

Exploring Student Motivations in
Using a Newly Developed Study Abroad Application

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Abstract

This study examined student motivations to use a newly developed application for their study abroad needs. Though prior research suggests that identifying with certain perceived groups increases their sense of belonging, critics also recognize that every unique individual has his/her own set of specific needs to be satisfied regardless of social membership. A survey style interview was conducted in which twelve Cal Poly students answered open-ended questions surrounding application use and travel needs. The interview assessed their opinions on perceived membership as a Cal Poly student, their motivations to utilize travel applications, and their ideas on what features make travel applications most successful. As predicted by Social Identity Theory, primary results show that a majority of individuals identify with groups they are proud to be a part of. Similarly, as predicted by Uses and Gratifications Theory, users prefer instantaneity, food suggestions and comfort/safety aspects as important features when using a travel application. Overall, this study suggests that Cal Poly students would find an application developed by other Cal Poly students helpful; and although common themes arose across the majority of participants, distinct features help explain the success of travel apps.

Keywords: study abroad applications, social identity, gratifications, interviews

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California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo prides itself on its academic motto “Learn by Doing.” This motto encourages students to obtain critical skills and knowledge while acquiring direct experience in the field of study one is pursuing. In particular, the *Study Abroad Program* at Cal Poly encourages students to gain global perspectives by immersing themselves in new cultures. However, as a student of Cal Poly, I noticed that—within my social circles—a majority of individuals who had the opportunity to study abroad wished they had a platform that helped guide them on their journeys. Creating a successful platform that helps students learn about study abroad opportunities while simultaneously providing attractions and activities within certain cities would help solve this problem. Today, with the rise of technology and mobile applications options available, it is important to note that not all applications are equally as successful or useful for students. Certain success factors can determine whether or not an individual will adopt an application for usage.

Data shows that Cal Poly ranks third in the nation for outgoing students who study abroad—suggesting that an effective platform for students who study abroad would indeed be useful (Battenburg, 2009). More so, according to *Business of Apps* (2017), individuals aged 19-24 spend the most time on mobile applications monthly; the same age-range that college students attend universities. The goal of this research is to explore what makes a travel abroad application for college students most useful by examining multiple theories that help define mobile application success. In addition, through the use of qualitative interviewing, this study explores the type of

information most individuals would want to have accessible in order to make the application more successful.

Literature Review

Prior research suggests that certain theories contribute to better understanding the success of mobile applications. More so, these theories are comprised of different arguments that provide the foundation of why individuals are motivated to participate in certain technological media. Some of the theories that contribute to this study include, but are not limited to, Social Identity Theory (1979) and Uses and Gratifications Theory (1972). The following review covers 6 main ideas and theories: (1) Social Identity Theory; (2) Trust in users; (3) Motivation to participate; (4) Attitudes towards experience; (5) Uses and Gratifications Theory; and (6) Perceived value.

Social Identity Theory

To better understand the fundamentals that would contribute to a travel application's success, one must consider who the user will be and how they will compare with users of other travel applications. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on how the user's social identity may influence the usage of an application. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1979) is a theory that proposes that an individual's sense of identity depends on what groups they belong to. This theory helps predict certain intergroup behaviors based on perceived group status. Individuals tend to adopt the identity of the group they belong to and act in ways that they perceive members of the group act. Social Identity Theory addresses ways that social identities are created and how they affect people's attitudes and behaviors toward their intergroup (Ashforth, 1989).

Given what is known about this theory, it is reasonable to predict that an application's success rate may increase if part of the user's self-concept is derived from some type of attachment to the group. Success rate in this context can be defined as more engagement within an

application; as opposed to other factors such as expanding revenue, or improving brands (Law et al., 2018).

In examining current research on the topic, a common theme is present in most studies: the more one feels involved in a community, the more participation one is likely to exert to further strengthen the community and individuals within. For example, one study tested people's identification within their work groups. Results showed that strong identification was revealed within specific work groups, thus suggesting that one's social identity plays a role in organizational settings and respected institutions (Hennessy, 1999).

Both factors (usage and success of an application) contribute to a positive correlation, meaning when one factor increases, so does the other. As such, if people feel as though they cannot input relevant information or do not feel a part of said group, they will likely participate less. Although we can infer correlation between these two factors, we cannot assume causation. Relatedly, the results of Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) suggest that participation in a travel community is driven mainly by social benefits. For example, students may believe that by contributing or utilizing an application that Cal Poly students consider beneficial, then they would receive the social benefit of "fitting in." Social Identity theory is just the starting point in the examination of travel applications. More research is needed to explore this topic through the form of qualitative interviewing. By asking students about whether they would rather use an application made by and for Cal Poly students, researchers can examine if this speculation will hold up. In addition, an interview designed to look at these areas might also benefit from asking about student's perceived social benefits.

Trust in Users

In addition to Social Identity Theory, it is also important to examine the trust that a user has toward an application and where that trust comes from. There are many ways in which those who

use travel applications can access that information. For example, one can obtain travel information through personal sources or through market dominated forms of communication. However, according to Bieger & Laesser (2004), people are more likely to obtain information from family or friends because it is deemed more trustworthy. Trust is an important factor when it comes to times of uncertainty. The act of traveling to unfamiliar places can create skepticism or unpredictability. Therefore, it is important for both parties receiving and giving information to be trusted. Formal sources may not provide that comfort in the ways that a personally known source could. Nowadays, with the rise of technology, formal sources are easier to access and there are hundreds to choose from. The problem is that this can cause information overload and not all sources can be reliable or useful to the user. Therefore, it can be challenging to determine which application to use over another. Putting together a platform that combines a way to communicate travel needs while still trusting those who provide it may be the key to understanding success. Research already shows that consumers generally prefer to rely on personal sources when making decisions or purchases (Casaló, 2011). Therefore, it is important to understand that the closer one feels to knowing who provided the information in the travel application, the more trust they will have in the long run.

Motivation to Participate

In addition to trust, a user's level of motivation also contributes to their willingness to use a new travel application. There are many interesting findings that contribute to why people have a strong sense of social belonging. For instance, if people are intrinsically motivated, they are more likely to have a stronger sense of belonging (Qu, 2011). Intrinsic motivation refers to behavior that is driven by internal rewards. In this case, actively participating in a travel application may not produce external rewards for oneself, however it may produce the feelings of pleasure or satisfaction. Participating and/or utilizing a travel application that is created by individuals from

the same University may increase feelings of gratification or pride. Intrinsic rewards include non-physical rewards, but instead emotional connectedness or feelings that they make an impact/difference. Motivation can vary depending on the demographics of the user. With that being said, tailoring to a specific audience or age group can narrow down the exact ways in which motivation could be increased across the population. It is much harder to determine what motivates users if the scope is way too large to measure. For example, trying to market to every age range of people who travel (applications such as Expedia or Travelocity) makes it harder to please the population. Tailoring to a smaller population, such as Cal Poly students, allows for a better understanding on what is exactly needed for a successful travel application. Therefore, users may be more intrinsically motivated to utilize an application that has been adapted specifically for Cal Poly Users.

Attitudes Towards Experience

As well as examining the motivation levels of a user, the attitudes towards an individual's experience will also influence the success rate of a travel application. Perceived enjoyment of an application is a hard determinant to examine because it can change over time as people build experiences and receive new information. Past research shows that experienced travelers are more influential when it comes to topics related to itinerary and money advice and less experienced travelers are more influential when it comes to topics related to food, places to see, and places to go (Arsal et al., 2008). We can assume that Cal Poly students are less experienced travelers based on age, income, availability, etc. Therefore, this information is useful to understand how successful a Cal Poly travel application would be. If Cal Poly students are considered less experienced travelers, then they would find information on site seeing, food and attractions more influential and useful than financial advice. A travel application made by current Cal Poly students would do just this; it would provide users with past experiences and recommendations in

specific areas, which meet the needs of less experienced travelers. People also tend to have favorable attitudes and behaviors when the usage of an app is perceived as easy to use (Im & Hancer, 2017). In addition, a study by Rodgers, Negash, and Suk (2005), stated that individual's familiarity with technology can also affect their online experience. Meaning, those with less experience online prefer more information and those with experience prefer quality. Similarly, hedonic value, such as fun and enjoyment, can shape the user's attitude on his/her intentions of using a travel application (Im & Hancer, 2017). The less it feels like a task, the better attitudes people will have and in turn the more likely they will use it and tell others to use it. By interviewing students, their attitudes toward experience will determine what will make a travel application most successful.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Certain attitudes can also provide insight on why a user would use one travel application over another. A theory that helps us predict why users utilize specific applications to fulfill their desires is, Uses and Gratifications Theory (1972). This theory is an approach in understanding why and how people use specific media to satisfy specific needs. This theory is valuable in understanding what people do with media rather than what media does to people. More so, this theory identifies why people seek out certain media outlets to fulfill certain needs, wants, or goals (H0, 2010). This theory is useful in understanding why people use applications, but more specifically, it can be used to examine applications geared towards travel.

A number of gratifications may be achieved by the usage of applications. For example, humans are largely motivated to keep a certain social status whether we realize it or not (Dunne et al., 2010). It is important, especially for young people, to keep a certain social persona within a group. Utilizing a travel application that is tailored towards a specific college group could potentially meet the need of social status for young adults. Young people tend to participate more

in online environments to try and negotiate difficulties that can arise offline (Dunne et al., 2010).

In addition, a study performed by Hui-Yu and Ling-Yin (2010) found that females are more likely to engage or participate in mobile app usage. It has been hypothesized that women feel the need to express themselves more and therefore indulge more in online environments. Online environments are a way to deceive oneself, which also may be the reason women use apps more than men to escape and feel good about themselves. If a travel application provided individuals with a sense of freedom to experience what others have coined “enjoyable,” they may find the motivation to participate and escape from their realities more.

Another main fulfillment for uses and gratifications in a travel application would be to relieve stress and anxiety so that users can actually obtain this maximum gratification (Hui-Yu & Ling-Yin, 2010). If an application is easy to use and is seen as effectively making a task easier, than it is perceived as more desirable. If something is more desirable than the need increases, and for any application that is one of the main goals: to make an application more desirable to increase customer usage. Therefore, creating a travel application that maximizes ease (for a majority of users who want to reduce uncertainty when traveling) will in-turn be more successful in meeting a user’s needs. It is important to remember that the goal of any media outlet is to satisfy its users. Uses and Gratifications Theory (1972) helps us understand the multiple ways that individuals use media to meet specific needs and why certain media works better than others based on desires.

Perceived Value

Not only do individuals use media to meet specific needs, they assess the media they use based on the perceived value it has. When trying to understand the success rate of an application, it is important to assess the perceived value that it has from its target population. In a study by Davis (1989), he explored different ways that users would consider applications to be acceptable and useful. Based on the Technology Acceptance Model, he concluded that an application’s

acceptance is based on perceived usefulness and ease of use. In his study he defines perceived usefulness as the degree to which a person believes that a particular system would enhance his or her job performance and perceived ease of use as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort. In short, a user will pay and utilize an app if they feel that they are receiving its worth and it is helping them achieve something they lacked. It is interesting because most studies have found that the adoption of mobile applications comes from a mix of leisure and work functions. The organization of data is a key success factor that can streamline an application (Feng, 2006). On top of that, Yang (2013) found that mobile app users are more likely to embrace the app if the intended behavior is approved or expected by people who are important to them. Also noted was the fact that a consumer is more willing to try a mobile app if it is within his or her control, means, or resources.

In summary, this literature review has presented a variety of theories that help describe, explain, and predict what kinds of things might impact the success of an application. Based on past research we know that one's social identity in a perceived group plays a vital role in shaping how welcome they feel in participating and/or utilizing an application. More so, the trust, motivation and attitudes that individuals have all contribute to the success rate of an application. The greater the motivation, and the more significant the trust and attitude, the more the users will operate it. Lastly, on top of the factors that influence application success rate, the ways in which an application meets individual needs and desires will ultimately determine its desirability. Therefore, it is important to determine what the final user (Cal Poly students) would need in a new application to enhance study abroad opportunities. As such, this study will utilize interviews to examine this phenomenon further. The following research questions guide this study:

1. Would Cal Poly students indeed find a Cal Poly created application **more compelling** than another application created by users outside the University?

2. What **features** would students find more useful to satisfy their intrinsic needs?

Method

This qualitative study examined the motivations of students to use an application developed by fellow Cal Poly undergraduates. To answer the previously posed research questions, a survey style interview was utilized in which participants answered open-ended questions relating to travel needs and mobile phone application usage (see Appendix C). Thirteen questions guided the conversation surrounding studying abroad to unknown places. Afterwards, interviews were transcribed to identify common themes.

Participants

For this study, twelve Cal Poly San Luis Obispo students from a variety of disciplines (Communication Studies, Business, Biology, Agriculture Business, Economics, Liberal Studies, Journalism, and Event Management) were recruited. Participants included five males and seven females, with a mean age of 21.25. There was also a variety of student levels that were represented: one freshman, one sophomore, two juniors, and eight seniors. Regarding ethnicity, one participant was Asian or Pacific Islanders, one participant was Hispanic or Latino, and ten were White or Caucasian.

Procedures

A few different sampling methods were conducted to recruit participants for this study. First, a volunteer sampling method was used; students in certain Communication Studies classes were recruited to participate by voluntarily providing their emails to coordinate an interview. Next, to recruit the remaining participants, a snowball sampling approach invited participants to contribute via social media networking such as Facebook and Instagram. To start, the interview

began with a consent form. This document informed the participants that their contributions were voluntary and anonymous (Appendix A). Throughout the interview, participants were allowed to withdraw at any point. Next, the consent form was followed by a series of questions about their demographics—age, sex, year in college and ethnicity (Appendix B). Then, the interview began with thirteen open-ended survey style questions (Appendix C) to better understand the participants motivations surrounding travel applications. As incentive, participants who were enrolled in certain classes (COMS 311 and COMS 312) had the opportunity to receive extra credit for their contributions.

Results

Audio recordings were used in each of the interviews that were conducted. After all the interviews were complete, the responses were transcribed to find common themes that would contribute to understanding the success of a newly developed travel application better. Using the research questions to help guide the conversations and then the transcribed conversations, common ideas and premises were identified. Research question number one was answered by every participant. The second research question allowed for more open-ended interpretations because more answers were possible; features were specific to individual needs and wants. Four main themes emerged from the interviews: (1) personally identifying with the application; (2) promptly obtaining information/needs from the application; (3) satisfying the need of food options within the application; and (4) having a sense of comfort when traveling.

Identification

The first theme that emerged was identification. All twelve participants agreed to the first guiding research question: a Cal Poly created application would be more compelling than another app created by users outside the University. Social Identity Theory was supported when twelve out of twelve participants all strongly identified as a Cal Poly student. This type of membership

helps explain why all participants thought using an app that was created by fellow members of Cal Poly would be useful. Participant A stated, “I trust what other Cal Poly students have to say,” while Participant G stated, “Since we’re all from Cal Poly, we think that whatever any Cal Poly student is doing is probably the coolest or most fun thing because we want to relate.” This makes sense given that Social Identity Theory claims that a portion of a person’s self-concept and worth is derived from being included in a relevant and/or important group (Tajfel, 1979). Therefore, because subjects identify Cal Poly as an important and worthy group of individuals, we can expect that a “Cal Poly” travel application would be successfully used by other Cal Poly students.

Instantaneity

The second theme that emerged was instantaneity. One of the most important aspects that arose in seven out of twelve of the participants answers was instantaneity. A major concern that all seven participants had was that the application must respond to their needs in a timely manner. To achieve gratification, as stated in Uses and Gratifications Theory (Dunne et al., 2010), there must be something responsible for meeting their desires and needs; the instantaneity is the gratification. Living in such a fast-paced society, participants revealed that when traveling for only a short period of time it is important to experience the city the best they can in the time that they have. “Depending on your network, it can be difficult to try and connect to Wi-Fi to make certain web searches load” (Participant C). This application would in turn need to be operated with limited Wi-Fi, so easy searches can be made. Student B concluded, “I used PDF’s that were already downloaded, made by my friends who previously studied in those places, so it looks like you are on the right track. The PDF’s made it easy to pull up.” Unfortunately, young generations only know and want media that is fast and easy to access. However, with technological advancements increasing each year, instantaneity has become easier and easier to obtain.

Food as a Feature

In answering the second guiding research question of what specific features would be most useful in meeting student's intrinsic needs, the most common answer was food. Eleven out of twelve participants clearly stated that finding the right places to eat was very important to their wellbeing, happiness, and overall experience in a city. Participant K expressed, "For me, I love to enjoy walking around with the comfort of good food, or drinks. It really adds to the whole experience." Participant C added, "I would absolutely trust food recommendations of other Cal Poly students. Food is important to a ton of people, we like to think we are all foodies in one way or another. No one wants to pay money on bad food." When assessing why food is such an important feature to many individuals, we can think back to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943). Every person, internally, must satisfy their basic needs before attending to any other needs. The first basic needs are physiological which include, food, water, rest, etc. Once one need is met, the next level up is what motivates us. This also may help explain why the next theme emerged: comfort. The needs that follow after the physiological ones are safety and security needs. Overall, understanding Maslow's five-tier model of human needs can contribute to the success of an application.

Comfort

Aside from physiological needs being met, safety and security needs also emerged within many conversations. The fourth theme that appeared was comfort; the idea of being comfortable in unknown places. In other words, for ten out of the twelve participants in the interview, their safety and ability to control their uncertainty was voiced. Traveling to unknown places, and not understanding the language or customs of that culture can be very difficult and stress provoking. "The biggest thing for me was once I explored the city, I wanted to go somewhere safe to sleep," stated participant D. Others added, "Hostels would be a huge asset to this application. The hardest part for me was finding the best places to stay" (Participant E). "You can find tourist things to do

by picking up random brochures, but no one tells you were to stay for the weekend” (Participant A). The need for comfort could derive from a theory called Generalized Unsafety Theory of Stress (GUTS; 2018), which states that prolonged stress responses arise largely from unconsciously perceived unsafety rather than actual stressors (Brosschot et al., 2018). Studies have shown that cognitive processes take place outside of conscious awareness, therefore having a “housing” feature on a travel application would meet the needs that individuals may not even know they have (Schnabel et al., 2006).

Discussion

This study examines the motivations Cal Poly students have in thinking about using a newly developed travel application made by other Cal Poly students. After answering open-ended survey style interview questions, information was gathered to better understand what would make a travel application most successful. The interviews helped identify what would indeed be useful features of an application. For one, because every participant identified as a Cal Poly student, we can infer that people would use an application that is made by Cal Poly students according to Social Identity Theory. Relatedly, Uses and Gratifications Theory suggests that people will seek out certain media needs to satisfy given desires. The majority of the specific needs that were discovered from the interviews included instantaneity and comfort/safety. Lastly, Generalized Unsafety Theory of Stress informed this study that a possible reason behind certain needs being met comes from unconscious desires.

Limitations

It is important to recognize that this study was subjected to three limitations. First a majority of the participants was gathered from a snowball sample, meaning that existing study subjects were recruited among acquaintances. Some disadvantages of snowball sampling include nonrandom selection and reliance on subjective judgments (Johnson, 2014). This may be an issue

because like-minded participants may have recruited other similar like-minded participants.

Therefore, the diversity in possible responses may have been limited.

Another limitation includes the time and the scope of the study itself. Recruiting more study subjects would increase the data, which in turn would increase the discussion and understanding of what makes a travel application successful. Some scholars argue that twenty interviews help assess grounded theories (Creswell, 1998). However, the scope of the project was limited to only twelve interviews; if more time was available, the possibility of recruiting more subjects would increase; this in turn would allow the opportunity to achieve a richer field of information from more participants.

Lastly, social desirability bias may have impacted the study. In other words, respondents may have answered questions in a way that would be favored by others. This often happens when respondents want to represent themselves in the best possible light. Even though social desirability is one of the most common sources of bias that affects the validity of studies, there are methods that can cope with the issue. Some include, but are not limited to, using forced-choice items, proxy subjects, and self-administered questionnaires (Nederhof, 1985). Overall, to avoid inaccuracies within this study, different tactics could have been utilized to ensure the legitimacy of responses.

Future Recommendations

This study helps explain the underlying factors that would help make a travel application more successful. However, in reality it does not test if these recommendations would increase usage or actually be beneficial. It would be interesting to test an application with these exact features to a larger sample. For example, a quantitative experiment that compared two travel applications (one created by Cal Poly students and one not created by Cal Poly students) would allow researchers to better understand if the Cal Poly application would indeed be preferred or not.

Additionally, it would be interesting to see how wide or narrow Social Identity Theory encapsulates members. For example, if a similar travel app was created by another university would it have the same effect? From the interviews in this study, it can be reasoned that individuals who identify as a Cal Poly student would utilize an application made by other Cal Poly students. However, do students at most universities identify all together as “college students,” or only specifically within their university? This would be a useful question to examine as scholars seek to better understand the role and boundaries of identity theories and we continue to move more into our technological age of application usage.

Final Thoughts

With the rise of technology and an increasing amount of applications available to purchase or utilize, it has become seemingly more important to understand why individuals use certain applications over others. More so, it is important to recognize what separates certain applications via number of users and success rate. Every creator attempts to tap into the needs and wants of their population, but ultimately fails to recognize the importance of trust, value, and motivation. The results of this study suggest that application success increases if users feel like they are involved or belong to what the app stands for. Not to mention, success increases when users feel like they can trust the application and can ultimately benefit from it. Thus, creators of travel applications must understand their user populations needs and identification to be more successful.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT:

Communication Studies Senior Project

INTRODUCTION

This form asks for your agreement to participate in a research project on student motivations to use new study abroad applications. Your participation involves answering interview questions pertaining to your motivations when using travel applications and usefulness of study abroad tools. It is expected that your participation will take approximately 30 minutes. There are no risks anticipated with your participation. You may personally benefit from this study and others in research may benefit from your participation. If you are interested in participating, please review the following information:

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND PROPOSED BENEFITS

The purpose of the study is to examine the usefulness of study abroad tools for college students, and the motivations behind utilizing certain travel applications. Potential benefits include increased understanding for those in the field of communication studies.

YOUR PARTICIPATION

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an interview, which you be asked to answer some brief questions about yourself including demographic details, and questions pertaining to travel applications and their usefulness. The questions presented will be tailored to your study abroad experience, or lack thereof, and will indicated what certain tools are most needed when encountering unfamiliar situations overseas. Your participation will take approximately 20-40 minutes.

If you decide to participate, as an incentive, there may be an extra credit opportunity if you are a Cal Poly student. Extra credit is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of individual professors. It is recommended that you check with your professor to see if, and to what extent, extra credit is being offered and if there any alternatives to participating in this study. Students who would like the extra credit may complete a separate Google form, linked at the end of the study, to report their completion of the study to their professor. Student data on the Google form and Qualtrics study will not be linked in any way.

PROTECTIONS AND POTENTIAL RISKS

Please be aware that you are not required to participate in this research, refusal to participate will not involve any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue your participation at any time. You may omit responses to any questions you choose not to answer. If you withdraw from the study before completing the tasks, you will not be able to earn the extra credit incentive (if available).

There are no risks anticipated with your participation. Your confidentiality will be protected as your name and other identifying information will not be associated with your survey responses. All data on the questionnaire will be collected anonymously and your name will only be collected if you provide it on the extra credit form. Your confidentiality is only guaranteed to the

extent allowed by the security of the survey platform (Qualtrics, a protected and highly confidential system) and the use of Google forms for the extra credit form.

RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

This research is being conducted by Danica Schutt, in the Department of Communication Studies at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, under the supervision of Dr. Aubrie Adams. If you have any questions or would like to be informed of the results from this study, you may email the project's advisor, Dr. Aubrie Adams, Cal Poly Communication Studies Professor, at aadams45@calpoly.edu or 805-756-5997.

If you have concerns regarding the manner in which the study is conducted, you may contact Dr. Michael Black, Chair of the Cal Poly Institutional Review Board, at (805) 756-2894, mblack@calpoly.edu, or Ms. Debbie Hart, Compliance Officer, at (805) 756-1508, dahart@calpoly.edu.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research project as described, please indicate your agreement by completing the questionnaire. Please keep a copy of this form for your reference and thank you for your participation in this research.

If you agree to voluntarily participate, I will begin asking open-ended guiding questions that can/will facilitate other questions thereafter. Please be honest, open and direct when answering the below questions. If you feel at any time you would like to withdraw, please do not hesitate to voice your concerns.

- () Yes, consent and continue
- () No, decline and leave study

APPENDIX B

Demographics:

Sex:

- Female
- Male
- Other

Type your age in years: _____

Race:

- American Indian, Eskimo, or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African-American
- Hispanic/Latino(a)
- Middle-Eastern/North African

White

Multiracial

Indicate your approximate year in college:

First year

Second year

Third year

Fourth year+

Graduate student

Not currently in school

Other _____

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions:

- 1) Have you studied abroad/will you study abroad in the near future?
- 2) What kinds of groups do you most identify with? Do you strongly identify as a Cal Poly student?
- 3) What concerns do you have about traveling alone or in unknown places?
- 4) Would you be more likely to use an app that is based on Cal Poly students' opinions? Why would that be useful to you?
- 5) What would have been a helpful tool to have a more successful study abroad experience?
- 6) While in the process of traveling to unknown places, what kinds of resources would be most beneficial to you?
- 7) If an application were to help you travel in unknown places, what types of things would you like to see within a certain city?
- 8) What are your thoughts on having an application that provides students with resources that helps them travel while abroad?
- 9) How useful would it be to have an app with specific information that is directly coming from Cal Poly students who have studied abroad before?
- 10) How useful do you find common travel applications like Travelocity, Yelp, etc? Have you utilized these apps before? What seems functional about them?
- 11) How easy was it find answers to questions you may have had about specific programs?
- 12) What questions did you or do you have about Study Abroad Programs in specific? (Pricing, GPA, housing, etc.)
- 13) Would you like/liked to have seen more accessible information on questions you may have/had on abroad programs?