

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Study Abroad Leaders' Perspective on their Ability to Identify and Manage Psychological Stress of their Students

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This study was designed to better understand psychological support services available and desired for students and group leaders of study abroad experiences. It was hypothesized that study abroad group leaders 1) would witness psychological distress among their students and 2) would not have an action plan addressing psychological distress while abroad. The participants consisted of thirty-seven faculty and staff members who led a study abroad excursion in the past five years at a mid-sized, public university in the Midwest. Each participant answered an online needs assessment comprised of questions regarding demographics, trip logistics, and mental health concerns. The results indicated that nearly 50% of all study abroad trip leaders reported a student with a mental health issue and 75% of these group leaders believed that the students either did not have access to mental health services or only had medical assistance available. Limitations and recommendations for future studies are reported.