

## INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS AFFECTING STUDYING ABROAD IN VIETNAM

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the benefits of international students. Four independent variables are measured, including overseas experiences, international atmosphere, educational quality, and financial budget, with the dependent variable being the decision to study abroad. The core data came from a survey of foreign students from Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), Vietnam, who are enrolled in undergraduate and post-graduate programs all around the world. The SPSS statistical package was used to analyze the survey results. The independent variable Advantages factors on choosing to study abroad has significant correlations with Overseas experiences, International environment, Education quality, and Financial budget, according to SPSS data.

Keywords: Study abroad, international student, SPSS, statistical analysis.

Introduction

Many studies abroad programs  
now provide people all around the world

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with a variety of chances and experiences, such as combining study and travel or studying and working at the same time. People can study anywhere they wish, and there are chances available to anyone who wants to study abroad. Otherwise, the benefits of studying abroad are always among the most interesting issues that many experts all around the world have spent time researching. Studying, traveling, working, and living in another country are important decisions that can affect a person's life and define their future. As a result, for people from many countries, studying abroad has become a common life experience. Finally, in order to arrive at that conclusion, one must carefully consider the benefits of being an international student around the world. People should value any information and advice they receive from those who have had similar situations. There are issues with studying abroad, such as "Why do people go to study abroad so frequently, but they always want to go if they have the chance?" or "Why do people who live in the country's largest city still choose to study abroad despite the fact that my city has practically everything and is ideal for studying and working?" "And why do so many older people choose to return to university while being successful in their work or business?" "What are the unknowns of studying abroad?" you might wonder. "What are the advantages and disadvantages of studying and living abroad?" and so on. As a result, the purpose of this study is to answer such questions.

- 1) The general purpose of this study is to determine the advantages of

studying abroad and how they affect foreign students, including their decision to study abroad. There are eight distinct goals. Examine the problem of benefits, as well as the elements that influence international students' decision to study abroad.

- 2) Determine whether they have a favorable opinion of studying abroad.
- 3) To find out what people think about the benefits/decision to study abroad.
- 4) To demonstrate the link between domestic and international studies.
- 5) To investigate the problem of benefits and to discover the elements influencing international students' study abroad.
- 6) Examine the general benefits/decisions of studying abroad.
- 7) To demonstrate how a person's traits changed when they became an international student in three stages: before, during, and after the study abroad.
- 8) To assist Vietnam's business community in understanding the necessity of establishing sound policies to encourage their employees to study abroad.
- 9) To investigate the acceptable and supported study abroad rates.

#### *Questions for Research*

1. What are the benefits of being an international student?
2. What are the advantages of studying abroad for international students?
3. What are the difficulties associated with deciding to study abroad?

The phrase "international student" is used to describe international students from Ho Chi Minh City who are studying in another country.

The purpose of this study is to look at the experiences of international students as the primary reasons for choosing to study abroad. The researcher gathered information from international students in order to assess it. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics by the researcher. Researchers will be able to compare and contrast the findings as a result of the findings. Researchers can use the results to compare and learn more about the study of international decision-making.

#### Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

##### *The Experiences Study Overseas (ESO)*

Overseas experiences and foreigners staying in Vietnam contribute to influencing the domestic people's decisions to study abroad. Nearly 21,000 foreign students in Vietnam and Vietnamese students abroad are more than 100,000 (MOE 2019). The challenges are increasing in volume of pressure when students are foreigners to overcome the challenges of new life (Chen 2009). International students are not easy to confront with cultural shock (Wu, Garza, Guzman 2015). Students abroad have an incomplete understanding of lecturers' teaching (Robertson, Line, Jones, Thomas 2000). The problems continue to emerge such as challenges in terms of socio-cultural adjustment, and social relations (Joagni, Wenrong 2012).

Higher education should adapt to the new global system through the support of internationalization exercises (Altbach, Teichler 2001).

##### *The International Environment (TIE)*

In the international environment, students can gain international exposure, which will help them prepare for a global marketplace. International students contribute to the social environment and economics of the place in which they seek higher education (Labi et al., 2008, Peterson et al., 1999, Biddle 2002, Marino, Pandit 2007). Global exercises might help increase knowledge (Yang 2001). Foreign students were studied for their cultural adaptation, scholastic, financial difficulties, as well as mental, legal, psychological issues (Cohen 2006, Gerstenfeld 2002, Fischer et al., Godwin 2009, Koehl 2007, Mori 2000, Obst, Forster 2005, Paige 1990, Sandhu 1995, Sandhu, Asrabadi 1994, Surdam, Collins 1984). Anxiety, loneliness, homesickness, depression can all originate from dissatisfaction in a cross-cultural setting (Trice 2004). The issues include food acclimatization, climate change, language obstacles, formation of social bonds (Wilson 2013). The differences in the cultural aspects may cause problems of confidence, their interaction with people in the host country (Nasir 2012). Language, a staying period in the host country contributed positively, significantly to socio-cultural adjustment (Kashima, Loh 2006). Yang, Noels, Saumure (2006) adapted Ward, Kennedy's (1999) to measure socio-cultural adaptation among foreign students. The social-cultural adjustment has a positive

effect on the success of a student's academics, it can affect the decisions to study abroad (Wilcox, Winn, Fyvie-Gauld 2006).

#### *Education Quality of study Abroad (EQA)*

Studying abroad will be a viable alternative for students seeking to expand their knowledge base, have greater access to practice and research, and maximize their potential. Universities serve three purposes in the twenty-first century: knowledge creation, utilization, sharing (Van Schalkwyk, Steenkamp, 2014; Umashankar, Dutta, 2007). Students are clients in higher education who pay a fee to interact with institutions to gain information, skills (Abili, Thani, Mokhtarian, Rashidi, 2011; Doherty, 2008). Universities expect feedback, information on the academic, administrative services they deliver, and it enables them to allocate budgets, improve competitive marketing, promotion capabilities, differentiate themselves from competitors (Cardona, Bravo, 2012; Lam, Fong, Lauder 2002). Universities teach professionals to be successful, efficient managers as well as technocrats in private, public businesses to meet the many current, future requirements of society, hence the quality of university education is critical to a country's development (Pereira, Oliveira, Tinoca, Amante, et al., 2009). Universities must consider the long-term requirements, interests of students, businesses, alumni, parents, sponsors, the government, among other stakeholders (Rózsa, 2013). Other stakeholders, including parents, employers, sponsors, regulators, are said to be de-

pendent on student satisfaction, according to researchers. (Ahmed, Nawaz, Ahmad, et al., 2010).

#### *The Financial Budget of Study abroad (FBS)*

The financial budget was ranked as the biggest stress among university students, followed by an academic (ACHA 2011). The exchange rate would be another problem that explained why international students spent much of their time working part-time jobs because money in their host country where they are staying is equivalent to a large sum of money in their home country (Geo 2008). The financial crisis of students negatively affects their academic success (Wharton 2007). The financial budget negatively impacted students' engagement in class (Bennett 2003). The academic of students would be impacted by the financial budget (Joo, Durband, Grable 2008).

#### *The Advantages (benefits) Factors of Study abroad (AFS)*

Studying abroad improves career opportunities by increasing the value of education and establishing relationships with reputable institutions, thereby increasing the chances of landing a decent job in the future. Languages, cultural hurdles, academic, financial difficulties, social problems (Sherry, Thomas, Chui 2010). The adjustment needs of overcoming the social challenges, academics of students abroad (Poyrazli, Grahame 2007). Factors affecting international students' decision-making (Mahmud, Amat, Rahman, Ishak 2010); Socio-

cultural adjustment (Nasir 2012, Wilson 2013), loneliness, homesickness, English proficiency, financial budget (Banjong 2015), motivation (Chirkov, Maarten, Ran, Martin 2007). The encouragement from families was significantly related to the learning of success, academics of international students (Li, Chen, Duanmu 2010). Students 'motivation, study attitudes would influence their academic achievement (Nelson, Malone 2004). Socio-cultural adjustment referred to skills adapting to a specific culture, the ability to adjust, effectively negotiate with valuable things in the host culture, or effectively communicate or interact with people of the host country (Searle, Ward 1990). Social-cultural adjustment (Gabel, Dolan, Cerdin 2005). The process of understanding in terms of behavior, values, the belief of the host culture are factors associated with a cultural adjustment which also involves several interrelated activities with cognitive aspects in different levels from perceptions of one's (Kagan, Cohen 1990). The number of problems for foreign students includes transportation, discrimination, social communication, academic life (Prorazli, Grahame 2007). International students are frequently subjected to unexpected social interactions, according to reports, social difficulties affected their adjustment to the new environment (Rose-Redwood, 2010, Trice 2004). Students who experienced financial budgets suffered results from crises of personal finances (Banjong 2015). The crisis of finance led to their thought being absent in their class (Trombitas 2012). Personal factors such as motivation, learning method, finances were proven to have an impact on student

academic achievement (Silverman 2010). Students' personal troubles are strongly linked to their desire to study abroad (Barton 2009). The more living cost increases, the more pressure international students need to experience (Joo, Durband, Grable 2008).

### Research Framework

According to the research objectives and literature evaluation, the study provides a conceptual framework that explores the consequences of study abroad decision-making through the development of five hypotheses.

We looked into the following five hypotheses:

- H1\_ ESO: International experiences influence local students and employees' decisions to study abroad.
- H2\_ TIE: The international environment influences local students and employees' decisions to study abroad in a beneficial way.
- H3\_ EQA: The quality of education has a beneficial impact on the decision of local students and employees to study abroad.
- H4\_ FBS: The financial budget has a good impact on the decision of local students and employees to study abroad.
- H5\_ AFS: The benefits factors influence local students and employees' decision to study abroad positively.

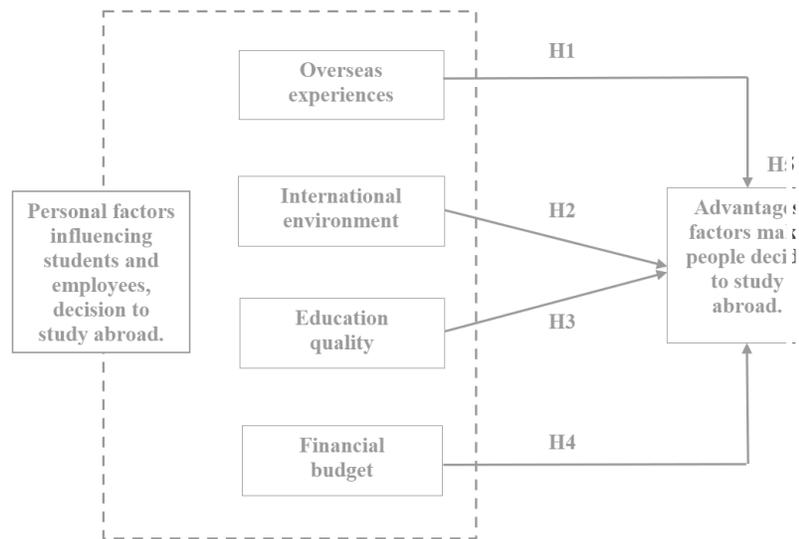


Figure 1. The conceptual framework.

### *Data Collection*

This study used a survey and employed a quantitative research technique. Descriptive statistics and relevant statistical tests would be used to assess the data. Explanatory and quantitative research designs and methods are used in this study. Primary data gathering is a type of data. The data collecting and analysis schedule for 2021 is 3 months (12 weeks) from March to May. The Likert scale is used as a measurement model (Five levels from 1 to 5). 1-Disagree/ 2-Disagree/ 3-Neither agree nor disagree/ 4-Agree/ 5-Strongly agree

### *Sampling Techniques*

All residents of HCMC, Vietnam, are included in the samplers. The respondents were between the ages of 18 and 65. Table 1 shows survey question

naires for a total of 238 international students, including students, employees, and research instruments. Convenience sampling is used for non-probability sampling.

### *Data Analysis*

Validity and reliability are assessed using IBM SPSS version 26.0. In the pilot study, 20 international students (12 men, 8 females) enrolled in an IMBA class (Australia, Canada). Expert opinions aid in determining the instruments' content validity. Cronbach Alpha's Reliability is a measure of item internal consistency. Exploratory Factor Analysis is then used to group variables that represent the same factor together, and then use correlation and regression analysis to see how they relate. The equation of the form where y is the dependent variable, x1, x2, x3, x4 are independent variables, and an is residual obtained by analysis

( $y = x_1 + x_2 + x_3 + x_4 + a$ ) is used to forecast the relationship between four independent and a dependent variable. For analysis, empirical data was acquired from 238 replies. The findings and interpretations will be displayed, along with a list of benefits that people

should be aware of before making the decision to study abroad. The sampling is restricted to survey respondents and focuses on local students and employees in HCMC, Vietnam, who have studied overseas.

Table 1. Summary Questionnaire and Surveys

Section	Subsection/ Variables	N of Items	Scales
Section A	Main Survey		Five points Likert scale, ranging from (1) "Strongly disagree" to (5) "Strongly agree"
Part 1	Experiences study overseas.	15	
Part 2	The international environment.	10	
Part 3	Education quality of study abroad	10	
Part 4	The financial budget of study abroad.	5	
Part 5	Advantages (benefits) factors of study abroad.	20	
Section B	Essentially information	33	Nominal and ordinal scale
	Other/Personal information	13	

Statistics analysis results

*The results of the Pilot Study*

Initial studies found that the Cronbach's alpha reliability of all variables was excellent, with values more than 0.7

for all scales, indicating that the study instrument had excellent internal consistency. The scale's Cronbach's Alpha is 0.7, indicating that all observed variables are acceptable and will be used by the researcher in the next factor analysis, as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. Result of Reliability of the Instruments

<b>Result of Reliability of the instruments (20 valid answers)</b>			
No.	Variables	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Experiences study overseas	15	0.939
2.	The international environment	10	0.759
3.	Education quality of study abroad	10	0.780
4.	The financial budget of study abroad	5	0.780
5.	The advantages (benefits) factors of study abroad	20	0.912
Total variables		60	

*Descriptive Analysis and Demographics Results*

**ESO:** Because the mean is more than 4, participants agreed that these characteristics will influence the benefits of studying abroad. The standard deviation for both of these variables is  $> 0.5$ .

**TIE:** A mean of  $> 4$  indicates that participants agree with these variables, which influence the benefit variables. The standard deviation for each of these variables is more than 0.5.

**EQA:** When the mean is more than four, it means that participants agree with these variables, which may have an impact on the benefit variables. The standard deviation for each of these variables is more than 0.5.

**FBS:** The mean is greater than four, indicating that people agree with these characteristics, which could affect the benefit variables. These variables have a standard deviation of  $> 0.7$ .

**AFS:** The mean is more than four, showing that people agree on these factors, which may impact international students' decision to study abroad. These variables have a standard deviation greater than 0.5.

*Frequency statistics*

The frequency statistics for participant's demographic data is shown in Table 3.

**Age:** 106 (44.5%) participants in group 26 – 35 years old, 68 (28.6%) in group 18 – 25 years old, 35 (14.7%) in group 36 – 45 years old, 18 (7.6%) in group 46 – 55 years old, 10 (4.2%) in group 56 – 65 years old, only 1(0.4%) in group Under 18 years old.

**Gender:** 76(31.9%) are females, 162 (68.1%) are males.

**Marital status:** was 203(85.3%) Single, 28(11.8%) Married, 4(1.7%) Married but not Child, 3(1.3%) Another.

**Education level:** 188(79.0%) University, 45(18.9%) Master, 3(1.3%) College, 1(0.4%) High school and Another.

**Majors:** are 124(52.1%) Economic, 65(27.3%) Technology, 32(13.4%) Education, 9(3.8%) Culture, 8(3.4%) Other.

**Occupation:** 143(60.1%) Staff office, 35(14.7%) Managers, 24(10.1%) Business, 20(8.4%) Student, 2(0.8%) Another.

**Income:** 135(56.7%) have 20 – 40 million VND, 43(18.1%) Under 20 million VND, 29(12.2%) 40 – 60 million VND, 22(9.2%) 60 – 80 million VND, 7(2.9%) 80 – 100 million VND, 2(0.8%) Over 100 million VND.

**Years have been studying abroad:** 80(33.6%) participants 3 - 5 years, 74(31.1%) 1 - 2 years, 73(30.7%) 5 years, 11(4.6) Less than a year.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Participant's Demographic Information

Sample size N = 238		
Demographic Information		Percent (%)
Age - Group years old	Under 18 years old	0.4
	18 – 25 years old	28.6
	26 – 35 years old	44.5
	36 – 45 years old	14.7
	46 – 55 years old	7.6
	56 – 65 years old	4.2
Gender	Male	68.1
	Female	31.9
Marital status	Single	85.3
	Married	11.8
	Married but not Child	1.7
	Another	1.3
Education level	High school	0.4
	College	1.3
	University	79.0
	Master	18.9
	Another	0.4
Major	Economic	52.1
	Technology	27.3
	Education	13.4
	Culture	3.8
	Other	3.4
Occupation status	Student	8.4
	Employees	5.9
	Staff office	60.1
	Manager	14.7
	Business	10.1
	Another	0.8
Income	Under 20 million VND	18.1
	20 – 40 million VND	56.7
	40 – 60 million VND	12.2
	60 – 80 million VND	9.2
	80 – 100 million VND	2.9
	Over 100 million VND	0.8
Years have been studying abroad	Less than a year	4.6
	1-2 years	31.1
	3-5 years	33.6
	5 years and above	30.7

*Reliability Results and Validity Analysis*

The Cronbach's Alpha values for ESO, TIE, EQA, FBS and AFS are shown in Table 4.

**ESO:** With a score of 0.962, the scales in this sample show a high level of internal consistency.

**TIE:** This sample's scales have a strong level of internal consistency, with a rating of 0.939.

**EQA:** Rating of 0.938, indicating that the scales in this sample have strong internal consistency.

**FBS:** Rating of 0.842, indicating that the scales in this sample are highly consistent internally.

**AFS:** Rating of 0.970, indicating that the scales in this sample are highly consistent internally.

Table 4. Reliability Statistics (N=60)

Variables	Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Independent Variables	Experiences study overseas	0.962	15
	The international environment	0.939	10
	Education quality of study abroad	0.938	10
	The financial budget of study abroad	0.842	5
Dependent Variable	The advantages (benefits) factors of study abroad	0.970	20
Total			60

*Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test*

The KMO index is 0.928 > 0.5, which proves that the data used for factor analysis is completely appropriate as shown in Table 10. Bartlett's verified results are 15627.513, and Bartlett's Test

showed with the mean Sig. = 0.000 which is < 0.05 meaning that the forms of the variables are satisfactory. Bartlett's test with significance (sig) < 0.05 demonstrates the tested variables are correlated to each other overall.

Table 5. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.928
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	15627.513
	df	1770
	Sig.	0.000

*Pearson's Correlation Coefficient*

In the Correlations, four independent variables ESO, TIE, EQA, FBS have statistically significant effects on the de-

pendent variable AFS because of the value in the Sig. column of them < 5%. These independent variables and the dependent variable have a linear relationship as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Correlation Coefficients

		ESO	TIE	EQA	FBS	AFS
Pearson Correlation	ESO	1	.671**	.572**	.465**	.591**
	TIE	.671**	1	.690**	.558**	.675**
	EQA	.572**	.690**	1	.559**	.684**
	FBS	.465**	.558**	.559**	1	.658**
	AFS	.591**	.675**	.684**	.658**	1

*Multiple Linear Regressions (Regression Analyses and Hypothesis Testing)*

In Model Summary, the adjusted R-squared coefficient of R Square is

0.620. That is, 62.0% variation of the dependent variable AFS is explained by four independent factors FBS, ESO, EQA, TIE. This shows that this linear regression model fits the sample's data set at 62.0%.

Table 7. Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.792 <sup>a</sup>	0.627	0.620	0.30195

a. Predictors: (Constant), FBS, ESO, EQA, TIE

b. Dependent Variable: AFS

In the ANOVA, the conformance of the model was checked through F value,  $F = 97.777$  with  $\text{sig.} = 0,000 < 5\%$ ,

proving that the linear regression model has been built in a perfect fit with the sample as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.658	4	8.915	97.777	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	21.243	233	0.091		
Total		56.901	237			

a. Dependent Variable: AFS

b. Predictors: (Constant), FBS, ESO, EQA, TIE

As seen in Table 9, the values in the Sig. column all equal 5%, indicating that four independent variables, ESO, TIE, EQA, and FBS, all have a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable AFS. That is to say, each of the five hypotheses has been accepted. ESO has a B coefficient of 0.136, which means that when ESO grows by one unit, AFS increases by 0.136 units. EQA has the highest B coefficient of 0.274, indicating that it has the greatest influence

on AFS. Furthermore, coefficient B is positive, showing that EQA has a proportional impact on AFS. The second level of impact belongs to FBS, with a coefficient B = 0.247. TIE is ranked third, with a score of 0.197. Based on the formula for the Regression Equation function, the following was the study's Regression Equation:

$$AFS = 0.639 + 0.274(EQA) + 0.247(FBS) + 0.197(TIE) + 0.136(ESO)$$

Table 9. Regression Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>							
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	0.639	0.196		3.259	0.001		
	ESO	0.136	0.053	0.143	2.579	0.011	0.522	1.915
	TIE	0.197	0.061	0.207	3.239	0.001	0.391	2.556
	EQA	0.274	0.057	0.281	4.792	0.000	0.467	2.143
	FBS	0.247	0.039	0.319	6.304	0.000	0.625	1.600

a. Dependent Variable: AFS

*T-Test, and One-way ANOVA (AFS)*

The results of the One-way ANOVA and T-test for gender, marital status, education level, major, occupation status, and income show that there are some differences between international students and the AFS variable in major and occupation status.

**Gender:** In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances, the Sig Levene Test is 0.195 > 0.05. There is no difference among respondents as the Sig F-test in the ANOVA test is 0.311 > 0.05.

**Marital status:** In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances, the Sig Levene Test is 0.011 < 0.05. We use the results in the Robust Tests of Equality of Means. Sig F-test is 0.062 > 0.05, there is no difference between respondents.

**Education level:** In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances, the Sig Levene Test is 0.125 > 0.05. There are no differences between respondents as the Sig F-test in ANOVA test is 0.950 > 0.05.

**Major:** In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances, the Sig Levene Test is 0.123 > 0.05. There is a difference between

Table 10. ANOVA test for majors

ANOVA test for majors					
AFS	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.170	4	1.042	4.606	0.001
Within Groups	52.732	233	0.226		
Total	56.901	237			

There is a difference between respondents in majors as the Sig F-test is  $0.001 < 0.05$ .

respondents as the Sig F-test in the ANOVA test is  $0.001 < 0.05$ .

Test is  $0.025 < 0.05$ . In Robust Tests of Equality of Means, Sig F-test is  $0.019 < 0.05$ , there is a difference between respondents.

**Occupation status:** In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances, the Sig Levene

Table 11. ANOVA test for occupation status

ANOVA test for Occupation status					
AFS	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.132	5	.626	2.703	.021
Within Groups	53.769	232	.232		
Total	56.901	237			

**Income:** In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances, the Sig Levene Test is  $0.500 > 0.05$ . There is no difference among respondents as the Sig F-test is  $0.494 > 0.05$  in the ANOVA test.

size is small in comparison to the population, and the time and money required are insignificant in comparison to the population. The data, however, are sufficient, and we may conclude that the four independent variables have a significant impact on international students' decisions to study in another country.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the results of the SPSS analysis presented in the previous section, the independent variable Advantages factors on local students and employees to decide to study abroad have significant relationships with Overseas experiences, the international environment, educational quality, and financial budget, as shown in Table 12. The study cannot reflect the entire population of international students studying in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, because the sample

#### Recommendations

Future researchers can extend the survey, expand the sample size, use a range of data gathering approaches, and include a number of question kinds, such as open-ended questions, in the questionnaire. For a more in-depth finding of factors, a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches can be used.

Table 12. Research Summary

No.	Hypothesis	Results
1	Hypothesis 1 (H1) _ Overseas experiences positively affects the local students and employees to decision study abroad.	Supported
2	Hypothesis 2 (H2) _ The international environment positively affects the local students and employees to decision study abroad.	Supported
3	Hypothesis 3 (H3) _ Education quality positively affects the local students and employees to decision study abroad.	Supported
4	Hypothesis 4 (H4) _ The financial budget positively affects the local students and employees to decision study abroad.	Supported
5	Hypothesis 5 (H5) _ The advantages factors positively affect the local students and employees to decision study abroad.	Supported

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