequate, somewhat because the messaging in advertising does not describe its practicality in prospective employees. The relationship between cultural competence and career aspirations is imperative for attracting students (Acqyaye & Crewe, 2012). Explicit connections between student motivation and academics are a powerful way to garner interest in abroad programs (Acqyaye & Crewe, 2012). Fortunately, higher education institutions are becoming more aware that academics and studying abroad should go hand-in-hand to ensure students are fully developing to be global leaders.

Finally, having diverse faculty and staff on campus and in study abroad programs gives students a sense of belonging and comfort. Researchers indicated that many students of color do not study abroad because they do not feel comfortable expressing their worries to staff who are not of color (Penn & Tanner, 2014) or staff of color is themselves not encouraging or engaging with studying abroad programs (Brux and Fry, 2010). Williams (2000) opines that students should have a comfortable environment in which to learn; when role models participate in abroad programs, they encourage a positive outlook towards success and taking risks (i.e., studying in an unknown country). Essentially, success can be achieved by anyone.

Mentorship is an essential component of success for students of color when studying abroad. Gutierrez (2012) proposed, "mentorship is a significant aspect of a student's education and development that often occurs outside formal courses and programs. …Mentorship for students on these levels can be particularly powerful in respect to professional socialization and modeling" (p. 2). In the list of constraints previously mentioned by CIEE (1991), higher education institutions struggle with a lack of diverse faculty. This struggle is compounded by the fact that a diverse faculty and staff enable students to build positive relationships and feel as though they have similarities with the faculty and staff. Also, students find comfort in knowing

they have someone on campus who has their best interests in mind and who understands their cultural perspectives (Collins & Krisonis, 2006).

When students of color connect with academic mentors who are relatable and experienced, students can derive motivation and feel more comfortable to develop intentional thinking in their environment (Penn & Tanner, 2014). Brux and Fry (2010) noted in their report that many students indicated having at least one mentor who discussed study abroad in class or had encouraged them, individually, to travel. According to the students, many of the teachers or advisors who encouraged them to get involved in studying abroad were African American, suggesting that it is important to have Black staff working in these programs (Brux & Fry, 2010).

Unfortunately, students of color have a difficult time connecting with mentors who could encourage them to study abroad when the mentors themselves have not studied abroad (Penn & Tanner, 2014). Furthermore, mentor and role model relationships are frequently more difficult to establish between students of color and white mentors (Hembroff & Rusz 1993; Brux & Fry 2010), who are more likely to have had abroad experiences. Many white mentors engage students of color with a colorblind perspective; namely, there is avoidance towards the use of racial terms coupled with the constant use of microaggressions to categorize students of color as scholastically inferior, less equipped, and less interested in studying abroad (Dorian et al., 2015). Thus, white mentors may avoid discussing studying abroad as a viable opportunity for students of color or may instead present studying abroad as a possibility, but not offer guidance or understanding towards addressing their travel abroad concerns (Dorian et al., 2015).

Encouragement and support from faculty are essential factors when students are deciding whether they will or will not participate in international programs. For students of color to successfully study abroad, joint efforts from both mentors and higher education institutions are

needed. With this combined support, students will receive authentic and sincere motivation in an environment conducive to guiding students towards plausible global thinking; furthermore, this combination will enhance cross-cultural awareness curricula that would mesh with these goals (Penn & Tanner 2014; Talburt & Stewart 1999). When considering the increased awareness, resources, and networks students can experience while abroad, students will become more engaged on academic, cultural, and personal levels (Salisbury et al. 2013; Talburt & Stewart, 1999).

2.2.4 Higher Education's Responsiveness to the Needs of Students of Color

Students of color face institutional barriers such as the accessibility to study abroad information, academic management, and academic mentorship; higher education institutions are still navigating ways to not only acknowledge that students of color have needs that must be addressed but also provide resources to address those needs. Fortunately, higher education institutions are finding the importance of increasing the diversity in study abroad (Dinani, 2016). Dr. Aaron Bruce (as cited in Mazyck, 2014), chief diversity officer at San Diego State University, explained that:

> The cultural responsiveness of educators is paramount in fostering a rewarding learning process for historically underrepresented students in study abroad. Culturally responsive international education provides a space for students to contribute to the learning process through the lens of their own identity and cultural realities. The experience of studying abroad allows an individual to analyze the commonalities and differences between domestic students and citizens of the world (p. 7).

Besides, study abroad advocates have long rallied to increase students of color participation (Salisbury, Paulsen, Pascarella, 2011).

Diversity Abroad, for example, is a global network of individuals from higher education institutions, government agencies, and organizations that are either non-profit or for-profit (“Diversity Abroad,” n.d). It released a set of guidelines called the Access Inclusion and Diversity (A.I.D.) Scorecard that institutions could follow to monitor the representation of students of color in study abroad programs. Programs such as the A.I.D. Scorecard are just one-step towards encouraging higher education institutions to be intentional in increasing their diversity abroad.

2.3 EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS OF COLOR STUDYING ABROAD

Over the years, low participation rates of students of color studying abroad have led to misinformation that students of color are not interested in studying abroad (Acqyaye & Crewe, 2012). However, students of color are interested in study abroad opportunities; research generalizes students' experiences, ignoring the specifics that can influence interactions and cultural learning (Brux & Fry 2010; Talburt & Stewart 1999). In addition, the generalization of a student's studying abroad experience "limits understanding of the process and outcomes of study abroad [and] neglects the needs of students whose race and gender may negatively affect their potential to meet their goals for studying abroad” (Talburt & Stewart, 1999, p. 164). This section examined the experiences of students of color on study abroad trips.

2.3.1 Being the “Token”

Many times, students of color who have studied abroad have found themselves being the "token," meaning the only person of color, during a trip. Talburt and Stewart's (1999) research

focused on a study abroad trip to Spain where one African American student discussed her perceptions of Spain through her racial experiences. Before preparing for her trip, this African American student felt that books created to prepare students to travel abroad did not tailor towards minoritized groups. She claimed, "The African American community is not taken into consideration [when preparing for trips abroad]" (p. 168).

The issues that would affect her and other students of color were not addressed: not prior to departure, while she traveled abroad, or when she returned home. Being a "token" on the trip left the student feeling uncomfortable to open up about her experiences fully. According to Mazyck (2014), "students sometimes internalize trauma or [the] discrimination they encounter abroad, thinking nobody would understand" (p. 2). As a result, it is possible that the student would not have her opinions challenged or develop critical thinking because the other participants on the trip either did not have similar experiences or felt they could more easily blend into the culture or population of the host country.

2.3.2 Heritage Study Abroad

Heritage studying abroad trips are defined as studying abroad "for the purpose of learning about one's own ethnicity" (Neff, 2001, p. 72). Students who participate in heritage programs perceive studying abroad an opportunity to learn about their family heritage and hope to feel at home and accepted by society (Tsantir & Titus, 2006). Szekely (1998) found that at a university in Cairo, Egypt, 26% of the U.S. students studying abroad there had Arab names with an additional percentage identifying as Black Muslims. Alex Neff (2001) reported that roughly 23% of students studying abroad in Africa are African Americans. In addition, roughly 75% of U.S. students studying abroad at Yonsei University in South Korea are of Korean heritage. Although

there seems to be a need for further research in the area of heritage seeking programs in a study abroad context (Comp, 2008), it appears heritage studies are rising with students.

Comp (2008) found that many students of color who participate in heritage seeking trips believe they will connect with the people and culture of their ancestors on arrival and will immediately identify with the host society. Although many students discover that this is not the case, it suggests the desire students of color have towards finding inclusion and a sense of home. In a summer trip with 14 African American students to Ghana, Dawson (2000) discovered that the heritage experience of her students allowed them to gain personal, cultural, and academic rewards. Day-Vines, Barker, and Exum (1998) also investigated 18 African American students traveling to Ghana. During their experience, students were able to:

> (a) Reject stereotypes, distortions, and omissions related to [the host country] and to substitute representations that are more accurate; (b) experience the emotional link to their slave history; (c) examine American cultural values critically and analytically; (d) experience growth regarding ethnic identity, racial identity, and intercultural sensitivity; and (e) experience enhanced achievement and motivation (p. 3).

Irrespective of the experiences of students of color in study abroad programs, literature continues to reveal that more work needs to be done by higher education institutions to focus entirely on the experiences of students of color.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FISHBEIN AND AJZEN'S THEORY OF REASONED ACTION

Within the literature, there have been many discussions about the benefits and barriers to studying abroad as well as what students of color experience when they do participate in an abroad experience. To address my problem of practice, which is to understand why Black

American undergraduate students do or do not study abroad, I used Fishbein and Ajzen's (1980) theory of reasoned action.

The theory of reasoned action was created from elements of information integration theory, which claimed that an individual "integrates information from a number of sources in order to make an overall judgment" (Anderson, 1971, p. 187). However, the theory of reasoned action enhanced the information integration theory by adding behavioral intent ("Theory of Reasoned, n.d.). Although information integration theory attempts to predict attitudes, the theory of reasoned action focuses mainly on behavior with the understanding that there are factors that can influence an individual's attitude on behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In addition, the theory of reasoned action is concerned mostly with understanding and predicting decision-making behaviors that are not responsive to straightforward explanations (Rehman et al., 2003). The theory of reasoned action introduced behavioral research, it has been applied to a variety of studies and is now considered one of the most significant theories about human behavior (Trafimow & Finlay, 2002).

Theory of reasoned action is an instrument that can be used to recognize the fundamental beliefs that encourage or deter individuals from participating in a variety of activities (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Theory of reasoned action proposes that "behavior can be predicted from behavioral intentions, attitudes, and subjective social norm influences. [Those] three variables determine all external influences such as demographic variables, attitudes toward the target behavior, and personality traits" (Becker & Gibson, 1998, p. 44).

Theory of reasoned action has two factors that determine behavioral intention: (1) attitude toward the behavior and the subjective norm, and (2) whether an individual will behave based on the feelings of others. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) claimed that theory of reasoned action founded

on the certainty that behaviors derive from beliefs. Phillips (2014) found that "behavioral beliefs and outcome evaluations predict attitude toward the behavior. Normative beliefs and motivation predict the subjective norm. The attitude toward the behavior and subjective norm predict behavioral intent, which determines behavior" (p.16).

2.4.1 Behavioral Intent

The behavioral intention in theory of reasoned action is a strategy or possibility that an individual will act in a specific way in certain circumstances (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). For example, a student of color who intends to go abroad may or may not follow through on that intent. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) defined intentions as a function of beliefs or information about the probability that performing a particular behavior will lead to an exact outcome. However, intentions change over time: the longer the length of time between intention and behavior, the higher the probability that unexpected events will result in changes to intentions. To obtain full comprehension of an individual's intent, which is the primary cause of behavior, the theory of reasoned action examines the underlying cause for a person's attitude towards that behavior.

In addition, the subjective norms of outside entities that could influence a student's attitudes are also examined (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) in theory of reasoned action. An example of this occurs when a student of color intends to look into studying abroad programs and resources. To predict whether the student will explore these programs and resources, the theory of reasoned action would examine the student's attitude (positive or negative) about deciding to look into study abroad programs. Also, they would observe the norms that are perceived from elements (family, mentor, etc.) around the student that would influence his perspective about study abroad as a good idea or not. Traditionally, the norms that are perceived by the student

from outside elements are traditionally the feelings of other individuals. For example, if a student discussed the desire to study abroad, the perceived positive or negative feelings of another individual (i.e., family, mentor, friend, etc.) are more likely to influence the student's decision either to move forward or to stop the process of going abroad.

An individual's behavior is influenced by their self-confidence to perform the behavior or task (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). In addition, students are more likely to be influenced by convincing messaging from those relevant to them (Krosnic & Alwin, 1989). For students of color interested in study abroad programs, their confidence in their ability may be low (Ali, 2015; Woodruff et al., n.d), making them more sensitive to the opinions of others, which could be a contributing factor to the low participation of students of color in these international programs. Attitudes towards studying abroad are influenced by their expectations of the experience and their assessment of the outcomes (Tensley, 2015).

2.4.2 Subjective Norms

As previously mentioned, subjective norms are a series of opinions towards a subject that an individual receives when deciding whether to behave in a certain way (Park, 2000). Although there are some assumptions regarding how a specific subjective norm would react, there must be a level of awareness to decide if one would comply with the views of others. For example, if a student of color discussed studying abroad experiences with white students who provide nothing but positive feedback, a student of color may lean more towards going abroad. However, if a student of color hears of a negative experience from another student of color, this may deter a student of color from going abroad. It would then be the responsibility of the student to gather

more, outside information or opinions, such as hearing about the range of experiences from other students of color who have traveled to make a fully-informed decision.

For this problem of practice, the theory of reasoned action was ideal because it considers the pre-perceived attitudes towards studying abroad and the social influences upon students of color. Theory of reasoned action not only focuses on those attitudes and subjective norms but also assumes that people make decisions in rational ways (Phillips, 2014) based on the information available. Attitudes, beliefs, and the influence of friends and families are essential factors when students of color are considering studying abroad.

2.4.3 Kasravi's Factors Influencing the Decision to Study Abroad

In 2009, Dr. Jinous Kasravi conducted an adapted model intending to combine aspects of Peterson's (2003) decision to study abroad model and Brooker's (2001) decision-making process to study abroad to explore the factors that influence the decision to study abroad for students of color. Peterson and Brooker's studies are based on Fishbein and Ajzen's (1970) theory of reasoned action.

2.4.3.1 Peterson's decision to study abroad model

Peterson (2003) developed a model that examined the factors that influence whether a student would decide to study abroad. The factors investigated were behaviors and beliefs towards study abroad as well as the subjective norms that influence a student's intention. Peterson's (2003) study allowed her to identify communication strategies for professionals in the field of international education. The decision to study abroad model:

> Not only facilitates a greater understanding of the beliefs that form an attitude about study abroad, but it also explicates the normative component of the decision and thus provides clues as to essential referents and, hence, important influences as messengers and potential target audiences. These findings are significant because they shed insight into a process that is far more complex than merely focusing on "obstacles" and "incentives." (Peterson, 2003, p. 32)

2.4.3.2 Brooker's model of the decision-making process

Booker's (2001) study explored the differences between students who have applied to study abroad programs and those who have not through perceived outcomes, perceived social pressures, and perceived obstacles in a student's decision to study abroad. Brooker (2001) differentiates between factors in the decision-making stage, relevant information needed to make the decision, and salient beliefs and perceptions.

2.4.3.3 Kasravi's factors influencing the decision to study abroad

Kasravi (2009) developed an adaptive model (Figure 1) that explored students' perceived outcomes, perceived barriers, and personal characteristics. In addition to the perceived social pressures from primary sources of information and the experiences and recommendations of others, the institutional environment and how it influences the decision to study abroad for students of color are examined. The purpose of Kasravi's (2009) study is to move beyond the barriers of why students of color do not study abroad and examine students of color who have decided to go overseas to gain further insight.

Kasravi's (2009) study used a mixed method design in two stages. Stage one provided quantitative methods using two survey instruments for two different populations of students. The surveys, adapted for my study, explored the personal, social, and institutional factors that influenced the decision to study abroad for students of color.

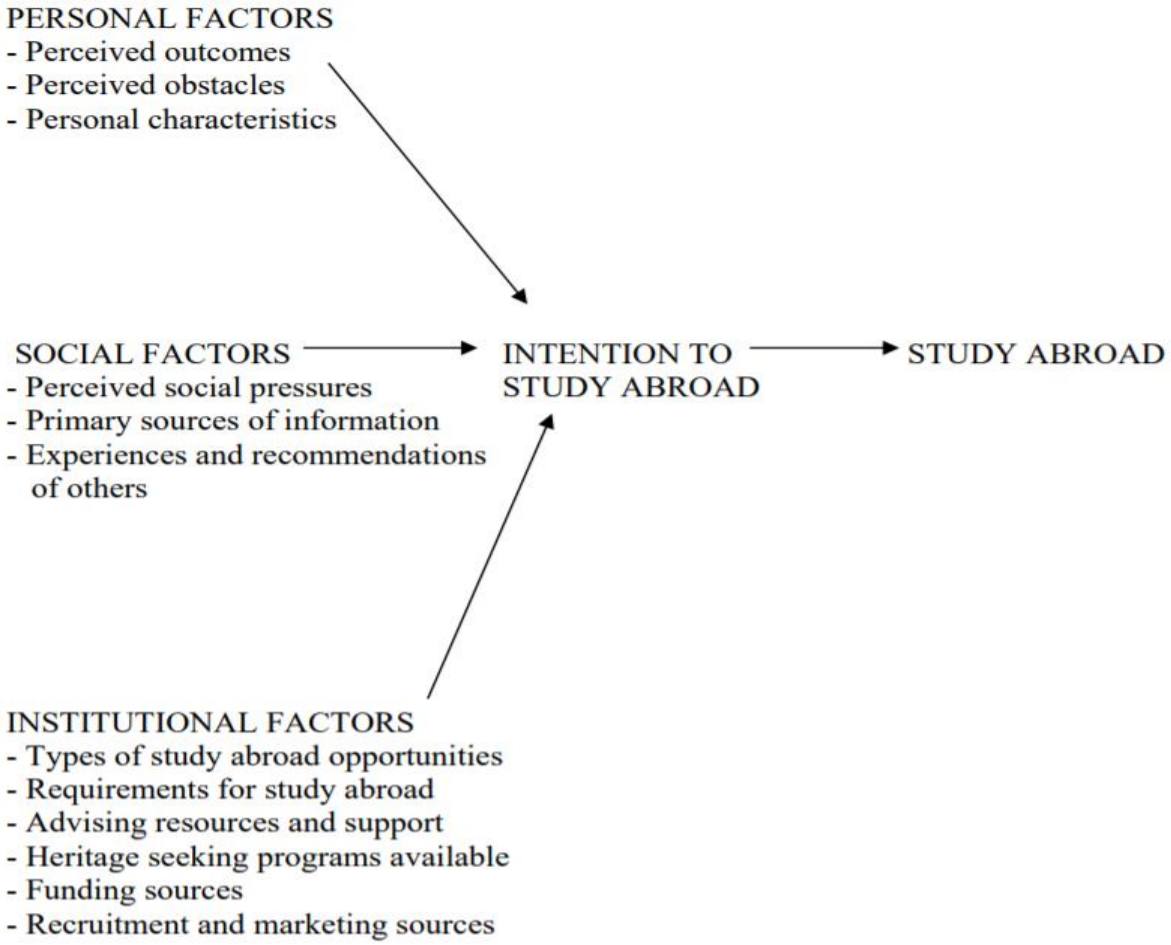


Figure 1. Kasravi's adapted model of decision to study abroad (Kasravi, 2009)

Students in the first stage were undergraduate students of color from the University of California, San Diego who had recently been accepted to a study abroad program. Kasravi (2009) had a 23% response rate (80 out of 349) from those who completed the survey. Stage two was a focus group and individual interviews to explore factors more deeply. Students in the second stage were those who had decided not to study abroad but were all sophomores and above. Unfortunately, the response rate for the second stage was only 35 students.

Three core key findings from Kasravi's (2009) study included: factors influencing the student's decision to study abroad, the barriers encountered by those who have and have not

studied abroad, and the characteristics of the students. Personal internal and the determination of the student was one of the significant factors that influenced if a student will travel abroad. Factors included the perceived outcomes of personal growth and personal identity. Kasravi (2009) found that the "social factors of influence were peers/significant others, past participants, family/culture support, and student engagement on and off campus" (p. 158). Institutional factors, such as marketing/outreach, study abroad promoted in campus/University culture, a variety of program offerings, and effective advising, were beneficial to attracting students of color.

A significant barrier encountered by those who have and have not studied abroad was the program cost and restrictions on financial aid for study abroad programs. Students who participated in stage one found alternative ways to cover their funding. Both groups of participants expressed funding as the most significant barriers for students of color. The second barrier for students of color interested in studying abroad was the lack of cultural norm and family resistance. Students found that their families do not expect them to study abroad for their academics, so the concept is foreign to most families. A third barrier was the obstacles students of color face when considering studying abroad that are different from their white counterparts. Many students of color realize they may need to face labeling/stereotypes, family resistance, and negotiations when weighing the worth of studying abroad. Also, the fear of racism was a major concern. A fourth barrier was institutional, with students receiving shortcoming in advising; restrictions or awareness of financial aid; and obstacles of program restrictions.

All the students who decided to study abroad had a positive outlook and the internal drive, personal determination, and resilience to overcome barriers. Kasravi (2009) found that

"personal factors...intertwined with some of the social factors" (p. 168) and many students who decided to go abroad had some form of support that encouraged or guided them.

Although Kasravi (2009) and my study have similar elements, the significant differences between our studies are the populations and objectives of our research. Kasravi's (2009) study examined all students of color, whereas my study will only focus on Black Americans. The purpose of my study is to develop recommendations to increase the number of Black Americans in study abroad programs based on my findings, whereas Kasravi's study was to understand what motivates students of color to study abroad. Kasravi's study showed me that personal drive and individual development was a dominant element I had not considered. I had always assumed knowing the academic or professional benefits would automatically encourage others to travel abroad. However, although academic and professional benefits are essential, Kasravi's study helped me to understand that individuals must see studying abroad as a way to develop into a better person.

2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the benefits and barriers Black students face when considering studying abroad, including increasing cultural competency and the career benefits gained through a study abroad experience. However, racial barriers – such as the fear of racism – and institutional barriers – such as accessibility of information, academic management, and the type of mentorship received – can be discouraging to Black students. Therefore, the factors that influence Black Americans to study or not to study abroad during their academic years need to be determined. To assist in answering the question, Fishbein and Ajzen's Kasravi's (1980) study

theory of reasoned action, which focused on the attitudes and subjective norms of an individual to conclude why they make decisions in the manner in which they do, was used as the theoretical framework guiding this study.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

With this inquiry, I aimed to develop recommendations for international educators to increase the representation of Black students in study abroad programs. To assist in the development of the recommendations, this dissertation in practice examined Black American undergraduates' intentions and behaviors regarding study abroad, guided by the following inquiry questions:

1. What are the behavioral intentions of Black American undergraduates with regard to studying abroad (do they have a desire/intent to study abroad or not)?
2. What are the subjective norms that influence Black American undergraduate students' decision to study abroad or not (what elements influence the decision to study abroad or not)?

3.1 INQUIRY SETTING

The University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) is a comprehensive urban university located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Pitt is ranked 68 for best colleges in National Universities and 24 in Top Public School in the USA (U.S. News & World Report, 2017). Pitt has seventeen undergraduate and graduate schools and colleges with an enrollment of roughly 29,000 undergraduate students (University of Pittsburgh, 2017a; U.S. News & World Report, 2017). Pitt is ranked for its School of Medicine, School of Education, and Swanson School of Engineering (University of

Pittsburgh, 2017a). In 2017, Pitt's undergraduate enrollment by ethnicity was 72% White, 3.6% Hispanic/Latino, 9% Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 5.3% Black/African American (University of Pittsburgh, 2017b). The inquiry took place at the University of Pittsburgh's student portal. Announcements, approved by the university's information technology department, can be posted on the portal and accessed by all students registered to the university. Recruitment on the student portal is open for all students; therefore, the Office of Study Abroad and the student organizations National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and the Black Action Society (BAS), were used to target Black students.

The Office of Study Abroad offers study abroad opportunities in more than 350 programs in over 75 countries. The study abroad programs can range from two weeks to a full academic year in 77 different areas of study (University of Pittsburgh, 2017a) which provides an array of options for students, regardless of major, timeframe, and desired destination (Appendix D). A Director and a team of sixteen staff members (University of Pittsburgh, 2017a) operate the Office of Study Abroad. The office divides its staff to focus on several core areas such as, the Panther programs (general study abroad programs offered at Pitt); Pitt-recognized programs (study abroad programs operated and recognized by Pitt through a third-party agency); exchange programs (international students who attend Pitt for a semester or a single academic year); business international programs (business internship abroad); engineering international programs (abroad opportunities for engineering students); and the Vira I. Heinz program (women scholarship for international experiences) (University of Pittsburgh, 2017a).

According to Jeff Whitehead, Director of Pitt's Study Abroad Office, the Office of Study Abroad sends roughly 1900 students abroad with the top five destinations being the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, and China (personal communication, August 21,

2017). Out of those students, 52 students have self-reported as Black/African-American. However, the percentage of those individuals are not absolute, seeing as the majority (roughly 1100 students) of the students do not self-identify their ethnicity (personal communication, August 21, 2017). The Pitt's Study Abroad office was the winner of the prestigious 2017 Senator Simon Paul Award for comprehensive internationalization. The Simon Paul Award, which is awarded by NAFSA: Association of International Educators, recognizes colleges and universities that are making significant and well-documented progress towards integrating international education throughout all facets of a university campus (NAFSA, 2017).

3.2 EPISTEMOLOGICAL APPROACH

In conducting this inquiry, I combined a post-positivist and interpretive approach. Approaching this inquiry from a post-positivist perspective allowed me to examine and measure my inquiry to identify the constant relationships between variables (Mertens, 2015). Essentially, I identified the connections between the intentions and elements of influences that affected a Black undergraduate student to or not to study abroad. Mertens (2015) believes that post-positivism "…holds the belief about the importance of objectivity and generalization based on probability rather than certainty" (p. 12). By following this approach, I acknowledged that the literature and theories could be influenced by what is seen; however, as a post-positivistic researcher, I relied on my findings to predict specific outcomes.

A quantitative study is not solely positivist in practice. A more interpretive philosophy can provide more realistic results when conducting a quantitative study (Babones, 2016). Meaning, an interpretive perspective can use statistical data to help tell a story because "statistics are used to shed light on the unobservable data generating processes that underlie observed data"

(Babones, 2016, p. 453). A quantitative interpretive study, therefore, focuses on how observed data is generated (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2014). Babones (2016) believes that "interpretive quantitative research has the potential to yield results that are more meaningful, more understandable and more applicable than those achieved through conventional positivist approaches" (p. 453). However, the goal of an interpretive approach is not to answer the research questions; instead, the goal is to develop the researcher's expertise (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2014). I incorporated this approach in this inquiry to do just that.

As I considered my epistemology approach, my goal was to be as transparent as possible. To achieve transparency and to eliminate as many biases as I can, a small group of individuals (n=10) from my place of employment was asked to volunteer to take the survey. My organization operates in the realm of higher education in the context of international education. Individuals selected were familiar with international higher education and racially represented the population I intended to serve. I requested five individuals who have gone abroad once during their undergraduate years and five who have not gone abroad. This pilot allowed me to receive feedback regarding the survey and to provide any revisions before distributing to the broader University of Pittsburgh population. Revisions included adding unaffiliated school programs as a study abroad participation option; expanding scholarships to academic and athletic; and including political landscape, race relations, and acceptance to LGBTQIA to factors that influenced study abroad.

3.3 RESEARCHER'S REFLEXIVITY

My objective was to focus on the intentions and behaviors of Black Americans within the realm of studying abroad. As a Black American working in the field of international education and who

have gone abroad, I can understand and reflect upon why Black Americans have different experiences and expectations of studying abroad. Understanding multiple sides was a vital position to have as I embarked on this inquiry. Greenbank (2003) described the position of a researcher in a quantitative study as an individual who acts independently from the participants. However, depending on the background and position of the researcher, the angle of investigation and judgments of the findings may be affected (Malterud, 2001). My aspirations and experiences drove this inquiry, connecting me to my participants in a vital way. My experiences living abroad changed my perspective of the world, informed me of the importance of globalization, and helped me develop as a pioneer of multicultural understanding.

As I conducted this inquiry with Black Americans, I understood that while we may have similarities, each person will have a different perspective and journey. Therefore, I considered myself an insider-outsider in this study, as "the experience of the researcher as an insider or an outsider cannot be a fixed one, because we are all at some point an insider and an outsider, given the setting" (Johnson-Bailey, 2004, p.129). To remain objective, I used a verified survey; however, I quantified the data to a numeric format. Once the data was in a numeric format, I compared and interpreted the data based on the literature. The committee of professors and professionals in the field who oversaw this inquiry helped me to do this as well.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

This inquiry aimed to understand why Black American undergraduates do or do not study abroad by using two quantitative surveys. The purpose was to examine the intentions and behaviors of Black undergraduate students about study abroad with the goal of making recommendations for international education institutions and organizations. I used a basic quantitative approach to the

inquiry. A quantitative method is used to examine the relationship between variables with the primary goal being to analyze and represent that relationship mathematically through analysis (Overview of Quantitative, n.d). Taking a quantitative approach allowed the data to be numeric, which was easier to analysis to be objective when reviewing results.

Black American undergraduates who do or do not study abroad was the focus of the inquiry. Fishbein and Ajzen's (1980) theory of reasoned action, which examines and predicts the decision-making behaviors of an individual, was the theoretical framework used in gaining a foundation to the inquiry. The research questions were: (1) What are the behavioral intentions of Black American undergraduates with regard to studying abroad and (2) What are the subjective norms that influence Black American undergraduate students' decision to study abroad or not?

To collect data, I used two quantitative surveys. Quantitative surveys can provide the context, such as trends, attitudes, or opinions of participants (Creswell, 2014) and are ideal for providing information about a large population (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 2013). The two types of surveys that exist are descriptive and analytic with "descriptive [focusing] on present-day behavior [and] analytical [focusing on] the population being studied" (Berger, 2000, p. 225). Berger (2000) found that "researchers often use data from descriptive surveys to develop hypotheses and use analytical surveys to test their hypotheses about what causes certain kinds of behavior" (p. 223). Descriptive surveys obtain information that connects to the opinions, beliefs, values, and behaviors of a group of individuals. A descriptive survey was the best for this inquiry because it was preplanned and structured in design, so the information collected was statistically inferred from a population (Knupfer & McLellan, 2014). By using statistically inferred data, the data collected justified the findings and made it more reliable (Sagor, 2000).

3.4.1 Instruments

To answer the stated inquiry questions, I used two survey instruments (Appendix B) developed by Dr. Jinous Kasravi. Both surveys taped several defining factors of decisions and influences of studying abroad. The survey given to students who have studied abroad was broken into seven sections and included questions that collected basic background information (e.g., the location of study abroad experience; length of program; type of program). Questions inquired how students first heard about study abroad, if anyone in their family or friends have gone abroad, and how certain influential people were in their decision to study abroad. Institutional factors (e.g., was information on study abroad programs and opportunities readily available on campus) was also collected using a four-point Likert-scale of "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

The survey given to students who have not studied abroad was shorter yet similar in collecting background, source information, institutional factors, personal characteristics, and student demographics. For students who have never studied abroad, the survey examined the obstacles (i.e., program costs or lack of family support) that prevented students from going abroad. The purpose of the second survey was to collect data to compare students' attitudes and opinions towards studying abroad with those who have traveled. Behavioral patterns were uncovered to identify measurable data and themes.

The platform used to administer the surveys was Qualtrics. Qualtrics is a private management company that develops software that allows users to collect and analyze data online. Qualtrics' survey tool was the ideal program because it was free through my institution. Also, Qualtrics does not require software installation and has an easy interface to navigate. Inputting my two surveys into Qualtrics allowed me to create one online document that can be

filtered based on selected materials. For example, if there are participants who select they have not studied abroad, Qualtrics would automatically skip over the questions for those who have studied abroad and direct participants to the questions tailored for them. Once data were gathered, I could filter anyone who did not fit the criteria of the study. For example, if there were graduate students who completed the survey, I filtered their answers out in the final results without physically deleting their responses.

3.4.2 Sample

The demographic information provides a profile of Black undergraduate students who have and have not studied abroad at Pitt. There were seven hundred and thirty (n =730) responses to the survey. Among the respondents, 6% (n=44) identified as Black American. The term *Black American* includes individuals who self-identified as African American, Black, Black-multiracial, African/first generation-American, or simply, Black American. I removed those who identified as anything but Black American; therefore, the final number of available cases was forty-four (n=44). Participants identified as female (63%), male (32%), and non-binary (4%). Also, 93% were born in the United States with 97% having English as their first language. Engineering (28%, n=14) and science majors (18%, n=9) were among the top majors for all participants (Table 3). Engineering majors included bioengineering, chemical, civil, electrical, industrial, and medical. Science majors included biology, molecular biology, and rehabilitation sciences.

Table 3. Academic Year and Major

Have you studied abroad?	Major	Total
Yes	Engineering	7
	Emergency Medicine	1
	Pharmacy	1
	Science	2
No	Emergency Medicine	1
	Engineering	7
	Pharmacy	1
	Science	3

3.4.3 Recruitment Process

First, I coordinated with the Office of Study Abroad to recruit Black students who have studied abroad. Simultaneously, I recruited from two Black student organizations, which included the Black Action Society (BAS) and the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE). These proposed sample locations were a targeted source because of my previous professional relationship with the director of study abroad and the advisors of the student organizations, who helped me recruit participants. Moreover, BAS and NSBE were essential since they serve primarily Black American undergraduate students.

NSBE is one of the largest student-governed organization in the country, includes more than 394 college, pre-college and technical professional/alumni chapters in the United States (NSBE, n.d.). NSBE provides mentorship and academic support, provides workshops for

professional development, and encourages participation in regional and national conferences for individuals of color (NSBE, n.d). Whereas, the Black Action Society (BAS) represents the voice of Black undergraduate students on Pitt's campus and strives to recruit more Black students to campus, incorporate Black history into courses, and to demand the number of Black faculties be increased and present on campus (Black Action Society, 2014).

The Director of Study Abroad sent an email (Appendix C) to the current undergraduate student who has previously participated in a study abroad program. Advisors to BAS and NSBE sent a similar email to current undergraduate students in hopes of attracting participants who have not a studied abroad program. The email contained an introduction email that explained the survey process. Unfortunately, those recruiting locations did not yield enough respondents. Therefore, an announcement, which was a copy of the recruitment email, was placed on the University of Pittsburgh's student portal. All students registered to the university access the student portal.

Because of all recruitment strategies, over seven hundred and thirty individuals completed the survey, however, only forty-four qualified for the study. Participants of the survey had the opportunity to enter a raffle for a gift as a thank you for completing the survey. Identifying information was collected for the raffle; however, this information was filled out in a form separate from the surveys to ensure anonymity.

3.4.4 Analysis

Once data was collected, Qualtrics was used to analyze all the data. First, the data filtered three groups, 1) all study abroad and non-study abroad participants who identified as Black American; 2) Black American who only studied abroad; 3) Black Americans who did not study abroad. On

Qualtrics, separating the results allowed for faster analysis and comparison of the groups without deleting or seeing the responses of another.

With filters established, all data turned into numerical values. A codebook listed each variable and question with a numerical code listed as the answer. The codebook reached an agreement on the analysis of data to create a comprehensive set of codes with definitions, criteria, and texts (Fonteyn, Vettese, Lancaster, & Bauer-Wu, 2008). With the data, the level of measurement – nominal, ordinal, and interval data – was identified. Nominal data, a basic non-logical classification (such as gender and ethnic background), are used to classify data (Statistics Solution, 2017). Ordinal data are ordered levels or ranking (Statistics Solutions, 2017), such as the academic year. Interval data classify and are placed in a logical order while each interval is a scaled distance (Statistics Solutions, 2017), such as a four-point Likert scale.

Open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide more information on specific questions. Open-ended questions yielded candid information and insight that could be limited to structured closed-ended questions. Through Qualtrics, open-ended questions went through a lemmatization process. Lemmatization allowed sentences to be tagged based on identify common variables. For example, when respondents answered the question "what risks, did you take by participating in a study abroad program?" The results had a variety to iterations of eat (eating, eats) like, "I missed eating American food" or "ingredients make it difficult to make the food I want to eat," the lemmatization categories the words and tag the variables accordingly. Once variables were tagged, Qualtrics ran a report to identify the frequency of each variable and provided a percentage of the number of variables mentioned by respondents. The established groups (all Black participants, study abroad only, non-study abroad only) filtered the variables and percentages and compared.

3.4.4.1 Data errors

To check data for errors, I used a cleaning data process. Van den Broeck, Cunningham, Eeckles, and Herbst (2005) stated “data cleaning intends to identify and correct these errors or at least to minimize their impact on study results” (p. 906). The spot-checking and eyeballing techniques helped identify possible errors. Spot-checking for data-entry and coding errors occurred by comparing raw data to the manually entered data (Kruse & Mehr, 2008). To achieve this process, I randomly selected several completed surveys and compared them to the electronically entered data. This process allowed me to confirm the accuracy of the transcription. For eyeballing, errors that resulted from data-entry or coding was reviewed (Van den Broeck et al., 2005). For example, if #7 from the codebook question read, Have any of your friends previously studied abroad, respondents can only respond with a "no," "yes," or "don't know." If "no" is assigned a value of 0, "yes" is 1, and "don't know" is 2, any number other than 0 – 2 in question #7 column will be an error. Errors identified through the data cleaning was reviewed and entered correctly.

3.4.4.2 Analysis process

My data analysis was descriptive only. As a descriptive analysis, I described what the data showed and provided a summary of the sample and the variables. Data were tabulated to identify different variables within the data set to identify patterns, the frequency, and percent distributions (Treiman, 2009). The frequency distribution is a planned tabulation of the number of respondents located in each category and percent distributions displays the proportion of represented respondents within each category (Treiman, 2009). The frequency and percent distribution identified was displayed as tables and graphs.

3.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE METHOD

Limitations are part of all inquiry processes. In my post-positivist approach, I examined my epistemology while being objective yet dispassionate in the interpretation of data. Ryan (2006) acknowledged that researchers recognize the complexity of life and experiences. However, "truth is constructed through dialogue [and] valid knowledge emerge as conflicting interpretations and possibilities are discussed and negotiated" (Ryan, 2006, p. 20); this is not possible through a post-positivist approach. The data interpretation was from the structured survey, not through continued dialogue or follow up with participants.

Using a quantitative survey and data was a limitation because respondents could only choose from a limited number of response options (Mertens, 2005), and the results could only provide information without explanation. Data responses may not accurately describe a complicated situation, leaving information void of in-depth interpretations. Therefore, it was important that the feedback received from the pilot study eliminated confusion and misinterpretations as much as possible.

Like with any survey, there was the risk of insufficient completion rates. Out of seven hundred and thirty survey respondents, only forty-four identified as Black American. It appears that many participants did not read the introduction letter or welcome message on the survey, which explicitly stated this study would examine Black students. However, Black students received several emails from university administrations; therefore, there is a chance that my request was ignored.

Finally, there were limitations to using descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis is limited and only allowed me to make synopses about the participants I measured. As mentioned in my delimitations of study, I do not guarantee that any recommendations developed can be

implemented at all higher education institutions beyond the university at which the study was conducted; however, general conclusions were provided.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the methodology used for the inquiry. Two quantitative surveys provided trends, attitudes, and opinions used to answer the injury questions: 1) What are the behavioral intentions of Black American undergraduates with regard to studying abroad (do they have a desire/intent to study abroad or not)? and 2) What are the subjective norms that influence Black American undergraduate students' decision to study abroad or not (what elements influence the decision to study abroad or not)? The inquiry was at the University of Pittsburgh because of my previous employment at the university. The goal was to recruit 200 Black undergraduate students, with 100 who have studied abroad and 100 who have not; however, only 44 qualified.

The epistemology approach to the study was a post-positivist because it allowed me to base my interpretation of the data on my reflexivity as a Black woman who studied abroad as an undergraduate and who currently works in international education. However, my interpretation limits the quantitative nature of the survey, which allows respondents to provide answers with restricted explanation and responding options.

4.0 FINDINGS

This inquiry investigated the intentions and behaviors behind Black undergraduate students' decision to or not to study abroad at the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt). The goal was to develop recommendations for the international education community for increasing the number of Black students participating in study abroad programs. This chapter describes the results of the analysis by providing descriptive data as shown in Tables 4–Table 12. Additionally, this chapter addresses each inquiry question that guided the investigation by providing numerical and qualitative data from the surveys.

4.1 PARTICIPANTS' PRE-COLLEGE AND EARLY COLLEGE BEHAVIORS

When participants were asked, "have you ever lived in another country," 13% (*n*=6) said "yes." However, when asked, "Prior to your undergraduate studies, have you previously traveled to another country," 60% (*n*=27) confirmed they had. When the participants' data were separated into two surveying groups (study abroad participants and non-participants), 32% (*n*=14) of students studied abroad, and 68% (*n*=30) of students did not. This data suggests that while a majority of participants had traveled abroad before their undergraduate years, most had not gone through a formal study abroad program on campus.

Students also seemed to struggle with the adjustment to campus (see Table 4), with 60% of participants rating the academic rigor of courses to blame for difficulty adjusting to campus.

Table 4. Participant Adjustment on Campus

	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Agree/Strongly Agree
I had a difficult time meeting the eligibility requirements for admission to my institution	90.47%	9.52%
I had a difficult time adjusting to the academic rigor of courses on my campus	39.53%	60.46%
Overall, I had a difficult time adjusting academically to being at a four-year institution	71.43%	28.58%
Overall, I had a difficult time adjusting socially to being at a four-year institution	71.42%	28.57%

Considering engineering (28%, *n*=14) and science majors (18%, *n*=9) were among the top majors for all participants, this may explain the academic rigor of courses that participants took. Engineering majors included bioengineering, chemical, civil, electrical, industrial, and medical. Science majors included biology, molecular biology, and rehabilitation sciences. With academic majors being rigorous for all participants, they were asked if they considered themselves to be in *survival mode*. Survival mode is focusing on finishing courses, getting decent grades, and graduating on time, had different meanings to those who have studied abroad than those who have not. 46% of study abroad participants stated they were in survival mode but did not allow their lack of survival to affect their decision to go abroad. One female engineering senior who studied abroad expanded her thoughts regarding her survival mode by sharing,

> I believe that having a better handle on survival mode with the privileges that I have (parents have engineering degrees, a full scholarship to Pitt, etc.) made it easier for me to consider and study abroad. I have asked others who have a harder time financially and adjusting their study habits and other external factors to study abroad, and they do not see

> it as a possibility because it's just another thing to worry about and not crucial to their education. They probably see it as fun, which it is, but there are other skills like the independence that you get from studying abroad, but that does come as a burden of distracting you from your home life, or financials, or doing well in school.

Studying abroad is a perceived luxury of the privilege. The study abroad participant above realized being fully funded and having an educated family was why she could study abroad. The academic scholarship likely provided a four-year academic map, which made selecting a program based on length or major easier. Also, having financial support from the scholarship could have contributed to some of the costs. Finally, having educated parents could have made the conversation regarding studying abroad more open because they may be aware of the benefits of studying abroad. Therefore, the barriers of time (completing a major), finances, and family did not apply to this participant.

When non-participants were asked to share if they were in *survival mode*, a female engineering senior shared: "I would have liked to study abroad for a semester, but because I was already a semester behind, I didn't want to delay graduation." Another non-participant shared the pressure of considering an abroad program, stating,

> I naturally worry really heavily about meeting deadlines, graduating with a certain GPA, and performing up to a certain standard when it comes to my schoolwork. I was raised in a household where I was questioned if I earned a 98% and not a 100%. That instilled in me an (unhealthy) need to achieve really highly, and it's not an option to complete work that is considered "less than," so as it pertains to college I particularly have no time to waste. I have my 8 semesters here, and I don't have money to stay any longer if I cannot complete in that allotted time.

This non-study abroad participant may have studied abroad if they had the same opportunities (time, scholarship, and family support) as the study abroad participant. Not all students have the privilege of time, wealth, or family support.

4.2 BLACK AMERICANS: INTENTIONS AND NORMS TOWARDS STUDYING ABROAD

This inquiry explored the following questions: (1) What are the behavioral intentions of Black American undergraduates with regard to studying abroad? (2) What are the subjective norms that influence Black American undergraduate students' decision to study abroad or not? In the next few sections, I describe the behavioral and subjective influences for Black Americans to study abroad.

4.2.1 Behavioral Intentions

The behavioral intentions were examined using the desire and intentions survey participants completed. 62% of survey participants first considered participating in a study abroad program in their freshman year. Seeing as 60% of participants traveled abroad before their undergraduate year, students who have an abroad experience prior to coming to college are likely to want to continue traveling abroad once in school (Brux & Fry, 2010). When examining the behavioral intentions of those who have studied abroad and those who have not (non-participants), the results differed slightly.

4.2.1.1 Study abroad participants

Study abroad participants ranked freshman (33%), sophomore (50%), or junior (17%) year the time they visited their institution's study abroad office. Many study abroad programs have course requirements freshman are not qualified for (Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015); therefore, the

sophomore year may allow for exploration before the demands of a thesis project or a final course requirement.

When study abroad participants were asked to share where they received information regarding study abroad programs, the institution's study abroad website (16%), classroom presentations (16%), or their study abroad advisors (11%) were the highest ranked (Table 5).

Table 5. Factors that Influenced the Decision to Study Abroad

	Amount	Percentage
Classroom presentation	6	16%
Email	4	10%
Flyer	4	11%
Former participant	3	8%
Study Abroad advisor	4	11%
Study abroad catalog	3	9%
Study abroad website	6	16%

Also, some family (10%) and friends (26%) of those who have studied abroad have gone abroad themselves (Table 6).

Table 6. Family and Friends Who Studied Abroad

Has anyone in your family previously studied abroad?		**Have any of your friends previously studied abroad?**	
Yes	10%	Yes	26%
No	23%	No	5%

Although areas such as the website (16%) or flyers (11%) ranked high and are important, the data show personalized communication (i.e., classroom presentation, advisors, family/friends)

had a more significant impact and were more successful in attracting students to study abroad opportunities.

The top visiting countries study abroad participants traveled to were France (*n*=2), Germany (*n*=2), United Kingdom (*n*=2), and South Africa (*n*=2). Research has claimed that many study abroad participants seek countries that appear similar to their homeland (Talburt and Stewart, 1999). In addition, most study abroad participants favored an institutional study abroad program (*n*=7) or a course related program (*n*=6) with the majority of the students participating in a program that lasted between two-six weeks (n=10). Reflecting on the financial barriers and the stress of graduating on time, it is not unexpected the participants sought a program that is easily accessible and accomplished through their institution within a responsible time frame.

4.2.1.2 Non-study abroad

When those who have never studied abroad were asked, "have you ever been to your institution's study abroad office," 43% (*n*=13) went during their freshman (53%), sophomore (13%), and junior year (33%). Non-participants favored visiting the study abroad office during their freshman year (53%) in comparison to those who have gone abroad who visited their sophomore (50%) year. The non-participants who were aware of the study abroad opportunities at their institution received program information through their academic advisor (11%), email (11%), or former participants (10%) (Table 7).

Table 7. How Participants Learned About Study Abroad Programs

	Amount	Percentage
Academic advisor	14	11%
Professor	12	10%
Former participant	13	10%
Email	14	11%
Flyer	12	10%
Classroom presentation	12	10%

In addition, few families (15%) and friends (38%) of the non-participates had gone abroad (Table 8).

Table 8. Participants' Study Abroad Exposure

Has anyone in your family previously studied abroad?		**Have any of your friends previously studied abroad?**	
Yes	15%	Yes	38%
No	49%	No	29%

With 60% of all survey participants traveling abroad prior to their undergraduate year, it seemed unlikely that the 43% of non-participants who visited the study abroad office simply lost interest. Freshman year is an adjustment period for many and study abroad offices have credit requirements. It is assumed that non-participants were finding their footing and may have forgotten the study abroad information or decided to postpone abroad opportunities for another time because, at that time, they were not qualified.

4.2.1.3 All participants

Survey participants were asked to share the obstacles faced that affected their decision to study abroad or not. Safety and finances were the top concerns. When participants were asked to elaborate, one female engineering senior, who previously studied abroad, shared that she only felt comfortable during her study abroad trip because she traveled with white students. The participant elaborated by writing,

> I didn't speak French or know anything about their culture, so I was worried about that. I also wasn't sure about their race relations, but since I was with a majority of white people, I think I made it out okay.

It is possible that being in a French-speaking country where the citizens are assumed to have lighter skin, the participant did not know how people would treat her because of her darker

complexion. Therefore, she found comfort traveling with a group of people who looked like the assumed ethnic majority. White privilege is an advantage, benefit, or immunity granted to or enjoyed by white persons beyond the common advantage of all others (Clark, n.d; Simon & Ainsworth, 2012); however, Black American undergraduates lack this privilege. As a Black individual, the participant felt that being in a group of whites gave them the security they may not have had wandering alone or with other non-white travelers, recognizing that white participants have a privilege that she did not have while studying abroad.

Financially, federal loans (20%), academic scholarship (19%), and family support (24%) were the primary source of funding for all participants. Family support ranked the highest which showed parents are invested in their children's education. In fact, parents of the participants were highly educated with mothers' (*n*=29) and fathers' (*n*=23) having a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree and a household income of roughly $75K (40%). The high income suggests that the greater the economic and social capital, the easier it is for participants to consider studying abroad programs.

When elaborating on their thoughts regarding financing for a study abroad program, one female junior who studied abroad participant shared, "[family] had put a lot of pressure on me to find outside sources of revenue and funds to travel abroad. I greatly struggled to do so. Money was a big strain…" Therefore, data showed that although many participants traveled abroad prior to their undergraduate year, parents may not necessarily want to finance any study abroad opportunities.

4.3 SUBJECTIVE NORMS

In this section, I review the subjective norms that influenced participants to study abroad or not. Non-participants shared that the program cost (*n*=28), restrictions on financial aid (*n*=11) and not wanting to be away from home (*n*=8) were the top three factors that affected their decision not to study abroad. The average cost of studying abroad in a foreign country is around $18,000 per semester (Institute of International Education, 2017) and the restrictions on financial aid vary depending on the type of study abroad program and the institution's financial aid process (International schools, n.d.). Research has supported the claim that finances are a major factor that influences potential study abroad participation. In addition, concerns regarding safety and racism abroad have made leaving home an uncomfortable consideration.

For study abroad participants, Table 9 displays having the ability to transfer academic credits (*n*=12), the program cost (*n*=12), and race relations abroad (*n*=11) were the factors that influenced their decision in choosing a study abroad program.

Table 9. Important Factors in the Decision to Choose a Study Abroad Program

	Not important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Being able to transfer credits	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%
Exploring my own heritage/cultural roots	69.23%	15.38%	0.00%	15.38%
Friend influence (having a friend who has or will participate)	53.85%	38.46%	7.69%	0.00%
Internship/volunteer work options with program	15.38%	38.46%	38.46%	7.69%
Parents/family influence	38.46%	23.08%	23.08%	15.38%
Program cost	7.69%	0.00%	15.38%	76.92%
Race relations	0.00%	15.38%	30.77%	53.85%

It was not surprising that program cost and race relations were the top factors because the data throughout the survey supported these claims. There was no indication in the data that transferring credits was a concern for study abroad participants, though it is not surprising because of the rigorous demands of the academic majors of the participant in this particular inquiry.

However, those who studied abroad confessed to having anxiety (62%) about partaking in a study abroad program, mainly due to their race. One female participant shared,

> Money was a risk for me, as well as racial risks. As a black woman, traveling anywhere is dangerous, and I did not know anyone else entering my study abroad program. I went to London, which is luckily a cultural Mecca, but I was still stared at, and one couple even asked to take a picture with me at one point, so my safety was a large risk. This was also a time when there were a lot of terror attacks happening in London, and in areas around Europe, so there was the risk I'd be caught up in political unrest while on my trip.

Another female, who studied abroad, shared her experience of being harassed, stating,

> I was one of three Black people on this trip. …I anticipated feeling excluded, and I was. …I made a conscious effort to be more outgoing, interactive, open-minded, understanding, and sensitive during this trip. … All of my fears, in this aspect at least, came to fruition. …I traveled to Western Europe. It is not a secret that a recent influx of Northern and Western Africans to Western Europe has brought some tension. As a West African—that was something I was particularly concerned about. I heard several disparaging comments by locals about the recent African immigrants. I was deemed "acceptable" because the locals and my peers assumed I was African American.

Although there were risks to studying abroad, study abroad participants believed there was value in going abroad.

4.3.1 Value of Studying Abroad

Study abroad participants (100%) felt that traveling allowed them to increase their critical thinking and independence while learning more about themselves and another culture. One

participant felt that studying abroad allowed them to, "Learn about [themselves] in the context of another culture and away from comfort because [they] are all [they had] to fall back on." Table 10 summarizes the personal and professional value of studying abroad.

Table 10. Personal and Professional Value of Studying Abroad

	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/Strongly Agree
Help me professionally in a globalized world	0%	100%
Increase my critical thinking skills	0%	100%
Increase my independence	0%	100%
Learn about another culture	0%	100%
Learn about myself	0%	100%
Learn about my own cultural roots	69%	30%
Make me more marketable to future employers	0%	100%

Participants (100%) also felt that going abroad allowed them to become more marketable to future employers in a globalized world. Unexpectedly, connecting to their cultural roots was not a value (30%) while traveling. Literature suggests that Black Americans were more open to studying abroad programs if they focused on heritage travel (Neff, 2001). Heritage travel allows for an opportunity to learn about family or cultural heritage that is more difficult to understand in the USA; however, in this study, most participants traveled to European countries (n=8).

4.3.2 Support for Studying Abroad

In acknowledging the risks and fears, Black Americans faced while considering studying abroad, identifying on-campus support was critical. Academic (79%) and study abroad (92%) advisors were ranked as the highest influential people to discuss options, concerns, and needs when considering study abroad, as displayed in Table 11. All participants believed their institution

encouraged international experiences (such as study abroad) for students like themselves (92%) and information was readily available.

Table 11. Institutional Study Abroad Support

	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Agee/Strongly agree
Information on study abroad programs and opportunities are readily available to students at my institution.	15.38%	84.63
My institution offers funding for students wanting to study abroad.	25.00%	75%
My institution encourages international experiences (such as study abroad) for students like myself.	7.69%	92.3%

There were several indications that participants were uncomfortable speaking of the study abroad opportunities with study abroad advisors (23%) or professors (33%) and that some participants (18%) did not find their advisors (study abroad and academic) helpful in their advisement (Table 12).

Table 12. Comfort and Helpfulness Towards Studying Abroad

	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/Strongly Agree
I felt comfortable talking to the study abroad advisers about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.	23.07%	76.92%
I felt comfortable talking to my academic advisers about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.	7.69%	92.31%
I felt comfortable talking to my professors about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.	33.33%	66.66%
The study abroad advisers are helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities	18.18%	81.82%
My academic advisers are helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities.	18.18%	81.81%

In fact, 40% of participants felt that their professor did not encourage them to study abroad and 31% of participants felt that their needs and concerns were not met when discussing study abroad options. The data questions the knowledge advisors (outside of the study abroad office) have

towards abroad opportunities and the benefits of studying abroad. If advisors continually educated the academic and professional benefits of traveling abroad more would be likely to discuss the options and feel comfortable in alleviating concerns.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Overall, the analysis of the data showed that the behavioral intentions and subjective norms towards studying abroad are influenced by the involvement of the study abroad office and financial resources. Participants first expressed interest in studying abroad during their freshman year, although sophomore year was optimal when discussing travel options. In addition, academic and study abroad advisors were highly ranked as the most influential people to discuss options, concerns, and needs when considering a study abroad program; however, other staff (i.e., faulty) were not aware of the value of studying abroad.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this inquiry was to identify the behavioral intentions (desire or intention) and the subjective norms (elements that influence decisions) that influence Black American undergraduate students' decision to study abroad or not. The Institute of International Education (2017) found that only 5.6% of study abroad undergraduates identified as Black or African American; whereas 72.9% identified as white. To investigate reasons why Black American undergraduates may not be studying abroad at the same rate as white students, I conducted this inquiry to examine if they had an interest in studying abroad and what elements influenced their decision making towards studying abroad.

The inquiry questions were developed using the theoretical framework, Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action, which was created to understand and predict decision-making behaviors that are not responsive to straightforward explanations (Rehman et al., 2003). As an instrument, the theory of reasoned action can be used to recognize the fundamental beliefs that encourage or deter individuals from participating in a variety of activities (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and can be predicted from behavioral intentions, attitudes, and subjective social norm influences (Becker & Gibson, 1998).

To gauge the behavioral intentions and subjective norms of Black undergraduates at the University of Pittsburgh (the site of inquiry) two existing quantitative surveys were used to understand a) intentions and norms of participants who have studied abroad and b) those who

have not studied abroad (non-participants). Both surveys inquired about students' knowledge of study abroad opportunities at the University of Pittsburgh, the influence of family and friends, institutional factors that supported or hindered their decision, and obstacles faced during their decision making. Similarities and differences between the two populations were compared and identified through the data analysis. In this chapter, I discuss the key findings and offer recommendations for practice and research.

5.1 KEY FINDINGS

Through the data analysis, I identified four key findings that can influence practice, particularly for study abroad offices and international education organizations looking to increase the participation of Black students in study abroad programs. First, the behavioral intentions are identified to examine the attitude Black students have towards studying abroad. Second, the subjective norms are outlined to identify and name factors that can influence Black student's decision to participate in a study abroad program. Third, there is a need to discuss racial perceptions. Finally, I discuss the need for same race mentoring, which became apparent in the findings.

5.1.1 Key Finding #1: Behavioral Intentions of Black Undergraduates

The theory of reasoned action defines behavioral intention as a strategy or possibility that an individual will act in a specific way in certain circumstances (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This

inquiry revealed the behavioral intentions of Black undergraduates and possible factors that influence a students' desire or intention to study abroad.

5.1.1.1 Intention to study abroad

Before attending the University of Pittsburgh, 60% of survey participants traveled outside the United States. Therefore, it was unsurprising when 62% of all participants expressed interest in studying abroad during their freshman year. Considering most survey participants had gone abroad prior to the undergraduate year and wanted to continue to go abroad once in college, it is clear there is a favorable view towards studying abroad and an assumption that if you had traveled abroad before, you are likely to want to do it again. However, when data were separated by those who have not gone abroad and those who have, smaller differences between the groups were identified.

During freshman year, 53% of non-participants and 33% of study abroad participants visited the university's study abroad office. First-year students are often stretched to the limit concerning receiving information; therefore, students' participation in programs or organizations are likely to decrease during the first year of college (Rust, Dhanatya, Furuto, & Kheiltash, 2008). When comparing non-participants with students who have studied abroad, 13% of non-participants visited the study abroad office during their sophomore year versus 50% of study abroad participants. Sophomore year is an ideal time to begin a study abroad program (Lipka, 2006) because of its flexibility. Sophomores tend to fall in early stages of intellectual development, making it easier for major and career exploration (Tobolowsky, 2008) which may be enhanced by study abroad opportunities. This finding suggests that Black undergraduates are likely to participate in a study abroad program if the encouragement to do so happens during their sophomore year. Being familiar with student limitations (i.e., being overwhelmed as a

freshman), regardless of their interest, is crucial in obtaining the participation and a step to predicting the behavioral intentions of Black students.

5.1.1.2 Learning about study abroad programs

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) defined intentions as a function of beliefs and/or information about the probability that performing a particular behavior will lead to an exact outcome. Learning about study abroad opportunities, therefore, can lead to behavioral intentions. The literature suggests that Black students feel that studying abroad is not intended for them (Tensely, 2015).

According to the study data, participants heard of study abroad programs through the study abroad website (12%) or classroom presentations (10%). Study abroad offices, therefore, need to adjust their marketing to attract Black students to lead to more specific outcomes (i.e., recruit more Black students to study abroad programs). The study abroad office has control of their website and any presentations regarding its abroad programs. Developing marketing materials and providing more diversity on the study abroad website could positively influence Black students' decisions towards studying abroad programs. Advertising, for example, has been inadequate in having a diverse representation and researchers have historically generalized the study abroad experience for white students with little attention to the needs of students of color (Mazyck, 2014; Brux & Fry, 2010). Providing personalized communication (i.e., presenting at a Black student organization or highlighting how students of color benefit from studying abroad) is also key in generating interest and actively targeting and encouraging Black students to participate in study abroad programs (Koernig, 2007; Lukosius, 2013). In acknowledging that Black students need outreach and personalized communication to feel included, study abroad offices can easily adjust those areas to influence Black student's behavior towards studying

abroad and implement strategies that could affect the factors (i.e., the subjective norms) that impacts Black students' decision making towards studying abroad.

5.1.2 Key Finding #2: Subjective Norms

The subjective norms are a series of opinions towards a subject that an individual receives when deciding whether to behave in a certain way (Park, 2000). In this study, 46% of all participants feared they would not graduate on time if they studied abroad. 49% believed studying abroad would not fit into their academic requirements, and 77% of study participants believed study abroad costs were too high —all are opinions that influenced Black students' decision making when considering studying abroad opportunities.

5.1.2.1 Academic alignment

68% of study participants felt they had a difficult time adjusting to the academic rigor of courses on campus with 46% of participants identifying as an engineering or science major. Engineering and science majors have strict academic requirements that can affect a students' ability to study abroad and graduate on time (Carlson, et al., 1990). However, if more students were aware that study abroad offices could assist in selecting programs that complement their academic schedule, students are more likely to participate in a study abroad program. In fact, survey participants who studied abroad agreed or strongly agreed that it helped them fulfill elective requirements (92%) and fulfilled major requirements (77%). By building a connection between student motivation (i.e., graduating on time) and academics, students will garner interest and institutions can bridge the benefits gained through a study abroad program (Acqyaye & Crewe, 2012; Mazyck, 2014), keeping in mind the students' career goals.

5.1.2.2 Career alignment

Many students who have studied abroad have considered their academic progress and how studying abroad could affect their employability (Posey, 2003). In this inquiry, study abroad participants claimed that studying abroad helped them professional in a globalized world (100%); made them more marketable to future employers (100%); and increased their critical thinking skills (100%). These claims support the theory that studying abroad can provide a clear benefit to a student's career prospects (Orahood, Kruze, & Pearson, 2004; Sailsbury et al., 2013; AIFS, 2013). In fact, 46% of participants who have gone abroad claimed internship/volunteer work options was an essential factor in deciding to study abroad. This data further confirms that students who understand the marketability of studying abroad to employers are likely to have a more favorable opinion of studying abroad.

5.1.2.3 Finances

The lack of appropriate finances is a primary concern for students of color interested in traveling abroad ("Increasing Diversity Abroad," 2016). Black undergraduates who completed the survey identified loans (31%), scholarships (23%), and family support (18%) as the top three sources of funding for college. From all survey participants, family support ranked the highest in the *main source of funding* received to pay for school, and the majority (51%) of survey participants claimed their parents made $50,000 annually or more. Parents who financially support college students influence students' decisions and, unfortunately, many parents see studying abroad as a luxury or waste of money (Jaschik, 2013; Woodruff et al., n.d.). Moreover, many students of color are uninterested in taking out loans for international travel because of the perception that studying abroad is available only to the wealthy and loans are to be used for traditional academic courses (Southwick, 2016). In addition, the lack of awareness of appropriate finances to study

abroad (such as grants and scholarships) is also a concern for students of color ("Increasing Diversity Abroad," 2016; BaileyShea, 2009). Creating ways to better educate Black students and their families of the financial options available through scholarship, grants, and loans can be a great way to ease financial concerns about studying abroad.

Students of color struggle to see the relationship between studying abroad, academic goals, and career aspirations (Brux & Fry, 2010). Expressing concerns regarding not graduating on time and assuming studying abroad would not fit into an academic requirement is a clear indication that not all students are unaware that the study abroad office has tailored programs based on their majors. Outside the academic and career aspect, assuming studying abroad is not financially achievable is also affecting the decision-making process when considering studying abroad.

5.1.3 Key Finding #3: Racial Perceptions

Racial perceptions include the fear of racial conflicts or being targeted because of one's racial identity (Willis, 2015). 61% of survey participants ranked the fear of racism as a major concern when considering studying abroad with 85% claiming that race relations are an important factor when choosing a study abroad program. The generalized education of study abroad opportunities has left many students feeling unprepared for dealing with or understanding the racial issues abroad (Brux & Fry, 2010; Tensley, 2015). Institutions and study abroad offices rarely discuss racism while students are in the decision-making process (Sweeney, 2014). Study abroad offices need to engage all students in racial perception discussions so that students have additional knowledge of the host country and hopefully feel more equipped to make informed decisions about studying abroad programs.

5.1.4 Key Finding #4: Same Race Mentorship

Throughout this inquiry, mentorship and advisors (academic and study abroad) are interchangeable. I assumed that advisors act in a mentorship role to guide students to maximize their college experiences while offering advice to achieve a fruitful college experience. Of the study abroad participants, 38% ranked academic advisors, and 38% ranked study abroad advisors as influential or very influential in their decision to study abroad. However, of the non-participants, 52% did not feel comfortable discussing study abroad options, concerns, or needs with their academic advisor, professor, or study abroad advisor. The faculty and staff at the University of Pittsburgh are 75% white and 6% Black or African American (the University of Pittsburgh, n.d.). Mentor and role model relationships are frequently more difficult to establish between students of color and white mentors (Hembroff & Rusz 1993; Brux & Fry 2010), which could be one reason why the survey participants felt uncomfortable discussing their study abroad options.

Mentorship is an essential component of success for students of color and "is a significant aspect of a student's education and development that often occurs outside formal courses and programs" (Gutierrez, 2012, p. 2). Unfortunately, there are faculty and staff that believed studying abroad is not essential, especially for students who may face challenges while in college (Carter, 1999). However, having at least one mentor who discusses or encourages participation in studying abroad programs is all that is needed to feel inspired (Brux & Fry, 2010).

With the combined support of the study abroad office and academic advisors, Black students can experience an authentic and sincere environment that is conducive to guiding them towards plausible global thinking (Penn & Tanner 2014; Talburt & Stewart 1999). Also, the survey data and literature further confirm the importance of personalized communication and

mentorship as subjective norms that can influence decisions. Faculty and staff are key stakeholders, as they can influence study abroad participation by implementing more strategies to attract more students.

5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings from this inquiry present a series of significant implications for study abroad staff and organizations that strive to attract a more diverse study abroad population. The following is a compilation of recommendations for practice, which I hope can serve as a guideline for study abroad offices and organizations. At the University of Pittsburgh, the recommendations were shared with the Director of Study Abroad to consult on implementing the recommendations on Pitt's campus during the Fall 2018 semester. The suggested recommendations are based on the key findings and on the behavioral intentions and subjective norms that influence Black undergraduates.

5.2.1 Recommendation #1: Actively Recruit Black Students

Those seeking to attract more Black students to study abroad programs need to give attention to the timing of recruitment and marketing. Unfortunately, throughout the inquiry, there were no dominant ways that students found out about study abroad and the low percentages throughout the study suggest there should be a comprehensive effort to getting information out about study abroad. Research has shown that sophomore year is an ideal time for studying abroad because administrators can see a positive impact on student development and students can engage in

transformational experiences before they are too involved in their majors (Bukowiec, 2017). Cedar Crest College, for example, developed an eight-day study abroad opportunity for all sophomores with at least a 2.5 GPA (Craig, 2016). The goal of the program was to increase the study abroad enrollment and to give all students a global experience (Snyder, 2016). As a result, Cedar Crest tripled their study abroad enrollment. However, knowing when to recruit students is the first step.

Targeted marketing materials can also assist in attracting Black students. For example, there needs to be a greater emphasis on personalized messages which can include photos of Black travelers on flyers, Black study abroad alumni delivering study abroad presentations, study abroad offices visiting student organizations, or study abroad offices providing a diverse representation of students on their website. Personalized messaging allows students to envision themselves in a study abroad program while emphasizing the affordability and relevance (personally, professionally, and academically) of travel (Stroud, 2010). The more Black students feel they are wanted and encouraged to study abroad, the more likely they are to have a positive perspective of studying abroad opportunities.

5.2.2 Recommendation #2: Align Academics and Career Aspiration

There should be an established link between academic requirements, study abroad programs, and career goals so students can be aware of the academic and professional benefits of studying abroad. Aligning academic majors with a study abroad program will allow students to stay connected to their academic goals. In addition, internship/volunteer options can provide students with the opportunity to engage in a global workforce before graduating.

Study abroad offices need to display an outline of studying abroad, academics, and career aspirations in an easily shared referenced way. For example, the Forum on Education Abroad, developed by Engle and Martin (2010), is a handbook for educators that assist study abroad offices in developing alignment and accountability goals in education abroad programs with students. This handbook would make an excellent small adjustment to guide students. However, a more extensive scale recommendation would be for study aboard offices to collaborate with academic departments to develop a study abroad track, like Pitt's Outside the Classroom Curriculum (OCC), that aligns academic major with study abroad programs.

The OCC is structured to maximize student personal development and their Pitt experience by outlining programs and events that can help students make the most of their academic experience ("Outside the Classroom," 2017). By implementing the concept of Pitt's OCC program, students would be able to articulate and demonstrate achieved global accomplishments (such as participating in a semester-long study abroad program or engage in a language table) throughout a students' academic career.

5.2.3 Recommendation #3: Educate on the Racial Dynamics Abroad

The fear of racism while abroad is a significant concern for Black students. Resources regarding the racial relationships abroad should be developed by study abroad offices to inform students during the decision-making process and during their time abroad. The NAFSA: Association of International Educators publication, *Exploring Education Abroad: A Guide for Racial and Ethnic Minority Participants*, for example, highlights racism and discrimination abroad, the responses one may receive abroad, and suggestions in dealing with racial or ethnic slurs (Berger, 2016). Having the study abroad office identify or create reliable resources can help students gain a sense

of the social and cultural environment of the host country but also prepare students to have difficult dialogues about race.

Individuals who study abroad become the representatives of their home country. Since Black Americans are not traveling abroad as frequent as their white counterparts, Black students should be prepared to answer questions that may be offensive (i.e., Are you that color because you are dirty?); intrusive (i.e., How many children do you have?;) or ignorant (i.e., What country are you from because only white people are from the USA?). All questions in this example are ones I have personally experienced while abroad, and I felt unprepared because my institution did not equip me with the training needed to engage in these difficult dialogues.

5.2.4 Recommendation #4: Train Advisors to Inform Study Abroad Education

Advisors (faculty, staff, and academic) have easy and constant access to students; therefore, they should be trained to inform students of the benefits (academically, personally, and professionally) of studying abroad. As previously mentioned, I believe that advisors and mentorship should go hand-in-hand. Study abroad offices should prepare its faculty and staff advisors (i.e., mentors) to adequately communicate and educate upon the benefits of studying abroad, mainly since many faculty and staff have not studied abroad themselves (Penn & Tanner, 2014). As a result, those educated advisors would feel more empowered to discuss study abroad options and concerns with students as they consider study abroad opportunities.

The University of Texas at Austin, for example, created a study abroad program with the intention of increasing students of color engagement in international opportunities (Lu, 2016). Many students who participated cited they would not have applied if “they had not been contacted and explicitly told about the benefits of abroad program[s] by a mentor” (Lu, 2016, p.

2). In fact, study abroad offices giving advisors the 'mentor hat' can also lead to several collaborations. Advisors and study abroad offices can work together to develop an extensive list of concerns and barriers their students reported when discussing study abroad options. Higher education advisors engage students of color with a colorblind perspective. There is avoidance of the topic of race coupled with the constant use of microaggressions to categorize students of color (Dorian et al., 2015). Having the study abroad office, advisors, and other institutional departments (i.e., Student Affairs, Counseling, etc.) can inform all units of the challenges Black students face prior and during a study abroad experience.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

In addition to implications for practice, the findings in this inquiry present a series of significant implications for higher education research. Though study abroad opportunities have increased and there is a definite racial gap between those who have gone abroad, limited research exists on the experiences and outcomes of students of color studying abroad (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009). Also, the implications of Black Americans who have or are interested in studying abroad have received little attention in research (Soria & Troisi, 2013). This inquiry demonstrated the importance of having a diverse voice in the field and the influence it may have on institutional efforts and stakeholders to increase the number of students of color studying abroad. More research should continue to explore this topic.

5.3.1 Research Black Undergraduate Experiences With Study Abroad

There needs to be more exploration of the Black perspective and voices in the field of international education, especially in the realm of study abroad. This inquiry was an attempt to be that voice, yet more research is needed. The experiences and barriers that affect students of color are not always realized by those who lead the study abroad initiatives (Collentine, 2011). Hearing diverse perspectives would allow leaders (i.e., faculty, staff, advisors, etc.) to be more conscious of the issues and allow them to continue the conversation within their networks (Berger, 2016). It is the Black voices that can assist researchers, institutions, and students in developing additional strategies to support other students of color.

5.3.2 Research Institutional Efforts to Increase Study Abroad Participation

Institutional efforts play a critical role in Black undergraduates' study abroad enrollment. In 2015, fewer than 10% of higher education institutions sent students abroad; however, that number has gone up over the years (Schulmann, 2016). This inquiry provided initiatives that can be used to find pragmatic ways to diversify study abroad programs. As institutions continue to inquire how to attract more diverse audiences, this inquiry highlighted the importance of collaboration between offices that focus on supporting study abroad experiences and those that influence students' academic decision making. More research must be conducted to document this importance.

There needs to be a commitment to developing more research (such as institutions taking the lead in overcoming barriers to attract more Black students) to find successful ways institutions can increase Black students in study abroad programs. Once institutions are

conscious of the benefits and make a commitment to push international opportunities, students can be recruited gradually to programs as they develop connections between studying abroad and their academic aspirations.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This purpose of this inquiry was to develop recommendations to increase Black students' participation in study abroad programs by identifying their behavioral intentions and subjective norms. The behavioral intentions (desire or intention) Black students had towards studying abroad was overall positive. Prior to attending college, Black students wanted to study abroad; however, once school started, students began to feel that going studying abroad would not fit into their academic schedule or feared they would not graduate on time if they traveled. However, the subjective norms (elements that influence decisions) for Black students considering studying abroad were the ability to align studying abroad to the academic major, professional benefits gained for employability, and the ability to finance a study abroad program.

Study abroad officers who can identify the behavioral intentions and the subjective norms that influence Black students' decisions are equipped to make the first steps towards developing initiatives to engage Black students in study abroad programs. However, greater success can be achieved by identifying other stakeholders (Black students, faculty, and staff) and incorporating them into the conversations. For Black students, studying abroad assists in their personal growth; education and career attainment; and intercultural development that is essential in developing global and multicultural competence that can assist in understanding the world around them.

Faculty and staff can affect study abroad participation by using strategies to attract more students through both advising and mentoring.

With roughly 6% of Black undergraduates studying abroad, there is work to be done. The benefits of studying abroad include the development of cross-cultural understanding and communication. There is a deepening of one's perspective on issues facing the world, an increase in foreign language skills, and interactions with other cultures and people. These are valuable traits that could elevate Black students academically and professionally—and yet, institutions are still struggling to achieve a diverse representation of students in study abroad programs.

APPENDIX A

PERMISSION TO USE DOCTORAL SURVEY

Permission to Use Doctoral Survey

Shawntia Key
Mon 4/24/2017, 6:39 PM
jinous@kuwaitculturela.org;

Good day Dr. Kasravi,

My name is Shawntia Key and I am a doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh. My dissertation topic will be examining the Black-American perception of studying abroad and I came across your 2009 Dissertation "Factors Influencing the decision to study abroad for students of color: moving beyond the barriers." I was very excited to discover your dissertation because I am also using the Fishbein and Ajzen theory!!

Therefore, I am writing you because I wanted to know if I could receive your permission to use your two quantitative survey instruments. You have created a wonderful tool and it would help me so much. And of course, I will reference you in my dissertation.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you so much for your consideration. I hope to hear from you soon.

JK

Jinous Kasravi <jinous@kuwaitculturela.org>
Tue 4/25/2017, 1:00 PM
You;

Dear Shawntia,

Greetings and hope you're well! Yes, of course you can certainly use my surveys. I have been so caught up with work and other matters that it is exciting to see that this topic is continuing to be explored. Finding an applicable theoretical framework was my biggest challenge, so glad to see that Fishbein and Ajzen is of use. Please let me know if you have any other questions, good luck on the writing, and look forward to reading your dissertation in the future.

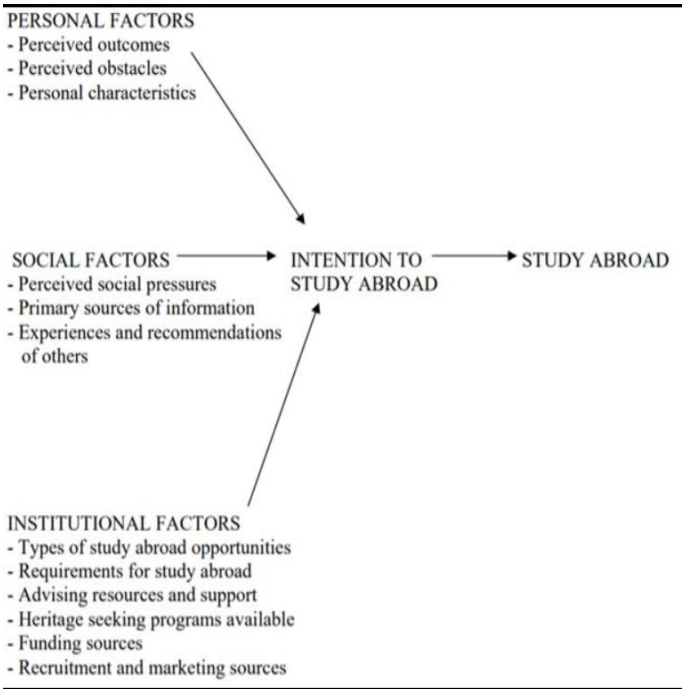
Warm regards.

Shawntia Key
Tue 8/29/2017, 9:10 PM
Jinous Kasravi;

Hello again Dr. Kasravi,

Thank you so much for allowing me to use your survey for my dissertation. I wanted to touch base again and ask if I could have your permission to use your adapted model of decision to study abroad graph (see below). I will also reference you as the creator :-}

Thank you again so much for your assistance. I truly and deeply appreciate it.



JK

Jinous Kasravi <jinous@kuwaitculturela.org>
Wed 8/30/2017, 4:46 PM

Hi Shawntia,

Hope you're well. You're most welcome and can certainly use my model. Please email me a copy of your dissertation when complete, look forward to reading it ☺

Warm regards.

APPENDIX B

INQUIRY SURVEY

University of Pittsburgh

Default Question Block

The purpose of this research study is to explore some of the intentions and behaviors that have influenced a **Black student's decision to study or not study abroad**. There will be no identifiable information collected in this survey and the data will be used to develop programming recommendations to increase the number of students of color in study abroad programs.

If you agree to complete the online survey, you are agreeing to have the data you provided used in this doctoral study. In addition, at the end of the survey, you will have the option to be entered into a random drawing for a $30 VISA gift card. To participate in the raffle, your name and email will be requested on a separate document, which will be noted at the end of the survey. Four winners will be selected.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, email Shawntia Key at **stia@pitt.edu**.

-Shawntia Key

Are you a current African-American or Black-American Pitt student?

Yes

No

What is your ethnic background? Please be detailed.

Example: African-American (first generation); Black American (unknown decedents); multiracial-Black, White, Indian; biracial-Black/White; etc.

Have you participated in a study abroad program at the University of Pittsburgh?

Yes

No

Which program did you participate in? (Please check all that applies)

Course-related abroad program

Campus organization (non-course related) offered program

Study Abroad Office offered program

Unaffiliated school program

Other

What was the length of your study abroad program?

1 semester

2 semesters (fall and spring)

1 academic year (fall, spring, and summer)

Other

Where did you study abroad? (please fill in the city, country, length of the program, and if program type (Course-related, campus org, study abroad offered, unaffiliated, other). If more than one, please list)

When did you first consider studying abroad?

Prior to high school
During high school
First year in college
Second year in college
Third year in college
Fourth year in college

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure	Not applicable
Information on study abroad programs and opportunities are readily available to students at my institution.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The types and number of study abroad programs offered at my institution are good.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Eligibility requirements for the study abroad programs are strict.	○	○	○	○	○	○
My institution offers funding for students wanting to study abroad.	○	○	○	○	○	○

My institution encourages international experiences (such as study abroad) for students like myself.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I felt comfortable talking to the **study abroad advisers** about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I felt comfortable talking to my **academic advisers** about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I felt comfortable talking to my **professors** about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The **study abroad advisers** are helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○
My **academic advisers** are helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities.	○	○	○	○	○	○
My **professors** encouraged me to study abroad.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I felt that my needs and concerns were met in discussing study abroad.	○	○	○	○	○	○

How important were the following factors in your decision to choose your study abroad program?

	Not important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Acceptance of LGBTQIA+	○	○	○	○
Being able to transfer credits	○	○	○	○
Country of program	○	○	○	○
Duration of the program	○	○	○	○
Exploring my own heritage/cultural roots	○	○	○	○
Friend influence (having a friend who have or will participated)	○	○	○	○
Interest in the course work available	○	○	○	○
Internship/volunteer work options with program	○	○	○	○
Language of study	○	○	○	○
Level of integration into host culture	○	○	○	○
Living in an apartment	○	○	○	○
Living with a host family	○	○	○	○
Parents/family influence	○	○	○	○
Political atmosphere	○	○	○	○
Program cost	○	○	○	○
Race relations	○	○	○	○
Size of city/town	○	○	○	○
Taking classes at host university	○	○	○	○

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

I faced the following obstacles during my decision to study abroad...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Citizenship/Passport requirements	○	○	○	○
Complications with test preparations, such as GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT, etc.	○	○	○	○
Extracurricular obligations	○	○	○	○
Fear of getting low grades while abroad	○	○	○	○
Family obligations	○	○	○	○
Fear of racism in other countries	○	○	○	○
Fear of safety in other countries	○	○	○	○
Fear of traveling to a new country	○	○	○	○
Lack of confidence in myself	○	○	○	○
Lack of confidence in traveling	○	○	○	○
Lack of family support	○	○	○	○
Lack of foreign language knowledge	○	○	○	○
Not meeting GPA requirements for the program	○	○	○	○
Not wanting to be away from home	○	○	○	○
Program cost	○	○	○	○

Study abroad courses not fitting into my academic program	○	○	○	○
Study abroad delaying graduation	○	○	○	○
Restrictions on financial aid for study abroad	○	○	○	○

Using the list above, list the top three obstacles faced during your decision to study abroad. ***(rank in order).***

Example: 1) Lack of family support; 2) Program cost; 3) Lack in confidence in myself)

How influential were the following people in your decision to study abroad?

	Not influential	Somewhat influential	Influential	Very influential
Academic advisor	○	○	○	○
Friend(s)/Significant other	○	○	○	○
Parent(s)	○	○	○	○
Professor	○	○	○	○
Sibling(s)	○	○	○	○
Study Abroad advisor	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○

How did you first hear about study abroad programs? ***(Please check all that applies)***

Academic adviser
Classroom presentation
Email
Family member
Flyer
Former participant
Friend/significant other
Professor
Study abroad adviser
Study abroad catalog
Study abroad fair
Study abroad website
Other (please state)

Besides you, has anyone in your family previously studied abroad?

Yes
No
Don't know

Have any of your friends previously studied abroad?

Yes
No
Don't know

Did any of your friends participate in the same study abroad program as you?

Yes
No

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Participating in a study abroad program helped me…

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Help me professionally in a globalized world	○	○	○	○
Fulfill elective requirements	○	○	○	○
Fulfill major requirements	○	○	○	○
Increase my critical thinking skills	○	○	○	○
Increase my independence	○	○	○	○
Learn about another culture	○	○	○	○
Learn about myself	○	○	○	○
Learn about my own cultural roots	○	○	○	○
Learn/improve a foreign language	○	○	○	○
Make friends from other countries	○	○	○	○
Make me more marketable to future employers	○	○	○	○

Many students report that when they are at the University, they feel like they are in a "survival mode." Survival mode is defined as trying to survive by focusing on finishing courses, getting decent grades, and graduating on time.

Rate your own sense of your "survival mode" on a scale of 1-10.

(1 being lowest/not surviving and 10 being the highest/surviving)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Participating in a study abroad program is not the type of thing my family expects or expected of me to do for my academics	○	○	○	○

If you did encounter any resistance from your family about your participation in study abroad, please describe.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I felt that being in "survival mode" played a factor in my decision to study abroad	○	○	○	○

If you stated "strongly agree" or "agree" on any of the questions above, please describe in more detail.

What risks, if any, did you take by participating in a study abroad program? Please explain.

Did you have anxiety about participating in a study abroad program?

Yes

No

If yes, what were you most anxious about? Please explain.

What do you believe is the value of study abroad for a student like you?

Have you ever been to your institution's's study abroad office?

Yes

No

If yes, what was your academic year when you first visited the Study Abroad Office?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate

How did you hear about study abroad programs? **Please check all that applies.**

Academic advisor

Friend(s)/Significant other

Family member

Professor

Study Abroad advisor

Study abroad fair

Former participant

Email

Flyer

Study abroad website

Study abroad catalog

Classroom presentation

Other

Has anyone in your family previously studied abroad?

Yes

No

Don't know

Has any of your friends previously studied abroad?

Yes

No

Don't know

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure	Not applicable
Information on study abroad programs and opportunities is readily available to students at my institution	○	○	○	○	○	○
The type and number of study abroad programs offered at my institution are good	○	○	○	○	○	○
Eligibility requirements for the study abroad programs are **not** strict	○	○	○	○	○	○
My institution offers funding for students wanting to study abroad	○	○	○	○	○	○
My institution encourages international experiences, such as studying abroad for students like myself	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel comfortable talking to the **study abroad advisers** about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs	○	○	○	○	○	○

I feel comfortable talking to my **academic advisers** about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel comfortable talking to my **professors** about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs	○	○	○	○	○	○
The **study abroad advisers** are helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○
My **academic advisers** are helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○
My **professors** encourages me to study abroad	○	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I feel that my needs and concerns can be met if discussing study abroad opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

The following things prevent me from studying abroad...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Citizenship/Passport requirements	○	○	○	○

Complications with test preparations, such as GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT, etc.	○	○	○	○
Extracurricular obligations	○	○	○	○
Fear of getting low grades while abroad	○	○	○	○
Family obligations	○	○	○	○
Fear of racism in other countries	○	○	○	○
Fear of safety in other countries	○	○	○	○
Fear of traveling to a new country	○	○	○	○
Lack of confidence in myself	○	○	○	○
Lack of confidence in traveling	○	○	○	○
Lack of family support	○	○	○	○
Lack of foreign language knowledge	○	○	○	○
Not meeting GPA requirements for the program	○	○	○	○
Not wanting to be away from home	○	○	○	○
Program cost	○	○	○	○
Study abroad courses not fitting into my academic program	○	○	○	○
Study abroad delaying graduation	○	○	○	○
Restrictions on financial aid for study abroad	○	○	○	○

Using the list above, list the top three factors that affected your decision to not study abroad. ***(rank in order).***

Example: 1) Lack of family support; 2) Program cost; 3) Lack in confidence in myself)

Do you plan to study, work, or volunteer abroad after graduation?

Yes

No

How do you currently pay for school? ***Please check all that applies.***

Academic scholarship

Athletic scholarship

Family support

Federal grants (i.e. Pell grant)

Federal loans

Private loans

Private grants

Personal funds

Other

What type of extracurricular activities are you involved with inside and outside of the university? ***(please check all that applies)***

Academic club/organization

Athletics

Church

Fraternity/Sorority

Social club/organization

Student government

Service/volunteer clubs

Work

Other

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
I had a difficult time meeting the eligibility requirements for admission to my institution	○	○	○	○	○
I had a difficult time adjusting to the academic rigor of courses on my campus	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I had a difficult time adjusting **academically** to being at a four-year institution	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I had a difficult time adjusting **socially** to being at a four-year institution	○	○	○	○	○

What is your gender identity?

What is your current year in college?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Other

What is your current major(s)?

Were you born in the U.S.A?

Yes

No

Prior to your undergraduate studies, have you previously traveled to another country?

Yes

No

Have you lived in another country?

Yes

No

Is English your native language? If not, what is your native language?

Yes

No

What is your annual family income?

$25,000 or less

$25,001 to $50,000

$50,000 to $75,000

$75,001 to $1000,000

$1000,0001 or more

Unknown

Rather not share

What is your parent's highest level of education? ***(Please check one box for each parent)***

	Mother	Father
Did not complete high school	☐	☐
High school diploma	☐	☐
Some college	☐	☐
Vocational or associate's degree	☐	☐
Bachelor's degree	☐	☐
Master's degree	☐	☐
Doctorate or professional degree	☐	☐
Unknown	☐	☐

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTION EMAIL

Subject: Do the survey, you can win a $30 VISA card

Dear student,

Would you like a chance to win a VISA gift card by providing ten minutes of your time?

I am writing to let you know of a research study that is being conducted by the graduate student, Shawntia Key. Ms. Key enjoyed studying abroad during her undergraduate years but noticed the lack of students of color in study abroad programs.

The purpose of this research study is to explore some of the intentions and behaviors that have influenced a **Black student's decision to study or not study abroad**. There will be no identifiable information collected in this survey and the data will be used to develop programming recommendations to increase the number of students of color in study abroad programs.

The online survey will be active throughout the month of November and December. If you agree to complete the online survey, you are agreeing to have the data you provided used in this doctoral study. In addition, at the end of the survey, you will have the option to be entered into a random drawing for a $30 VISA gift card. To participate in the raffle, your name and email will be requested on a separate document, which will be noted at the end of the survey. Four winners will be selected.

The survey will only take 10 minutes to complete. Click **HERE** to complete the online survey.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, email Shawntia Key at stia@pitt.edu.

Sincerely,

Shawntia Key

APPENDIX D

AREAS OF STUDY: STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS AT PITT

1. African studies
2. Africana studies
3. Anthropology
4. Archaeology
5. Architectural studies
6. Asian studies
7. Biology
8. Business
9. Accounting
10. Business Information
11. Finance
12. Global Management
13. Human Resources
14. Marketing
15. Supply Chain Management
16. Chemistry
17. Children's Literature
18. Classics
19. Communication
20. Computer Science
21. Criminal Justice
22. Cultural Studies
23. East Asian Language and Literature
24. Economics
25. Education
26. Engineering
27. Bioengineering
28. Chemical and Petroleum Engineering
29. Civil and Environmental Engineering
30. Electrical and Computer Engineering
31. Industrial Engineering
32. Mechanical Engineering and Material Science

33. English (including Literature, Writing, and Creative Writing)
34. Environmental Studies
35. European Studies
36. Film Studies
37. French Language and Literature
38. Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
39. Geology and Planetary Science
40. German
41. Global Studies

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