**The Experience of global nomads on u.s. college campuses**

**Helen N. Wood**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree**

**doctorate of education**

**University of Sheffield**

**School of Education**

**may 2013**

**Dedication**

To my family, both near and far who believed from the very beginning….

**Acknowledgements**

Thanks, first and foremost to the students who participated in this research. Who were willing to share their experiences overseas and on campus; in an effort to shed light on the individuals known as Global Nomads/ Third Culture Kids.

Thank you to Dr. Catherine Whitcomb and the cups of tea, as we shared our own experiences of growing up. For her support and willingness to read multiple sections, including a first rough draft and her advice and counsel over the last few years. To Dr. Mary Desler, for her support and willingness to ask questions and listen as I talked through student development and related theories. I am unsure how I can thank you for your unwavering support of me as an individual and a doctoral student, especially for the glasses of wine and dinners when life got too much.

Friendship is a hard term to define, but you know it when you see it. I am a very lucky person who has many people in my life that provide support and friendship. CC and SD, not sure how we made it through the last three years, but I think we are coming out of the dark.

To my cohort group… thank you for making me feel like one of the group, for providing support and explanations along the way. I am thankful for your friendships and look forward to continuing our conversations for many years. Simon, Tim and ultimately Alan a set of supervisors that gave advice, counsel and time. The process has been bumpy, and at times all consuming, but I made it through. Thanks to Alan, who was willing to take me on, and carry me to the end. Thank you for the stability.

To my family, who kept me laughing, provided rides from the airport, warm comfortable beds and amazing home cooked meals. To Aunty Viv… without your suggestion five years ago, that I could return home, I would never have begun this adventure. How do you thank your most important cheerleaders? The two people who have never let you down, who challenge you to be better and never question why. Mum and Dad, thank you.

Granddad, I did it...

**Abstract**

Global nomads and third culture kids (GN/TCKs) are defined as those individuals who have lived a portion of their lives in a country other than their passport country, due to the occupation of one or more parents (McCaig, 2002; Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of GN/TCKs on U.S. college campuses. Three themes emerged from the literature review: belonging, identity, and introspection; determined to be similar for all U.S. HE college students in this age group and were used to understand the participants’ experiences on campus.

The experiences of the participants were measured against the backdrop of U.S. Student Development Theory (SDT); the name given to identity development models addressing the development of traditional aged (18-22 years) U.S. college students. The experiences were also compared to Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) four cultural domains, hidden immigrant, foreigner, adopted and mirror. The method of investigation was a survey distributed through multiple online avenues, as well as six one-on-one interviews conducted via Skype® and telephone. The data analysis was guided by SDT, specifically social identity theories as well as Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) four cultural domains.

Elements of the participants’ experiences mirror those of mono-cultural U.S. HE students, and the universal themes of belonging, identity and introspection were evident in their narratives. The findings revealed most of the participants fell into Pollock and Van Reken’s hidden immigrant category; an individual who looks alike yet thinks differently than the majority culture. Evident in the analysis was the participants’ lack of understanding of U.S. culture; I classified this as a lack of national identity. A pictorial model that integrates the development of a national identity is included. The need for a new student development theory focused on the identity development of GN/TCKs is discussed.

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Chapter One

**INTRODUCTION**

The focus of the introduction is to place the research in context, providing an overview of the research. The purpose of this study is to look at the higher education (HE) experience, on campuses in the United States (U.S.), of a set of individuals referred to as global nomads (GN) or third culture kids (TCKs), who have lived a portion of their lives in a country other than their passport country due to the occupation of one of more parent (McCaig, 2002; Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). The GN/TCK student experience in U.S. higher education will be evaluated against the backdrop of student development theory and socio-political attitudes of race, ethnicity and difference in the United States (U.S.) in the age of globalization.

**CONTEXT**

Every year, thousands of students raised as expatriate Americans return to the U.S. for college or university studies. Educated in American style high schools, they are taught most of the skills they will need to continue their education. They are not taught the skills they will need to enter a culture they only think they are familiar with, but one which they cannot know intimately… Many of them will suffer a kind of culture shock as they seek to adapt to a social world they’ve assumed is theirs. (Sichel, 2004 p.7)

There are two fundamental presuppositions of education: people can change, and educators and the educational environment can facilitate that change. “The growth and development of students is a central goal of [U.S.] higher education.” (Evans, Forney, Guido-DiBrito, 1998 p.2) Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) in their research, ‘How College Affects Students’, focus on the net effects of college on post graduation success. Their research focuses on all aspects of the college experience, from type of college chosen, academic major, parental success in college and so on; they remark that there is a “net positive impact on student self-reports concerning the development of career related skills… [it] appear[s] to enhance [an] individual’s perception of how well college fostered their career skills and prepared them for their current jobs.” (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005, p.452)

From the earliest research conducted about the U.S. college experience (Student Personnel Point of View, 1937), there has been an understanding that the collegiate experience affects students, albeit in individual and different ways, and provides students with multiple opportunities for change and development. Millions of dollars are spent each year across U.S. campuses on programs to help students integrate into college life, and provide experiences that all add to the net experience of college. Not all students develop and change, neither at the same rate nor in what could be argued a positive manner; however, the research of Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) does show that the overall experience of college does allow individuals the opportunity to explore new roles and identities.

**RESEARCH FOCUS**

The focus of the study is related to multiple personal and professional interests. At the age of thirteen, I moved from a working class former cotton mill town in the northwest of England to the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois in the United States of America. Appendix one provides the reader with a more detailed life history. Until I was introduced to the term third culture kid, I had, I believe, played the role of ‘fitting’ in. At first glance one would not be able to ascertain my dual background. I speak with an American accent in a work environment only switching to an English accent at home with family - what Norma McCaig (2002) coined as a ‘hidden minority’ and Pollock and Van Reken (2009, 2011) refer to as a ‘hidden immigrant.’

My professional interest in this research comes from almost 20 years of working as a HE professional in student affairs. As a college student at a small liberal arts school of less than 2,000 students I gained first-hand knowledge of U.S. student affairs, through my interactions with staff and the jobs I held on campus. My research interest in the concept of Global Nomads and the globalization of education is situated in my frustration (and some of my colleagues’ frustration), on the reliance by some in U.S. HE on the American definition of diversity (multicultural) that only takes into accounts blacks, Hispanics and Asians. For example, at my former institution (a research-intensive, private, top ten HE)[[1]](#footnote-1), Multicultural Student Affairs provides services to blacks, Hispanics and Asians. Students of other cultural backgrounds and international students are accommodated elsewhere in the university in white U.S. culture dominated departments. This is not uncommon across the U.S.; on campuses in certain areas of the country depending on the racial make up of the area, Native American or Inuit students are added to multicultural units. There are only a handful (four at last count) of U.S. HE institutions that take into account the changes that globalization is creating, by providing support and services to students that identify as GN or TCK. Social, political and historical constructions of race in the U.S. have led to a discount of culture. The push to have everyone participate in the ‘melting pot’ leads to the elimination of culture as individuals and groups try to become ‘American’ (Root, 1993; McLeod, 1981).

The purpose of this research is to determine if the life history of the global nomad/third culture kid is unique enough to warrant an additional ‘theory’ or become a recognized category within student development theory by asking and answering the question ‘What are the experiences of global nomads on U.S. college campuses?’ This thesis will show that current student development theory does not adequately address nor include students who fit the definitions of global nomad or third culture kid. As Ted Ward has noted, “Third Culture Kids are the prototype citizens of the future.” (McCaig, 2002 p.17) While every student brings a different life history to college, most of those life histories are addressed by current student development theory (race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religious background, disability).

The majority of the research on global nomads or third culture kids has taken place in the last fifteen years but finds its roots in the research of Useem, Useem and Donoghue (1969). Academic research available primarily highlights the experiences of children under the age of 18 years who attend international schools (Dixon and Hayden, 2008; Fail, Thompson and Walker, 2004; Eldering, 1995). The academic research on GN/TCK students in college is limited and likely to be unpublished as it is primarily masters and doctoral research, although there is a growing online presence for global nomads[[2]](#footnote-2). As globalization continues to increase, the number of children and subsequent college students whose background would include a time outside their passport country will grow. Globalization changes an individual’s sense of identity, shifting cultural and historical markers on a local and global level. One in seven U.S. families are headed by a foreign born adult (Piedra and Engstrom, 2009). It seems it would behoove student services personnel to take into account the experiences in multiple cultures and societies when designing support services.

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) believe that there is “a way of thinking in a shared society by ordinary people, the common understanding that makes everyday practices possible, giving them a sense of legitimacy.” (p.34) It is this thinking that creates a sense of shared community, foreign to the GN/TCK, for each new community/culture they enter results in a struggle to define their place (McCaig, 2002; Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). One could argue that education is a reflection of its culture and society. Student Development Theory (SDT) is the name given to identity development models addressing the needs of traditional aged (18-22) U.S. college students. Societal changes and influences are reflected in the type of student development theories created in the last forty years. As a student affairs professional committed to using student development theory in my day-to-day work, I was interested in how current theory helps or hinders the transition of GNs/TCKs on campus.

**STUDY DESIGN**

The study focuses on undergraduate students who are in their second or third year on a U.S. college campus. The majority of student affairs research conducted in the U.S. is done so on undergraduate students in their second or third year on campus; I felt it was important to mirror this particular research model. Snowball sampling was employed in order to find 10 participants who self-identify with Norma McCaig’s (2002) definition of global nomad: “people of any age or nationality who lived a significant part of their developmental years in one or more countries outside their passport country(s) because of a parent’s occupation.” The participants range in age between 18 and 22 years and have completed at least one year of college on a U.S. college campus. Survey data was collected consisting of eighteen (18) questions regarding each participant’s life history, including moves, themselves in relation to others and their experiences on campus. Each participant was asked to participate in a follow-up interview. The interview was semi-structured to explore to the following: 1) the participants’ understanding of the term global nomad and how they might self-identify; 2) the participants’ assessment of the student support services on campus; 3) the participants’ assessment of self in relation to other students on campus; and 4) would the participants want or need specialized support services whether they be formal or informal. The open-ended nature of the interviews was designed to elicit full descriptions and perceptions of self and the participants’ understanding of identity development. Context analysis techniques were employed to look for themes; specifically highlighting sense of self, experience with student support services, sense of difference and desire for support.

**INTENT OF THE RESEARCH**

The intent of this particular research is to provide a voice for the students who self-identify as Global Nomad or Third Culture Kid, who currently, because of lack of academic research are not counted as part of admission applications and are not included in current U.S. student development identity models. Students with multiple life histories are becoming more prevalent on campuses as trans-national corporations continue to expand across the globe. GNs/TCKs are a silent minority on U.S. campuses as they fit into other ‘categories’ – I believe we, as HE administrators, are ignoring a specific kind of identity development that occurs for a significant number of multi cultural students.

U.S. HE has responded to societal upheavals in the past by creating student development theories that reflect social issues. My intent is to add to the definition of what it means to be multi cultural, acknowledging the need to include new language that incorporates globalization in the language spoken on campus and in the definitions of student development. Perhaps the reason HE has not responded to changes in globalization is because of the historical and political definitions of diversity as Bennett states “with an ‘ism’ attached, ‘multiculturalism’ has of course been associated with domestic (as opposed to international) diversity” (Personal Communication, 2010) Rizvi (2005) believes that the benefits of cross-cultural interactions are perceived to outweigh the issues of inconsistent capital growth and elimination of cultural uniqueness.

A proposed developmental model that incorporates national identity will be discussed showing that the unique experience of the GN/TCK warrants separate acknowledgement, not inclusion in other current SDTs.

**SUMMARY**

The introduction is meant to introduce the context and purpose of the research and to briefly introduce the concepts and terms that will be used and investigated throughout this thesis. An in-depth examination of terms, concepts and theories will be provided in the literature review and methodology chapters.

Chapter Two

**CONTEXT FOR RESEARCH**

This chapter introduces the research questions to be addressed as well as a hypothesis and objectives of the study. A statement of the problem and purpose of the study will be provided, including a discussion of U.S. society, globalization and an overview of the U.S. Higher Education system and how the three are ultimately interdependent.

Changes in the makeup of the current generation of students due to globalization has provided direction for this research and will inform the direction of future student development research. The intent of this chapter is to also show how racial categories and political and social upheavals in the U.S. lead to responses in research and the development of psychosocial models of identity development for U.S. college students.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Primary Question:**

Is the life history of the global nomad/third culture kid unique enough to warrant an additional student development ‘theory’ or become a recognized category within current student development theory?

**Secondary Questions:**

1. What is the experience of the Global Nomad on a U.S. college campus?
2. As each informant was growing up, when and how did she/he first become aware of ‘difference’, particularly ethnic and cultural differences?
3. What exposure to or experiences did each informant have with people that were different than him/her in a school setting?
4. Were interactions on campus influenced by the life histories and experiences of the informants?

I feel it is important to acknowledge here that creating or looking to create a new identity category is in its very nature problematic. These students (GNs/TCKs) could be included in current developmental theories that capture a particular element of their identity, sexual orientation, gender, race, or ethnicity. However, I do not believe that the theories capture the full essence of the GN/TCK and warrants at the very least, a discussion of what a new model of development would resemble for these individuals. As will become apparent in the literature review in Chapter 3, Erikson’s (1968) identity development model suggests that each person passes through stages on their way to identity resolution that includes dissonance, regression and ultimately resolution in order to progress and develop. The creation of a new identity category would in part recognize the uniqueness of these individuals; validate their experiences and development. It would acknowledge a change in social structures and developments in society that has changed the way people interact and live. In contrast, is the creation of a new category a self-fulfilling prophecy; if you label them they will be unique? As the research questions ask are the life histories unique enough to create a new model, or is researcher bias influencing the weight of ‘difference’? Identifying these individuals as separate denotes that they are unique and have a specific voice and developmental process that cannot be addressed by current theory.

**PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

My own story[[3]](#footnote-3) of being a global nomad or third culture kid begins in a mid-sized industrial, former cotton mill town in the north west of England, transported due to my father’s job in the early 1980s to a wealthy suburb north of Chicago in the United States. A move that was initially to last two years is now in its 29th year. My struggles with adaptation to a new country and education system are echoed through choices I made as a teenager, a young adult and as an individual who reluctantly became a U.S. citizen at the age of thirty-one. It is a strange life to lead when you can look in from the outside and hope that you are ‘passing.’ In a recent conversation with my mother and her friend (also a transplant from England), both of whom are in their sixties, state that they feel as though they do not belong in one place (England) or the other (the States); however, they both comment that the place the feel they most belong at sixty years old, is the retirement community they have chosen in South Carolina because as they reflect ‘no one is from here.’ Perhaps my parents and my brother would have similar stories, perhaps not. What is valid and important are my perceptions of how my story has led me to this point.

Like most GNs/TCKs there was an initial understanding of repatriation; once that changed, I believe my experience in the U.S. began to change. There was an overwhelming need to assimilate and attempts made to ‘fit in.’ My own unique world view influences the work that I do as a student affairs professional, how I tackle problems and situations both professionally and personally and certainly impacted this research. My own experience on a U.S. HE campus was good; I had experienced difficulties in high school, but by the time I got to college I knew how to ‘pass.’ Very few individuals from that time period, college, knew of my background and as a result, in retrospect, may have impacted my success post graduation.

My career goals were initially to be an archeologist and then a forensic pathologist, but because I was ‘treated’ as an American, I did not receive (nor to be fair did I seek out) appropriate career advice. After graduation I found out that I could not work in the American court system, a starting point for my pathology career, because I was not a citizen. My career choice came to a halt and I fell back on what I knew – student affairs. Ironically, a college mentor made a bet with me on graduation day that I would be working on a college campus the following September. Would my career choice and/or life be different if I had been counted as a global nomad or counseled as an international student and/or not been so focused on ‘passing?’ There is, of course, no answer for that question. What has happened as a result is the coloring of my experience as a student affairs administrator and subsequent work with international students and GNs/TCKs on campus.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)[[4]](#footnote-4), provides the professional ethics for the student affairs profession. As such, developing and maintaining a high level of service and care is an essential part of a student affairs professional’s work ethic. I certainly felt safe and secure on my campus, but as the American I had tried so hard to become, not as a GN/TCK. As will be discussed in detail in chapter three, there is no student development theory that specifically addresses the concerns of GNs/TCKs. Have I, as a student affairs administrator, then not been providing the best possible service and care to my students who identify as GN/TCK?

This thesis is an exploration of the experience of students who identify, as GN/TCK, in an effort to understand if what I have determined as areas where support lacking, is in fact valid. Services targeted at mono cultural students, international students, or those that identify with U.S. specific social classifications do not necessarily include viable support options for GNs/TCKs. It is my hope through this research that I am contributing original research to my profession and providing an accurate depiction of these particular students that will lead to appropriate services provided and a reworking of current standards and practices.

**EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

Developments in U.S. society and education are intertwined. Even though as noted earlier in the chapter there is no federal oversight or funding of education (no institution funded solely by government monies). Laws have been developed to protect students and schools, and those practitioners who work with students have developed theories and guides in reaction to social concerns. For the last forty years the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) has been surveying the incoming freshman student at the majority of institutions across the U.S.; over 8 million students have provided data to date (Pryor, Hurtado, Saenz, Santos, and Korn, 2007). The enrollment demographics of students have changed over the last forty years including gender, racial, ethnic minorities, first generation and low-income students. Pryor et al. (2007) argue that while access to HE has increased, institutions are doing little to prepare students for the global society. Societal changes such as the Women’s and Civil Rights Movements have helped change institutional polices and programs that have reduced inequalities on campus, however the system as a whole is still market driven and dictated by outside economic factors (Pryor et al., 2007). Recognizing that the world continues to get smaller and the experiences of students continue to broaden before attending college, I began asking whether appropriate support services are in place that addresses the needs and concerns of this new generation of students.

Education as a whole is wrapped in the ethos of a culture and society. American individualism has dictated the course of the American HE system and as a result, the subsequent student developmental theories follow that pattern. Chapter three will provide a detailed explanation of Student Development theories and societal patterns. As the social upheavals of the mid 20th century occurred in the U.S., the face of the college student drastically changed from white upper middle class predominantly male to students of color, as well as an increase in the enrollment of women, veterans and students from a wide variety of social backgrounds (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, and Renn, 2010). The result was a profession that looked to understand the needs and viewpoints of this new student body and developed a set of developmental theories that addressed the new faces on college campuses.

**SOCIETAL CONTEXT**

The word society gets its roots from the Latin *societatem* or *socius* meaning companion, where its modern definition of a “a voluntary association of persons for common ends a part of a community bound together by common interests and standards” is derived. (Merriam-Webster, 2004) Migration patterns of the last 200 years (forced and voluntary) have dictated the generation of U.S. society and culture. “Unlike trade in goods or international financial flows, migration can change the ethnic composition of a society…” (Hollifield, 2007 p.64) With advances in travel and communication technology, migration has accelerated reaching levels not seen since the end of the 19th century. “More than 215 million people (ca 3% of the world’s population) live outside their countries of birth.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

Fearon (1999) notes social, national and personal identity are intertwined and it is difficult to separate the nuances of each. He goes on to suggest that national identity (see further discussion in Chapter 3) means something different to those living in the country than to those attempting to assimilate. This disconnect is part of the struggle faced by GN/TCKs as they return to the U.S. for further education.

Advances in technology, especially in communication and travel, have changed the global landscape; moving us from the individual to the collective. Much has been written about globalization, which as a concept is not new; neither is migration in order to make a better life. However, the advent of technology and the free flow of information and social and economic capital has changed the way in which we interact (Fitzsimmons, 2000). Held and McGrew (2002) define globalization as the “expanding scale, … speeding up and deepening impact… of social interaction.” (p.1) Rizvi (2005) believes that the benefits of cross-cultural interactions are perceived to outweigh the issues of inconsistent capital growth and elimination of cultural uniqueness. As noted by Pollock and Van Reken (2009), communities all over the world are becoming more culturally mixed and TCKs/global nomads are becoming a way to define cultural identity in the post-modern world. While not all the experiences and new realities are the same, some of these children and adults who are/were raised in a genuinely cross-cultural, highly mobile world, have generated distinct identity/perspective differences (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009).

**OVERVIEW OF THE AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM**

The United States (U.S.) has an interesting and complex education system. As a whole it is one of the largest comprehensive mass education systems in the world, educating, in 2005, as many as 54.6 million between the ages of 6 and 18 and over 16 million “traditional aged” students between the ages of 18 and 24 in its roughly 4000 colleges and universities.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The U.S. higher education (HE) system is composed of four types of institutions, classified according the Carnegie classification system.[[7]](#footnote-7) The four types are: four-year degree-granting universities both publicly and privately funded (most universities grant undergraduate and graduate degrees and boast major research programs); four-year bachelors degree granting institutions both publicly and privately funded (colleges in general only grant bachelors degrees); two-year non-profit community and junior colleges, which grant professional certificates as well as associate degrees; and the newest category of institutions - for-profit private two-and four-year universities. For the purposes of this research the term college will be used to represent the different types of institutions in the U.S. HE system.

Martin Trow (1989) believes that it is a system that has allowed everyone to participate no matter the skill level, has no government oversight, no national curriculum and is one that follows market trends and relies on consumer preferences in order to thrive. He refers to it as ‘unique,’ driven by market forces and structural diversity. It is a system unlike any other, founded mainly by religious orders for vocational training (Bailey, 1974). It is a system that has moved and adapted with the times, mirroring societal needs, with federal intervention, the granting of specific land for building institutions of higher learning[[8]](#footnote-8) or providing access through the GI Bill[[9]](#footnote-9).

The U.S. has no national institution nor common standards of admission or grading; Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward, 17 U.S. (4 Wheat.) 518 (1819)[[10]](#footnote-10), kept forever the separation of government and (private) education and created a market place where anyone could create an institution hence the approximately 4000 institutions at present count. It is an education system driven by the market and ultimately influenced by culture from the masses (individual student tuition dollars), it is sensitive to student preferences and the job market. With Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society Legislation, the U.S. government made the decision to make available federal monies for education – BUT purposely gave the money to students in the form of grants and loans thereby dictating the market as students choose where to spend the money.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Trow (1989) believes that HE makes an impression on society and helps change societal attitudes, that an educated person has a long-term view of the world and its problems. The educated person has been taught how to learn and therefore is apt to engage in life-long learning, “All of this suggests that American higher education will be an even more important institution in the decades to come …” (Trow, 1989 p.20). In comparison the changes to the UK system appears to determine the enrollment of students to each institution. If this is the case the market will not necessarily speak, rather the haves (those with access to funds) will continue to have access to institutions of choice and the have-nots will be ‘forced’ to enroll where they can afford to attend, potentially downgrading degrees. Allowing student interest to determine the institution that survives and who adapts to meet needs is what is unique about the U.S. system. “According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Forecasts, through the year 2006, 4 year colleges will graduate 533,000 more students that the economy will generate in commensurate employment.” (Gray and Herr, 2000, p.97-98) The current state of HE has changed the focus on students from learners to consumers; the age of consumerism has changed U.S. higher education rather than education for the sake of learning, students are viewed as consumers and accountability is the norm. Sponsored research is the way many institutions fund academic programs and institutions have moved further away from the teaching of students to managing the multibillion dollar enterprise known as HE (Ball, 2003; Rhoads and Slaughter, 2006; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997). Tilak (2004) believes that the U.S. market philosophy of education is changing the way HE outside the U.S. is structured; going as far as to say that education is no longer viewed as a beneficial enterprise for society, but rather for the individual.

**GLOBALIZATION**

Globalization has changed the world dramatically in the last twenty years, creating a smaller world where people of different backgrounds interact continuously in ways unimaginable fifty years ago. Globalization also affects education - education maintains the social structure of society, by providing ‘types’ of education to reinforce class structures and maintain the status quo in society. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) note that education is affected by all the changes associated with globalization: it is affected structurally, in policy terms, in practice terms, and in the experiences that young people bring with them to their education. The world is no longer tight knit and organized; culture is dynamic and disorganized. Exposure to global media and global products has changed the way in which a local culture values education. We cannot assume that people are not affected by global consumerism. The global labor market is connected to the global social order; a skill-based paradigm requires people to be flexible in order to interact globally (Rizvi, 2008). He goes on to note that cosmopolitanism is a worthy educational goal; but we need to be cautious that we do not ignore history, interconnectedness, cultural practices and social networks (Rizvi, 2008).

Urry (2000) determined that the society of the future would be one defined by “powerful ‘national’ forces seeking to moderate control and regulate…” (p.1) The definition of society at a local level includes the definition of an individual person, where s/he fits in that culture and what value s/he brings to that society. Technology and mobility undermine societal (nation state) power, by diluting cultural identity. Mobility of the individual and consumer goods, the sociology of consumption, now dictate the way in which nation state culture develops; it gives individuals options. “Much twentieth-century sociology has been based upon the study of occupational, income, educational and social mobility.” (Urry, 2000 p.2)

Rizvi, Lingard, and Lavia (2006) state that identity in the global society is a hybrid form of the individual and a hybrid form of the nation state that the individual belongs to. This identity is wrapped up in politics and the economy, both on a local and global level. Trans-national elites benefit the most from education, as it not only reproduces societal class structures, but it also positions them strategically in the global economy (Rizvi, 2009). Education is wrapped in the values of the local community, the nation state and the institution; globalization changes these values (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010).

The new generation of student and the influence globalization has on education is starting to change the landscape of the college campus. Changes in globalization and the resultant change in a generation of students are a new social issue and U.S. HE needs to change to meet these students’ needs. While researching SDT theories to teach the masters’ level class “The College Student” I began to understand that my frustration lies with the profession. It is one, I believe, that is reactive rather than proactive. One that continues to develop theories that have grown from societal pressures rather than developing ones that address new needs and issues raised on campus. I believe that the issue of globalization and the way that technology is shrinking the social world is changing the demographics of students attending college, and as a result innovative research needs to address these needs.

Social constructionism aptly describes – how student development theories developed, under what societal conditions, and at what point in history (McEwen, 1996). In this research, social constructionism – the way in which social phenomena are used and made into traditions by societies – will be used to illustrate how Student Development theory has reacted to social issues and phenomena when developing new theories. Student Development Theory is as Miller and Prince (1976) state is “the application of human development concepts in a post secondary setting so that everyone involved can master increasingly complex developmental tasks, achieve self direction, and become independent.” (p.2)

In an unpublished presentation that looked at redefining the term multicultural I asked the question ‘is the limit on the term (multicultural) to mean Asian, Black or Hispanic limiting the resources provided to students on HE campuses who do not fit a neat category or tick box?’ (Wood, 2010) If student affairs professionals’ work to provide an environment that assists in the growth and development of the student through the use of student development theory – are these practitioners effective in their work if there is no theory to guide them about this particular population? In a conversation with program director Greg Caldwell of Lewis and Clark College[[12]](#footnote-12), he knows of no institution that has system in place, which collects data on U.S. students who have lived overseas, other than his own. The only students counted are those that fit the general description of international student (those students who are not of U.S. nationality and enrolled at U.S. institutions usually on a student F1 visa) and of those 671,616 attended U.S. colleges and universities during the 2008-2009 school year.[[13]](#footnote-13)

**SOCIETAL CHANGES REFLECTED ON THE HE CAMPUS**

My career spans almost twenty years in the HE industry; and during that time I have come to understand the mindset and philosophies of the American HE system, including how single minded it is. I have also come to learn, and on some level, appreciate the ‘holding pattern’ students are placed in during their bachelors programs; and I appreciate the difficulties young people between 18 and 22 face on a U.S. college campus. As White (1980) notes college students are neither children nor adults, “college affords young people additional time and opportunity to make the transition to particular forms of maturity.” (p.28) She stresses that developmental models based on western ideals and values that map linear movement from one stage or level to the next are not necessarily accurate measures of all students; and when we assume that students aged 18-22 years old are adolescents, we treat them as such and allow them the time to mature in an environment that expects mistakes.

As communities all over the world are becoming more culturally mixed, perhaps GNs/TCKs are redefining a new set of individuals in the post-modern world. The reality for these children and adults is they are/were raised in a cross-cultural environment; have distinct perspective differences; for some moved with the understanding of expected repatriation; and for some, not all, experience a privileged lifestyle in which they played a particular role (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). As a result their reality, in an attempt to understand and come to terms with self and placement in society, directly affects their identity development. This thesis will explore their sense of reality and experiences in order to understand how that may impact their experience on a U.S. HE campus.

Noted by Pollock and Van Reken (2009), Schaetti (2006) and McCaig (2002), these children and young adults report developmental issues that are a result of the lifestyle they lead. All agree that once adulthood is reached TCKs and global nomads have a stronger sense of personal identity and values than most children who grow up in the same place their entire lives. Of note here is that the development of these children is measured against current (western) models of development (as is student development theory), which may no longer be appropriate in a multi cultural and diverse world.

Measuring the development of these children against U.S. models of development is problematic not only because of mono-cultural concerns, but also the time frame and period during which they were created. The experience of the move(s) provide global nomad children with numerous benefits and challenges as they are developing: such as the benefit of realizing there is more than one way to look at something, and the challenge of appearing unpatriotic because they have confused loyalties in terms of a home culture and host culture (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). As McCaig notes “…intercultural and linguistic skills are the makings of the cultural chameleon…taking on enough of the coloration of the social surroundings to gain acceptance while maintaining some of the vestige of identity as a different animal, an ‘other.” (1996, p.101) Taft (1981) reminds us that the primary socialization of the child is reliant on the family and identification with the parent. “…exposure to a second culture later in life is one of the most striking instances in which a person’s accepted social reality is cast into doubt.” (p.65) Therefore it is not hard to make the case for global nomads experiencing a disconnect between family and society.

For me it is not a leap to recognize that my own struggles of fitting in, trusting others and genuinely participating in the moment are similar to others like me who have a multi culture background. Trying to figure out social cues, family cues, classmates, social references or family dynamics add to the pressures of U.S. college life. “Cross-cultural kids of all backgrounds tell us how they have learned to play the appropriate role for whichever cultural community they are in, often changing roles as needed.” (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009 p.110) These individuals adapt, blend in, spend time learning a new culture, have strong social and linguistic skills, but can also feel conspicuous and chastised for being insecure. They struggle to find what Pollock and Van Reken call cultural balance because they struggle to reconcile differing value systems; frequent moves can inhibit the development of social relationships and skills (2009).

It is important to note here that everyone progresses through developmental issues; most had an awkward teenage stage, tested limits in an attempt to determine where one fits in the larger community as well as the family unit. The difference for global nomads/third culture kids is that they are developing in a system they do not know well, with values in the home that maybe in complete contradiction with the social world around them. According to Pollock and Van Reken; using current developmental models of progress, these children (GN/TCK) show an uneven maturation pattern in terms of developing a personal sense of identity, establishing and maintaining strong relationships, developing competence in decision making, and achieving independence and adulthood (2009). Harkness and Super (1999) acknowledge that “much of children’s learning and development takes place in the context of participation in culturally constituted practices… that children’s culturally structured learning experiences are set within a larger framework of daily life that is also organized.” (p.67)

**OUTLINE OF RESEARCH**

This chapter provided the contextual background of the U.S. HE system, and the evolution and development of student development theory. The chapter also introduced both the personal and educational significance of the research. Changes in society and demographics of students on U.S. HE campuses helped develop the research question ‘Is the life history of the global nomad unique enough to warrant the development of a new student development theory.’ The excerpt from my personal narrative, I believe, sets the stage for this research and begins to show the significance of studying these individuals.

The next chapter provides a review of the literature on global nomads and student development theory, and provides definitions of terms. A discussion of national identity and culture identity development is highlighted through the themes of identity, belonging and introspection. Discussion is provided in relation to college students and provides the reader with an understanding of the narratives and subjects included in this study. It will provide the reader with an understanding of the American identity/ego in relation to race and culture in an attempt to highlight the potential adjustment issues a GN/TCK would encounter returning to the U.S. for HE.

The fourth chapter provides justification for the qualitative method chosen, and subsequent discussion outlines the instrument development and administration. An outline of the data analysis is provided and study limitations are addressed. The fifth chapter addresses study findings and provides a picture of the participants in the survey as well as the interviewees. The chapter discusses the themes of belonging; identity and introspection that emerged from the literature review and shows by example how the participants’ experiences relate to the themes.

The sixth chapter provides the reader with interpretations of the findings of the study. The chapter also presents a possible developmental stage model that GN/TCKs move through in their development on an HE campus. I believe that the lack of understanding of a personal national identity is what separates these GN/TCK students from others, mono-cultural students. It is where current SDT theory falls short in addressing GN/TCK needs. Finally conclusions and recommendations for educators and practitioners are provided and further research implications are suggested - including a national comparative study of non GN/TCK students and GN/TCK students; research to address the mental health needs of GNs/TCKs; and research on the reasoning behind the need to ‘count’ GNs/TCKs. The conclusion will also provide the reader with an understanding of where the research and researcher stand at the end of the process.

Chapter Three

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

What is American Higher Education and how is it significantly different from other HE systems? What is identity, specifically social, cultural and national identities? And, who are Global Nomads and why are they a significant enough population to study? From these questions the main research question, ‘What is the experience of the Global Nomad on a U.S. college campus?’ emerged. The chapter is broken into five sections; it begins with the advent of the Student Affairs profession as well as student development theories created to understand the behaviors of the American college student. Next, a discussion of identity is offered showing the history of where and how the concept of ‘identity’, as well as social identity, entered the American discourse and how it has influenced the discourse. Then a separate commentary is provided on race, and culture in the U.S. and how these identities influence everyday programs, policies and budget decisions at the local and national level. Fourthly, Wodak, De Cillia, Reisigl, and Liebhart’s (2009) work on the concept of national identity will lay the groundwork for the in-depth discussion of how it was used to analyze the sample data in the methodology section. Finally, research on the Global Nomad will be presented, including what according to researchers makes their experience unique.

I was acutely aware that Student Development Theory and the structure and culture of U.S. HE might not translate for all readers. Care was taken to include detail and information about U.S. HE that would inform a non- U.S. reader about student services, the formal and informal ways in which care and services are administered on most campuses. Attempts to provide notation and clarification of such details will be made throughout the chapter.

**Student Affairs/Student Personnel**

Introduced in the previous chapter was an overview of the U.S. HE system and the evolution of Student Development Theory. In 1937 the American Council on Education Studies convened a group of fourteen HE institutions in order to assess the development of students; the resulting document, the Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV), is considered the earliest documented guidance on how to support the student beyond the classroom.

“The basic purpose of [U.S.] HE is the preservation, transmission, and enrichments of the important elements of culture… This philosophy imposes upon educational institutions the obligation to consider the student as a whole – his intellectual capacity and achievement, his emotional make up, his physical condition, his social relationships, his vocational aptitudes and skills, his moral and religious values, his economic resources, his aesthetic appreciations.” (Marsh, 1937 p.1)

From the earliest inception of American HE the academic life of the student and the moral development of the individual have been paramount: “The American system was founded on the principle of student learning and character development.” (Komives and Woodward, 1996 p.1) The Oxbridge model of residential education influenced the earliest builders of U.S. HE campuses and would come to define a prominent area of student affairs work now known as residence life or residential education. U.S. HE campuses considered ‘traditional’, house more than 50% of their student body in university owned residential halls, that provide programming, peer mentoring and counseling; a significant number of schools also have live in adult staff members that monitor student behavior and provide counseling and support.[[14]](#footnote-14) The first students saw college as a way to “ratify and confirm their existing social standing,” rather than be educated to fill a role in society (Thelin, 1996, p.7). While only 1-5% of Americans between the ages of 18-22 years were enrolled between 1700 and 1900, that number increased to 50% by the 1970s; and by October 2010, the bureau of labor statistics suggested that 68% of High School (HS) graduates were enrolled in college.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Initially the college president would have been the person looked to for moral guidance, and the responsibility of professors was to guide students through their personal and academic lives (Appleton, Briggs and Rhatigan, 1978). As numbers increased, demands on the faculty increased; and a realization emerged that additional staff was needed to provide moral guidance and build character. The modern profession of Student Affairs derived its purpose from this need. Department functions include (but are not limited to) the following, differing on each of the 4000+ institutions of HE in the U.S. depending on the breadth and scope of the institution itself: academic support services, recreation and or athletic programs, financial assistance, housing and food programs, career advising, cultural events, health and wellness, disability and veterans services, student activities and campus student governance, campus conduct, research and needs assessment.[[16]](#footnote-16)

While lacking federal government funding and guidance, the U.S. HE system has taken much direction from federal and state laws as well as societal issues and pressure (Renn and Arnold, 2003). 1910 saw the advent of extra-curricular activities, post WWI and II saw the influx of women and GIs onto campus, and the 1960s and 70s saw federal aid acts for returning veterans and low income students as well as the increase of minority students on campus (Thelin, 1996). The social unrest and subsequent violence of the 1960s changed not only the architecture of the modern campus (the addition of riot-proof buildings), but also added an additional responsibility to student affairs professionals’ job responsibilities: conflict resolution. The 1972 federal act of Title IX – women’s access rights[[17]](#footnote-17) and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act[[18]](#footnote-18) changed the landscape of campuses for female students and those with both learning and physical disabilities. Between 1990 and 2000 HEs prospered and enrollments soared (due to increased population growth rather than a major increase in HE students attending college). During the same period student health and wellness, campus security and major advances in technology became hot button issues where colleges spent budgetary dollars. The changing academic delivery system and the obsession with consumerism began to drastically change the college campus as HEs developed on-line and distance learning programs (Thelin, 2003). “Whereas in 1910 and 1950 HS students could look forward to and aspire to be part of college life, by the 1990s there had been a cultural reversal: the student culture of junior high and HS students now set the tone for college life.” (Thelin, 2003, p.20)

There is an HE identity in the U.S. Kathleen White (1980) writes on the problems and characteristics of college students and states that in order to grasp whom American college students are, “we must consider them both as evolving individuals undergoing basic developmental change and as participants in social processes in a particular time and place.” (p.15) As a phenomenon that speaks to the lifestyle and turbulence of adolescence, the specific identity developed by an American teenager is wrapped in the culture and expectations of America and being an American. Hoare’s (1991) work on culture provides insight as to how a person’s reality is “shaped by the culture in which the self is embedded.” (p.45) According to Perry (1912), the American Mind was a political concept developed in opposition to British imperialism, saying that they [Americans] possess both superb confidence, and recklessness.

**Development and Philosophy of Student Affairs**

As changes in the U.S. HE system arose so did the need for professional staff that could commit to the character development of students. (As noted earlier, this was a fundamental premise of education during the founding of U.S. HE) During the early years students were viewed as immature adolescents who needed guidance (Nuss, 1996 p.24). While modern day student personnel divisions are a 20th century phenomenon, earliest pieces of them can be traced back to the 1860s where the German university movement began to influence student life – primarily the introduction of the gymnasium, emphasizing health and wellness and co-curricular activities (Nuss, 1996). By 1925 “distinct student personnel functions” had developed – with the distinct philosophy to support the academic mission of the institution and the character development of the student (Nuss, 1996 p.28). As Young (2003) notes, the student is a participant in his or her own education and the student affairs professional provides the structure for that participation. The community that develops (and in some cases is created, somewhat artificially) on campus provides a place for the student to grow and develop. Renn and Arnold (2003) argue that the effects of campus peer culture shape both “individual and collective life on campus in terms of identity, group membership, acceptable discourse and desirable behavior.” (p.262)

Psychology influenced the first theories surrounding student development, but specifically the changes in the field of psychology post WW1 can be related to the current work and theory development being done in the field. The rise of Behaviorism (belief that all observable behaviors can be measured and changed) and Gestalt (the understanding that the human mind and behavior act together as a whole not as two individual parts) provided and continue to provide a backdrop to Student Affairs of reacting to and creating opportunities for the holistic development of the student. As King (2010) has noted:

“Despite the fact that college administrators cannot change the cognitive and developmental transcripts a student brings to college, it is the hope of the profession to provide an environment that promotes maximum holistic growth (which Gestalt psychology would support) while a student is enrolled. Such an approach, again, takes behavior, mental processes, and social environments into consideration.” (p. 3)

The philosophy of student affairs allows professionals to work toward a community of caring which values the individual and provides an environment where success is possible. As Young (2003) states, it is where students are placed at the center of the learning environment, the uniqueness of the individual is valued, and students are met where they are in new integrated learning environments. Student development is action-oriented as administrators consistently look to find new ways to develop programs and strategies that allow the individual to grow and develop.

The critique of Student Affairs is also the basis of the work conducted by professionals in the area. The argument stems from a perceived need to legitimize the profession, to if you will, elevate it to an academic level. Early administrators sort to do this through Student Development Theory. Theories were developed in response to the social issues playing out on campus, (women’s rights, civil rights) as well as the recognition that the individuals working in student affairs were focused on the development of the individual. As a result the profession now has multiple theories that address student development, which provide a backdrop for program innovation and intervention, and professional associations that regard human development as the core of the profession. Yet there is still no acknowledgement from academics on the legitimacy of the theories or the work conducted. Regardless, multiple graduate programs in the U.S. focus on higher education administration and student personnel, and ten major professional associations are dedicated to educating professionals in the field. Student Affairs as a division is an important function in the U.S. HE landscape, and SDT gives the profession a way to connect development to the curriculum.

The responsibilities of the earliest professionals included keeping the peace, dealing with disciplinary issues, maintaining social order on campus, by the 1960s and 70s responsibilities changed to dealing with violent protests, major societal changes (integration of campuses), changing demographics of students (GI bill), wars and conflict resolution. In the last ten years these responsibilities have shifted to include issues of violence (e.g. shootings at Virginia Tech); as well as physical and sexual abuse of students; concern over the use and abuse of both prescription and illegal drugs; issues of mental illness; as well as developing positive affinity and retention programs in an attempt to retain students. Language from the Joint Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities[[19]](#footnote-19) first published in 1967, and updated in 1990, 1991, and 1992, has helped change the landscape of the HE campus as well as develop HE research and subsequent theory. For the purposes of this research, the development of research and theory is most relevant.

**Student Development Theory**

While Student Development Theory has a psychological base, it is a philosophy used by HE practitioners in order to provide a starting point to understand student behavior, and to create programs developed to address the individual defining traits of students. Student Development Theory (SDT) is used as an overarching title for multiple theories of student development under the subheadings of psychosocial, cognitive-structured, typology, and person-environment.

Is there a need for theory in relation to student affairs? A second question would be, can theory predict behavior of students and/or provide answers as to the developmental needs of students? As psychology has continued to develop its understanding of cognitive processes, behavior, and environment, so too has the understanding of how student development occurs during college (King, 2010). Student development is, as Rodgers (1990) noted, a philosophy “concerned for the development of the whole person”; programmatic what we do to encourage learning and development and theory and research on late adolescent and adult development. (p.27) It presumes growth or the potential for growth. As a side note, the profession does maintain an ethical standard of care, which provides administrators with a guide to program development and production. The tie to humanism is fairly obvious - as practitioners we do not have control over the environment in which students develop; but in our work to understand the student as a whole person, in an environment that we control, we can make sure that we care for each individual’s needs, interests and dignity (Law, 2011). As Merrill and West (2009) note on the subject of humanism and subjectivity, it is important that the categories we put people in can diminish their stories; but it is sometimes important to assign people to them in order for us to “make comparisons, explore patterns and develop theories.” (p.130)

Student personnel administrators believe the framework or guide of student development theory is necessary to do their work, that it enables them to identify and address individual student needs, design programs to meet those needs and/or encourage positive growth in students, and create healthy college environments that encourage positive growth in students (taken from authors personal lecture notes for ‘The College Student’). As McEwen (1996) notes it allows a practitioner to design programs and services in order to understand students and provide an environment for success. She goes on to state that student affairs professionals are “users of theories and consumers rather than formal theorists.” (1996 p.149) As a practitioner, it guides me in the type of environment that I create, the programs I develop and the relationships I build with students. Creating a safe place for students to experiment, fail, achieve and grow is much more valuable to me than attempting to contort a specific theory to predict how a student will experiment, fail or achieve and grow. That being said, the focus of this research is to understand if the current college environment provides global nomad students with the space to feel safe, accepted and understood.

If one uses the definition of theory provided by Knelfelkamp, Widick, and Parker (1978) – theory is a framework, it allows one to describe human behavior, and to explain, predict and generate new knowledge and research – one is able to see clearly the origin of Student Development Theory as a way to explain and predict the behavior and development of U.S. college students. It provides a common language for all members of the nonacademic community in which to communicate.

Student Development theory began as vocational guidance in the early 1920s as industry and education became intertwined. As psychology began to gain traction as a discipline and a matter of research, it became apparent that parts of the subject were applicable to the learning, growth and development of any age student. The field turned to psychologists and sociologists in order to understand human behavior and development. The first SDT theories are based extensively on Erikson’s (1968) stages of development and Jung’s theory (1971). Theoretical applications of both consider ways in which students’ development and their environments come together to affect their college experiences (authors personal lecture notes from ‘The College Student’).

Five theorists form the basis of student development: Sanford (1962), who saw the relationship between collegiate environments and students’ transitions from late adolescence to young adulthood; D. Heath (1968), who investigated maturation processes, the way in which a person moves from immature to mature ways of functioning; R. Heath (1964), who introduced typology theory specifically ego functioning where the self interacts with the world and achieves satisfaction and individual style how the individual regulates between the inner self and outer self; and Feldman and Newcomb (1969), who saw that the impact of peer group influence on individual students can be both positive and negative, and that peer group influence can provide support not met by family or faculty, can reinforce change, can affect whether or not a student stays or leaves college, and can provide social training.

The four types of theories that form student development theory today are psychosocial, which examines an individual’s personal and interpersonal life and the content of development (Marcia, 1966; Josselson, 1987; Helms, 1993; Cross, 1991); Cognitive-Structured theory, which illuminates the changes in the way people think but not what they think (Perry, 1968; Kohlberg, 1969; King and Kitchner, 1994; Baxter-Magolda, 1992); Typology theory, which examines the individual differences in how people view and relate to the world and whether those differences remain stable over time (Myers, 1980; Holland, 1992; Kolb, 1984); and Person-Environment theory, which examines not only the student and the college environment, but even more importantly the interaction of the student with the environment (Astin, 1984; Schlossberg, 1989).

The social construction of identity plays an important role in the identity dimensions outlined in student development theory, specifically those classified ‘social identity theories’ (Evans et al., 2010). Social identity in this context is based on oppression and privilege (white, social class, gender, ability, heterosexual, Christian), and an individuals multiple identities (race, social class, sexual orientation, gender and religion) (Evans et al., 2010). All of these are affected by context including interactions with peers, family, societal norms, stereotypes and socio-political conditions. Ethnic identity models, or the degree to which individuals adopt the majority ethnic identity (in this case U.S. whiteness) and the strength to which individuals retain their culture or origin, also address the construction of identity (Sodowsky, Kwan and Parrow, 1995). While not relevant to this particular research, some researchers believe that ethnicity has a biological component; what is relevant in ethnic identity is grounded in the concepts of Erikson (1968) and Tajfel (1981). Current racial and ethnic identity models, as described in student development theory, do not accurately address the identity development of global nomads.

**IDENTITY**

The role of self in relation to the role s/he plays in society is distinct within identity theory and is dependent on how the individual identifies himself or herself in relation to a particular societal role.

“Identity formation, finally, begins where the usefulness of identification ends. It arises from the selective repudiation and mutual assimilation of childhood identifications and their absorption in a new configuration, which in turn, is dependent of the process by which a society (often through sub societies) identifies the individual, recognizing him as somebody who had to become the way he is and how, being the way he is, is taken for granted.” (Erikson, 1968 p.159)

Identity is tied to social rules - rules by which children test limits and exercise developmental muscles. Achieving identity in terms of SDT is seen as the completion of earlier developmental tasks and provides a building block for later developmental tasks (Komives and Woodward, 1996). The U.S. sense of self is a western construct, seen as independent from, not in relation, to others. Gilgun and Abrams (2002) sees the self as flexible, a product of comparison against the group; that the self reflects the social environment (group) and maybe vulnerable to contextual shifts. Brubaker and Cooper noted identity “can be understood both objectively and subjectively” (2000 p.7) and can either be defined in relation to self or a collective. They believe that it is “something all people have or are searching for”: a sense of belonging and attachment to another, that “strong notions of collective identity imply strong notions of groups boundedness and homogeneity.” (2004 p.37)

Hogg, Terry, and White (1995) note “Identity is the pivotal concept linking social structure with individual action; thus the prediction of behavior requires an analysis of the relationship between self and the social structure.” (p.257) Archer (2003) provides an additional view of social structure, in that both culture and society “impinge” on the individual, and then Archer asks how the individual responds in certain situations. (p.3) She goes on to discuss how we as individuals are constrained by life circumstances, the lives into which we are born, but it is our ability to be reflexive in a particular situation or society that determines whether we are hindered by ourselves or enabled by the experiences. Certainly one can see then that self-esteem is connected to how well the individual feels that s/he fills the particular societal roles. Identity theory then reflects society. It influences individual social behavior based on the role a person plays, and how well that individual fulfills the role.

Erikson (1968) created a set of developmental stages that he argues each individual passes through on their way to developing a sense of self, an identity as s/he moves from birth to adulthood. Classified as a psycho-social theory, the theory addresses individual issues that people face in relation to the definition of self, how the self develops in relation to others, and the integration of personal and social selves; and, as a stage theory, is helpful in understanding the issues individuals face at various points in their lives.

There are a total of eight stages of development that an individual must pass through on their way to adulthood in Erikson’s theory. Each stage is started and resolved with a ‘crisis’, which enables the individual to develop new coping mechanisms on his or her way to becoming a fully realized adult. The order in which experience happens is important; each stage crisis and resolution is influenced by society, culture and gender, and successful stage movement means that a person has developed appropriate coping skills. The resolution of the parent-child relationship and subsequent clarification of independence is an important part of the transition from adolescence to adulthood, stages 5 and 6. While a great deal of discussion could center on each stage development and movement, for the purposes of this research I will be concentrating on the transition between adolescence and young adulthood or stages 5 and 6.

Adolescence according to Erikson (1968) is between the ages of 12 and 18 where the underlying conflict is identity versus identity diffusion. The struggle here is where an individual is attempting to stay true to his or herself. The major conflict is with peer relationships; and the individual must achieve a sense of identity in terms of occupation (what they see themselves as being when they grow up), sex roles, politics, and religion. It is at the tail end of this stage where individuals enter U.S. HE (age 18 years). Stage 6, following Erikson’s theory of young adulthood, is ages 19-40 years; the underlying conflict at this stage is intimacy versus isolation. The individual in this stage is struggling to sustain intimacy in love relationships – and it is important to note these relationships are not necessarily of a sexual nature – if the individual is not able to develop intimate relationships, the consequence is feelings of isolation.

It is during these two stages (stages 5 and 6) where the individual is developing his or her own independence and self-reliance; s/he is testing boundaries and begins to settle on an adult identity. In terms of U.S. HE development, the successful resolution of stage 5 is critical in the development of the young college adult. As White (1980) argues, the luxury of HE in the U.S. provides students with a prolonged period of transition and development. It is during these four to six years as a undergraduate that students have the opportunity to not transition into adulthood, thereby “fostering a questioning of self, of society, of values, and of goals, it contributes to the further growth and change of the individual.” (p.24) Erikson’s (1968) contributions to the field of identity theory provided a basis for the growth of student development theory in the U.S., from which all SDT has arisen.

**SOCIAL IDENTITY**

Social identity grew from an awareness of the group (Postmes and Branscombe, 2010). Social identity theory as developed by Tajfel (1981) places the individual in relation to the group as paramount in understanding individual identity. A group, as defined by Brubaker (2004), is a concept that does not need much explanation. It creates boundaries and provides researchers with what he calls “fundamental units of social analysis.” (p.4) The group to which one belongs, and where one feels comfortable, “provides the definition of who one is” (Hogg et al., 1995 p.259); all groups are not created equal. The social assignment of an individual in a particular group can cause dissonance within a community. Wallace (2003) believes that identity develops out of a “negotiation process between the individual and the reference group;” an emotional connection based on values and significance to place in society (p.87).

As Archer (2003) argues, the inner conversation each individual has in regards to placement in society is affected by both what she calls structural and cultural constraints, and whether understanding of these constrains or enables the individual. “Our human powers of reflexivity have causal efficacy – towards ourselves, our society and relations between them.” (p.9) Social identity is dependent on context (historical as well as immediate); and how an individual feels in relation to the group context determines a level of self-esteem. Social identity is the notion of the individual in relation to a group: the group retains the social identity and power and the individual by merit is either a part of the group or not. For some individuals, a struggle ensues as certain groups (i.e. majority groups, in this case whites of means – middle to upper middle class) have more power than others and therefore a vying for status. When an individual is part of a lower group, s/he may attempt to negotiate power or status within the group to define self-esteem and power.

Amongst other things, this means that when people identify strongly with a given group, they are more prepared to interpret the world and their own place within it, in a manner consistent with that group’s values, ideology, and culture. (Postmes and Branscombe, 2010 p.349)

If we look at individual development of students on college campuses against Erikson’s stages 5 and 6, we can see that the individual is negotiating for the first time relationship status, and solidifying value structures apart from family and community. If a social group on campus (religious, fraternal, social [minority or otherwise]) has social power and status, an individual is going to attempt to belong to that group. Global nomads, while outwardly appearing to ‘fit’ into the majority group on campus (white, middle to upper middle class), struggle with social and cultural references that may give them status; in effect the social and cultural capital they have is not adequate tender in the new environment. While they may feel more comfortable within international student circles (at least these students understand what it means to live in a foreign country), they do not fit here in the U.S. as they are not true members of this group.

Social identity as defined by Tajfel (1972) is “the individuals knowledge that he [or she] belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him [or her] of this group membership.” (p.31) In other words, social identity is part of a person’s sense of who they are associated with, and any internalized group membership. Struggles here are two fold: (1) an individual’s identity is reflected in association with the group to which they belong, and (2) the groups to which they belong are allowed to inform them about, and help interpret, their social world. This leads individuals to define themselves in terms of a social group (Haslam, Ellemers, Reicher, Reynolds and Schmitt, 2010). In the negotiation process between childhood and adulthood, individuals learn to adapt to their surroundings, find others to define themselves with and against, and thereby develop their own sense of identity and value constraints.

**Cultural Identity**

Cultural identity is a difficult concept to define, as we no longer live in cultural isolation. For the purposes of this research study, culture is defined as “persistent patterns of norms that shape the behavior of the individual and provide a frame of reference with which to interpret the meaning of events and actions.” (Kuh and Whitt, 1988 p.3) Cultural identity is shaped by culturally relevant social categories that we subscribe to or want to belong to as part of the larger societal group, thereby potentially determining our social status, privilege and power. In this particular study, cultural identity is considered in two ways, 1) campus culture shaped by the ongoing interactions of community members in their attempt to learn the specific culture of the institution, and 2) national identity determining the norms, values and beliefs of the larger majority society. Sanders (2002) states that social capital is directly related to cultural identity development and maintenance of individual identity.

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) note that the self is a subjective representation influenced by culture, whether that be autonomous and independent or dependent and socially defined. Hoare’s (1991) work on psychosocial identity development and culture reveals that culture is integral to the way a person constructs and perceives their reality, and that identity both absorbs and reflects culture. He states that identity is grounded, and that developmental changes occur in a person’s transition to adulthood show an “implicit connection with the sponsoring culture.” (p.47) He believes that there is a western sense of self that is bounded and unique, connected to ego identity, which can lead to prejudice – identity is inseparable from the specific culture that shapes it. When cultural globalization is involved, Iyall-Smith (2008) says that one of three outcomes happens: differentiation, assimilations or hybridization. She believes that elements of the two cultures are incorporated to create a new hybrid culture – that the individual occupying a hybrid space navigates between two cultural groups and occupies space within both cultural groups.

Wetherall notes that the social construction of identity is as Tajfel saw the “social context (where children locate themselves) is as decisive in the formation of individual psychology and that social action is determined by what the individual considers appropriate for the situation.” (1996, p.272) Billig (1996) takes the point further when he states it is not “necessarily how individuals categorize themselves, but how the categorizations are categorized – what cultural myths they perpetuate.” (p.349) Rizvi, Lingard, and Lavia (2006) state that identity in the global society is a hybrid form of the individual and a hybrid form of the nation state that the individual belongs to. This identity is wrapped up in politics and the economy, both on a local and global level.

Culturally, our identity is developed through interactions with family and the larger community. We know that geography provides a starting point for defining oneself: where one grew up, the people one interacted with, and the value structures of the communities. Raillton (2011) states that cultural wars have dominated the American political and social discourse in 20th century. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) note that rooted in academia are socially driven conceptual categories – race, class, gender, and sexual orientation - that drive research.

One of the premises discussed thus far is the concept of American society and differences in societal structures and developmental attitudes in HE specifically. This mentality and social structure comes from years of development (Gitlin, 1995). In conducting research on where and how the American bravado and sense of entitlement come from, I came across two things: writings pertaining to the development and defining of the ‘American Mind’ (Perry, 1912) and the development of a national curriculum of sorts that taught ‘Americanism’ (Aronovici, 1919). Both of which can be recognized in today’s mindset, in behavior on HE campuses as well as in the writings about and theory development of American HE students.

Can social identity be separated from cultural identity? Certainly the two overlap and have a causal relationship. However, I believe that on a college campus, students attempting to fit in routinely separate the two. At times social status (right student group, right fraternity or sorority, right residence hall) regardless of cultural identity is paramount to ‘survival’; at other times the need to find a safe cultural home (eating meals with racially or culturally similar peers, participating in a cultural month’s activities, defending ones cultural or ethnic background after a racial incident on campus) takes precedent. Therefore identity is, in terms of this research, an individual’s identification with a group that provides safety, similarity of thought or value, and provides ‘capital’ to the individual. Where I believe the GN/TCK struggles is the third type of identity, national identity, is in the immediacy an unattainable entity. In this particular case, American national identity is a perception learned from parental stories, summer trips home and media representations.

**RACIAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITIES**

In my opinion, U.S. society revolves around race. It dictates social programs, communal needs, funding of research, and has a stronghold on U.S. education. Race in this study is defined as an identity determined by genetic physical characteristics, juxtaposed against the backdrop of higher education: inclusion, program development and recognition of difference. Root and Kelley (2003) have written and researched extensively on race in America creating an ecological model of race that shows how individuals choose to identify with a race. Root states that the U.S. is a “country that has subscribed to race as an immutable construct, perceived itself as white, and [has] been dedicated to preserving racial lines.” (1993 p.3) She goes on to state “Our confusion of race and ethnicity indicates it will be difficult to abandon the smoke screen that hides our ‘caste system’ surrounding theory, politics, healthcare, education and other resources.” (1993, p.4)

Societal issues surrounding race have dictated the division of resources “even influencing the methodologies and theories of social science.” (Root, 1993 p.8) James Gee (1992) notes, that discourse is defined by members of a particular society and makes sure that all members understand and practice the “folk theories common to the group… intricately related to the distribution of social power and hierarchical structure in society [which] can lead to an acquisition of social goods.” (p.109-110)

Hoare (1991) notes that “American individualism and self-centrality” defines the American idea of a person (p.46). He raises the point that America hosts, but does not include, cultural others. Social, political and historical constructions of race in the U.S. have led to a discounting of culture. The definitions of diversity, culture and race in the U.S. are tied to political and societal issues which in turn flow into the education system and dictate programs and funding; “Race is socially constructed and has no basis in science, although it remains a social marker and structuring force of identity.” (Wallace, 2003 p.88)

McLeod (1981) states that “American culture views nationality and cultural identity as mutable; one can change one’s cultural identity consciously and without a great deal of difficulty.” (p.42) Social identities or the social construction of race, class, ethnicity, gender etc. came out of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s where Brubaker (2004) notes that identity entered the social discourse with Erikson’s writings on identity crisis. Brubaker (2004) states, “American history thus reveals the power of imposed identifications but it also reveals the complexity of the self understandings of people defined by circumstances they did not control.” (p.55)

The concept/term multicultural has come to mean race in the U.S. and culture is not easily separated from the term; therefore, culture as it is defined in other areas of the globe is a hard concept to grasp. “Culture in all of its early uses was a noun of process: the tending of something, basically crops and or animals.” (Williams, 1973 p.87 in Cole, 1991) It was not until the 19th century did the word culture come to refer to social groups and begin the categorization of those groups in the U.S. (Cole, 1991). As Brubaker (2004) notes, “The phenomena we call race, ethnicity, and nation, surely count among the most significant social and cultural structures – and among the most significant social and political movements of modern times.” (p.87) Race as a social construct can be traced to Carolus Linnaeus who, while creating his classification system, also ‘sorted’ humans into categories (Root, 1993). Racial classifications in the U.S. are a reflection of social and political agendas. The social construction of race belies its power in defining who we are as individuals; what we are as a community; who we are as a country; and how interactions between the individual, community and nation function.

The term ‘multicultural’ is a way to discuss race and can be seen as an inclusion technique for mono-cultural institutions in the U.S. There is the argument as described by Sanders (2002) that the hyphenation of ethnicity helps produce socially constructed identities. At the particular developmental stage this study highlights, the individual is developing an identity separate from family in order to develop a healthy sense of self. On campus one can see students retreat towards similar racial groups in order to develop self – racial theories discuss this as the move towards assimilation with the majority culture. Root and Kelley, (2003) state “A critical stage in racial identity theory is the retreat into the racial community for refuge and the learning of pride by knowing one’s history.” (p.34) However, when a GN returns to the U.S. there is no (cultural) group to retreat to, their cultural experiences cannot be validated. Wallace (2003) argues that sociocultural theories of human identity development “allow us to approach identity development as a joint social activity that emerges our of a negotiation process between the individual and the reference group.” (p.87)

Brubaker (2004) believes that race, ethnicity and nation are ways of “perceiving, interpreting and representing the social world – not things in the world but perspectives on the world. … A cognitive approach encourages us to ask how, when and why people interpret social experience in racial, ethnic or national terms.” (p.17) Extrapolated further the social designations of race and historical constructions in the U.S. perhaps prevent educators and researchers from seeing beyond them. Of note, racial and ethnic percentage of population counts, translate into research funding, niche student life positions (jobs) and federal funding. Adler (1977) states that a multicultural person is one whose “identity is inclusive of life patterns different from his own and who has come to groups with a multiplicity of realities. … this person is always in the process of becoming part of and apart from a cultural context.” (p.25-26) It is at this juncture where this research begins.

**National Identity**

Wodak, Cillia, Reisgel, and Leibhart (2009) write on the subject of national identity – that which is developed through the interaction between a particular person and the society in which he or she grows up. This form of identity is directly influenced by the discourse developed to create a national identity. Although writing specifically about Austrian Identity, one can extrapolate the process to the development of an American identity, and the ‘wall’ up against which global nomads come when arriving back in their passport country. In 1912, Perry’s writing about the ‘American Mind’ states that the “typical American – lies the life of a good citizen and neighbor… and trains his children for a useful life and for their country’s services.” (p.49)

Brislin (1993) says the U.S. struggles with “… a collective society, [where] people are socialized to see themselves as part of a group, the most common of which is extended family. In individualistic cultures, people are socialized to be more independent of the group…” (p.96) Aronovici (1919) concurs with Perry (1912) when attempting to define the term Americanization, believing it to be an aspiration of a social concept expressed by the constitution. Aronovici uses his essay to discuss racial and national integration - stating that the problem with national unity cannot be solved by forcing everyone to speak the same language, but rather by creating access to education. He believes that the “new nationalism will arise out of an honest effort to conform American life to American ideals and not from the satisfaction that what is America is American…” (p.46) American society is dominated by the notion that everyone wants to become an American.

Citizenship, as defined by Tilly (1996), provides a designation, which “locates identities and connections among individuals and groups.” (p.5) Citizenship also gives rights and responsibilities to individuals, membership in a group and protection by an authority. Tilly (1996) believes that citizenship groups are created on three levels, “piecing together existing chunks of social structure,… shared origins, values and social relations, …and the public identity of the citizen.” (p.9-14) The participants in this research all are U.S. citizens, but have not yet located their public identities as part of the group, U.S. society, as they have not lived within the confines of the U.S. for extended periods of time. Work completed by Hoare (1991), Berry and Sam (1997) and Leong and Chou (2002) suggests that developing an identity in a new culture is confusing and disorientating resulting in culture shock. In an attempt to adapt and or assimilate, one must, determine if one wants to retain a portion of the original culture while learning new contextual cultural behavior.

What is national identity? De Cillia, Reisigl, and Wodak (1999) speak of it as the practice of exclusion at the expense of ‘others.’ The discourse for exclusionary practices in any country is one that includes entrenched national and cultural identities contrasted against new nation definitions that include immigrant voices. While an argument for another thesis, I would suggest that exclusion, whether purposeful or not, leads to the misinterpretation of situations by GNs/TCKs and the lack of services currently provided on most campuses by student services personnel.

In Wodak et al.’s (2009) work they posit five facets of a national identity: (1) nations are mental constructs, (2) national identities are social identities, (3) social conditions interact with discursive practices, (4) national commentaries construct distinctions between themselves and others, and (5) there is no such thing as one national identity (p. 3-4). For the purposes of this study it is point (3) ‘social conditions interact with discursive practices’ that is the most relevant. It is here that Wodak et al. (2009) argue that we make assumptions, that all people perceived sharing a national identity have similar emotions, behavioral conventions, share habitus and ideas about a common history or past; that in-group members share a common purpose and attitude to other in-group, members as well as a common attitude to out group members (others).

Using discourse to change or create attitudes and values is a form of social practice – that is, the interaction between members of the in-group constantly reinforcing the in-group status and the status, or lack there of, of the out group. Discourse establishes power; institutions such as schools continue to perpetuate the discourse. One could argue that the development of particular student development theories that address pertinent in group social issues – race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender etc. – only add to the specific notion of an American identity and keep a specific American HE discourse prominent on campus. Ricento’s (2003) work on the discursive contraction of Americanism keeps this argument alive. He argues that as a symbol the collective thinking of the nation has transferred to it an emotional attachment, and, in doing so an identity to ‘Americanism.’ Gee (1992) believes that the group defines a society’s discourse - each member of the group understands the discourse and plays socially accepted roles within it. On campus, this thinking is perpetuated with rituals and traditions particular to an institution, both within the student social environment and in the rituals established by the institution to acclimate students to campus.

As Ricento (2003) notes, the ‘symbols’ of a nation help define its collective identity or discourse as this “justifies and promotes social, political and economic policies” (p.613). This thinking is also prevalent on HE campuses as traditions are created. Media campaigns and glossy admission brochures are developed to tell the institution’s story. Ricento provides a glimpse of how an individual gains a sense of American identity through four views: television, movies, media and history (the history that is told). He believes there is a pattern of discourse that increases the dominance of one social and ethnic group over another in society. This is based on Van Dijk’s (1993) position that the socially wealthy gain and retain access to the socially valued resources. Gee (1992) states, “each discourse apprentices its members and disciplines them to converge to be a norm reflected in the social practice.” (p.141) Gee believes there are levels to discourse: ‘primary discourse’ is learned in early childhood and ‘secondary discourse’ is learned as individuals socialize outside the home (1992). One could argue here that, while a global nomad may have held a position of social value/power in her or his adopted country, that social value/power has all but disappeared, or at the very least changed, once returning to the U.S.; and now the individual is attempting to understand how he or she belongs in this new society, in essence learning an additional secondary discourse.

**GLOBAL NOMAD/THIRD CULTURE KID IDENTITY**

Marica (1980) believes that identity formation is a “process that neither begins nor ends with adolescence, young persons sort through and synthesize their childhood identifications in order to construct a viable pathway.” (p.160) It is this navigation that produces, according to Iyall-Smith and Leavy (2008), a hybrid identity where the local and global interact in what Bhabha (1994) refers to as third space.

The term third culture was first coined by Ruth Useem in response to her own experience of moving her children to various countries during their developmental years: “behavior patterns created, shared and learned by men of different societies who are in the process of relating their societies or sections thereof to each other.” (Useem, Useem and Donoghue, 1969 p.169) The Useems would go on to write and research on the phenomenon of third culture and its effects on children. Culture, as they defined it, is the learned and shared behavior of a community or interacting human beings; and third culture developed as a result of the expansion of the western world first in colonial culture based on the super ordination and subordination of two societies that came into contact with one another (Useem et al., 1969). Third culture, as they saw it, has to be learned like any culture and passed down through the generations – generations they clarify are not age based, but rather generation based, based on time spent socializing in the third culture. As Greenholtz and Kim (2009) state, the irony of being a global nomad is that everyone’s experience is different, partly because each individual comes from a different place with different norms and values; but what makes them similar is difference. Third space as defined by Pollock and Van Reken (2009) suggests that bi-cultural children create a space in order to cope with the two distinct places in which they live, the dominant (school) culture and their migrant (home) culture. This mimics Bhabha’s (1994) thoughts on the location of culture and individuals retreating to a safe place to make sense out of the distinct difference of the two spaces.

Cottrell (2007) notes that finding research on TCKs/GNs is difficult, as much of the research is in the form of dissertations and is rarely published; although, interest in the subject has increased in the last five years. A Google Scholar search for the term global nomad or third culture kids returns information on back packing, flash packing, global identity, attachment theory, international schools, websites, blogs, articles, and consulting firms providing assistance for migrating families and children. Technological advances over the last 100 years have changed the way we communicate, travel and interact. While the terms global nomad and third culture kid are relatively new terms, children have been moving with their parents for centuries. For the purposes of this research, I believe the two terms to be interchangeable and synonymous with individuals who have spent a portion (in the case of this research, more than two years) in a country other than their passport country during their formative years.

Care should be taken here to recognize that the terminology being used (TCK) was ‘coined’ in the late 1960s a time in history that was significantly different than the world the participants in this research, including for many of their parents, were born into. Given that society has changed since the term was first developed and as noted in several definitions, minimal changes have been made to the over all definition; it is with caution that I place the full weight of my research on it. As Useem et al’s (1969) research discusses, the concept of third culture was developed against a background of colonial culture and was based on the relationship between western and non-western cultures. The term was defined to include a lifestyle that is learned and shared by those who are from one culture and are in the process of relating to another one. Certainly one can argue that the countries into which many GN/TCKs now move are more westernized than they were 45 years ago when Useem et al provided the definition. Recognition of the changes globalization has had on education, society, and the part technology plays in shaping an ever-smaller world is paramount. Communities all over the world are becoming more culturally mixed as corporations expand manufacturing and distribution of products.

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) began to expand the definition of GN/TCKs in the late 1990s a time period different that the late 1960s, and still different that the early 2010s. The nature of the definition implies that GN/TCKs choose to blend into the world around them; have learned to play the appropriate role for which ever cultural community they are in, changing roles as needed; and are seeking to understand the unwritten social rules of a community in order to be accepted. This assumption leads one to believe that these individuals easily adapt, and are adept at recognizing difference and change. As is shown through the experiences of the participants in this particular research that is not the case. The participants struggle with adaptation, questioning their social identities and attempt to navigate the social rules of a country/community they are expected to understand. I believe the question is, if developmental patterns are judged by old standards formed when most people grew up in one cultural environment (Erikson, 1968; Jung, 1960), how can we take into account the ‘new normal’ of what it means to grow up in a constantly changing world?

**HYBRID IDENTITIES**

For children and adults raised outside their passport country, their world has been a mobile one, which has included adapting to new values and societal customs. Coming to terms with self and placement in any society affects the identity development of the global nomad. Vidal (2000) refined the definition to include experience and cultural identity, stating, “Third culture kids [are] an example of a people whose experience and cultural identity can not be understood within the limiting [traditional] frameworks of culture.” (p.17 in Pollock and Van Reken, 2009) While one could argue that an entire family’s culture changes due to the moves, for the purposes of this research it is the children’s identity development, at a particular point in their undergraduate career, which is the focal point.

Modern migration is dictated by economics - impacting local society, and in turn, its education systems; as Hollifield argues changing the “ethnic composition of societies.” (2007, p.64) Held and McGrew (2002) define globalization as the “expanding scale… speeding up and deepening impact… of social interaction.” (p.101) Pollock and Van Reken (2009) show us that GN/TCKs understand certain realities - they were raised in a cross cultural world that is highly mobile, and have distinct identity and perspective differences. Many GN/TCKs choose to blend into the world around them to create a sense of belonging, being a GN/TCK has multiple advantages for the individual: they are adaptable, can blend in, have more than one-way of looking at things. However, the lifestyle brings with it multiple challenges, confused loyalties, ignorance of ‘home’ culture, and delusion of choice. “Cross Cultural Kids of all backgrounds tell us how they have learned to play the appropriate role for which ever cultural community they are in, often changing roles as needed.” (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009 p.110)

From work with international students and counseling sojourners, we know that students experience culture shock to varying degrees. “It has been construed as a crisis of personality or identity because contact with an alien culture is said to tear away all the familiar foundations of the individual’s self.” (Leong and Chou, 2002 p.187) It can be argued that success in the U.S. is related to how well students adapt in a society that de-emphasizes cultural context and emphasizes individuality. Researchers who themselves identify as GN/TCK (Schaetti, 2006; Pollock and Van Reken, 2009; Useem et al., 1969; and Cottrell 2007), myself included, may be perhaps determining the difficulties in transition; or as Schaetti (2000) states identity congruence is part of our own value and cultural biases. Many primary, secondary and HE schools are adding global engagement or global citizen programs and researchers such as Hayden, Rancic and Thompson (2010) speak to the value of what it means to be international: an open and flexible worldview, encouragement by others to learn cultures different from their own and the ability to defend and explain their value system.

As noted earlier, Dixon and Hayden (2008) provide documentation of support systems for students in primary and secondary schools; and Schaetti (2000) and Cottrell (2007) speak to the adjustment of adult TCKs, but little research focuses on HE development. Schaetti (2000) argues that GNs/TCKs are in a search for congruence between reference group encounters and daily life. She goes on to argue that, even if a GN/TCK hides a portion of self in an attempt to blend in, at some point the individual will need to address the hidden self in order to find congruence and complete his/her identity development. Are U.S. HE systems, which are inherently reactive, providing enough support for what one could argue is one of the largest and most difficult transitions these individuals make?

How do these individuals cope navigating two distinct cultural spaces? Most researchers believe that Homi Bhabha’s (1994) concept of third space is an appropriate place to start the discussion. While not easy to grasp in terms of a concept, third space theory does lend itself to this research in the most basic of ways. Third space is, as Bhabha (2009) notes, the in-between space between two groups or cultures. He also believes that it is a challenge to the “limits of self… in the historic experience, and in the cultural representation of other peoples, times, languages, and texts.” (p. xiii) Global nomads and third culture kids exist in this hybrid space as an everyday occurrence, attempting to navigate family values and traditions as well as those of the host culture. As noted earlier in this chapter, this navigation comes at a cost for some of these individuals, delaying identity development or causing periods of grief (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009).

Bochner (1981) acknowledges that individuals straddling two or more cultures undergo ‘role strain.’ This is reflected in the delayed adolescence and grief issues noted by Pollock and Van Reken (2009) in TCKs. Bhabha (2009) notes that this type of negotiation “produce[s] a dissemination of both cultural traditions that leads to a displacement of the members…. It is supposed to bring about a common identity, one that is new in its hybridity; it is thus neither the one nor the other.” (p.2) Brislin (1993) cautions us regarding the word culture - that it is value laden, the expected behaviors in a particular society may not allow us to understand the particular values an individual carries with him or herself as culture is also transmitted via family, generation to generation. He goes on to argue that emotions and the way in which people think also affect the way in which members of different cultures interact. “The result of increased intercultural contact is that virtually all people, as adults will have to learn new combinations to interact successfully with people from other cultural backgrounds.” (Brislin, 1993 p.98)

Lossau (2009) believes the semantics of third space creates a pitfall, as it does not address the conceptualization of identity and difference (p.4). Space is a relative term; and as space is redefined in the era of globalization and advances in technology are made, Lossau (2009) and Ikas and Wagner (2009) ask what space is and believe that a renegotiation of space is occurring due to changes in definitions of the national self and ideologies. “…space can be regarded as an ordering tool which enables us to locate identities by spatializing difference.” (Lossau, 2009 p.69) It is important to remember at this point that third space is not dualistic, it is not one individual culture versus another – rather it is all that makes up the one individual versus all that makes up the host culture. “Traditional imaginations of culture as stable… are said to be outdated in globalized times, and replaced by more fluid understandings of cultural identification.” (Loussau, 2009 in Ikas and Wagner p.71)

Iyall-Smith and Leavy (2008) define what happens as a result of existing in the third space the production of a hybrid identity. They state “cultural traits are programmed to society and individuals through processes across the life course. As people cross arbitrary institutionalized categories of identity, a synthesis occurs and a hybrid identity emerges.” (p.8) The hybrid identity is also fluid, taking into account the shared heritage of the group’s history or struggle (Leavy, 2008). Obviously, hybrid identities are not a new concept; but in the age of globalization, they are becoming more prevalent and relevant. Cote’s (1997) Identity Capital is relevant here as he notes, “identity is a tool selectively deployed in social life – the key is for the individual to form and sustain an identity that is practically and meaningfully situated in a social matrix that is in constant movement.” (p.340)

Dramatic changes in the modern world - advances in technology, natural and social sciences - reflect a world where the ability to move between ‘spaces’ is important for development as a person and a culture. “In recorded history, man has ‘evolved’ not by adapting his biological nature, but by explicitly modifying his physical and social environment.” (Bochner, 1981 p.28) He goes on to describe, “culture [is] something to be adjusted to, coped with, defended against, and maybe even ignored.” (1981, p.29) McLeod (1981) notes “Americans share the notion that cultural identity is an all-or-nothing proposition reflected in the ‘melting pot’ philosophy…. American culture instead of utilizing its wealth of immigrants as potential mediators has been intent of turning them into 100% American.” (p.42)

“The notion of identity…is influenced by the political structure of the United States.” (Iyall-Smith and Leavy, 2008 p.343) Archer (2003) argues that the internal conversation that each individual has is “relatively unknown territory.” (p.342) It is here she argues that the structure (constraint and enabling) of society begins to define the individual. Gee (1992), Archer (2003), Cote (1997), Bhabha (1994) all argue that society’s constraints (discourse, structure, groups) create arenas from which an individual either is defined or attempts to define self. Cultural Identity is a bounded concept if one identifies only through race (U.S. Social constraints); however, cultural identity is defined fully (culture, society, nation state), allowing a person’s identity to be multi-layered. It allows the individual to create an identity as they see fit. Iyall-Smith and Leavy (2008) state, “American history thus reveals the power of imposed identifications but it also reveals the complexity of the self understanding of people defined by circumstances they did not control.” (p.55) However, one must recognize that the identity created is a result of experiences within the structure of the community and the understanding by each individual of the roles played, the power gained by group membership and the reconciliation of personal values and traditions.

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of the U.S. HE system and its significance in U.S. society, as well as to provide the reader with an understanding of the concepts of Student Affairs and Student Development Theory. A non-exhaustive review of the literature on identity was provided, and a brief discussion of the literature surrounding Global Nomads was discussed. What became apparent while writing this chapter were the themes - belonging, identity, and introspection - that will be used in the analysis of the surveys and interviews. The following chapter will discuss the methodology involved in studying the subjects.

Chapter Four

**METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

This chapter will provide the reader with a detailed understanding of the methodology and methods used throughout this research study. The limited understanding of, and lack of research on, these particular students, specifically in U.S. HE, will be discussed. A rationale will be provided for the methods chosen to explore the student’s experiences. The discussion of methodological influences, the design of the study chosen, identification and selection of participants (including information regarding the cohort) will be shared, as well as approval of the study, and data collection and analysis. Limitations of the study will be presented as well as suggestions for addressing these in future research.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Chapter two of this research (Context and Background) provided the reader with an understanding of my background, in order to provide a context for the research and express the personal significance of the research topic. The limited amount of data and research conducted with TCKs/GNs students, in particular students entering or enrolled in HE, is in part why I decided to add to the growing area of study. As noted in the literature review, the GN/TCK concept takes on a multitude of definitions from sojourner, international student, military and missionary dependents. McCaig (2002), Schaetti (2006), Weigel (2010), Caldwell (2011), Quick (2011), Schaetti (2011), and Lin (2011) all provide a detailed look at the global nomad as a college student, both at the point of entering HE and as current students. The lack of generalized national counting of these students, unlike other categories of race, gender, religious preference etc. found on HE admission forms [most forms follow national census data categories or federal guidelines as a way to gain additional funding] has hindered specific research on the GN/TCK experience on college campuses.

In chapter three it was noted that the above categories are reflected in current U.S. social issues and HE funding streams – race, gender, religious preference and international status – and for the most part these ‘categories’ translate into centers for study and support on the majority of campuses in the U.S.[[20]](#footnote-20) While it is plausible that third culture kids could be classified in each of the aforementioned categories, a significant portion of their identity is as a third culture kid/global nomad (McCaig, 2002; Shaetti, 2006; Weigel, 2010; Caldwell, 2011; Quick, 2011; Schaetti, 2011; Lin, 2011). As of now they are unrecognized, uncounted members of most U.S. college campuses. I was only able to find three institutions (University of Virginia, Syracuse University, and Lewis and Clark University) that provide a tick box on an admission form. Given that the literature review shows that identity development of young adults continues throughout college, it was important to explore the group, in part to determine if ‘non-recognition’ of status played a role in how these students continue on their developmental journey.

The snowball sampling method was chosen in order to ‘find’ individuals who identify as global nomad or TCK. As Mack, Woodsong, McQueen, Guest, and Namey (2005) state, “Snowball sampling is often used to find hidden populations, not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies.” (p.6) Unlike other markers of identity (race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity) the global nomad identity is not currently a recognized national identity marker, hence a hidden population. Snowball sampling enabled me, as a researcher, to access these students, using social media networks and a network of researchers to contact students at various institutions in different parts of the United States. The students in this study were from a variety of institutions on the west and east coasts, the majority of who were at private institutions and had chosen the institution based on family connections. While not a marker, I studied as part of this particular research; it became apparent that a majority of students chose HE institutions based on family connections or ties.

“I have a lot of family ties to Westmont; our main supporting church is there and my sister was going there. That was another reason: she was about to start and I wanted to be near her.” (*Keith*)

From the survey data, I was able to compile a list of the institutions attended. Most students had attended 1 institution; 8 participants had attended more than one HE institution. Of the 27 completed surveys, the majority of the institutions attended were in the U.S. (See Table 5.1 for institutional detail) Some of the institutions provide services to their global nomad students in the form of student organizations rather than formal student services; although, as became apparent during the interviews, some services did not provide enough support from the participant’s point of view. I have no data on students at institutions without support services other than anecdotal information from my own work experiences. I have not included those experiences here and have attempted to refrain from allowing those experiences to influence my analysis.

**QUALITATIVE METHOD**

The qualitative method was chosen as the approach for this particular study, as it provided an opportunity to gather detailed information on the lived experience of each individual and the social world in which he or she lived. I sought to understand a) the experience of each individual on a college campus and b) how their life history plays a role in how they define themselves as an individual and as a member of a new culture. Haywood Metz (2000) believes social reality is connected to a location “the social structures and different cultural understandings that surround it.” (p.4) In other words reality (appropriate social norms or mores) in one community may not be that in another, therefore a new member of a community would need to understand that community’s social reality in order to fit in, and become a full member. This can be seen on many college campuses when first-year students look for ways to belong and are expected to learn traditions and value systems, whether that be in the community as a whole, a particular residence hall or student organization.

The framework of the qualitative method allows the researcher to explore social phenomena, the survey and the interviews allowed me as the researcher to get close to the participants. As noted in the introduction, each participant has a different life history and experience; as such each individual experience was analyzed not counted. Cohen and Manion (2000) provide clarification by noting “humans actively construct their own meaning of situations which arises out of social situations and is handled through interpretive processes.” (p.219) The qualitative method allows the researcher to make generalizations, but caution should be taken as data is socially situated, contextually related and dependent (Cohen and Manion, 2000). For this particular research there is no average, no median, no mean. Each experience is as important and significant as the other. As Ellis (2004) notes, qualitative methods have the “goal of trying to understand the complexities of the social world in which we live….” (p.25)

The methodology chosen was derived from readings on the narrative approach (Ellis, 2004) and the benefits of qualitative research discussed by Denzin, Lincoln, and Giarina (2006) specifically their work on engaging with the participant. The work on thematic analysis by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), transactional analysis by Stewart (2011) and reflexive analysis by Srivastava and Hopwood (2009) was also considered. Each of these approaches will be discussed later in the chapter. What became apparent during my research was the value of understanding the personal stories of each participant, knowing that each story was different but not dissimilar. The richness of each individual’s experience in the form of a narrative would reveal more than just answers on a survey and would show the similarities of experience, frustration and successes.

Issues of reliability and validity in interpretive work are extensive. Validity in this instance is judged by process and method; being consistent with each informant, referring text and interpretations back to each will be vital throughout the research process (Merrill and West, 2009). The experiences of each individual involved are distinctly different. The question raised at the beginning of this thesis, ‘are the experiences of the individuals too different to generalize similarities’, forces the researcher to look to process and method to determine validity and reliability. Ensuring the process and method and subsequent analysis are consistent provides plausible validity of the narrative material (Merrill and West, 2009). Being reflexive in the process with each informant is crucial, remembering, “story givers know the whole iceberg not just the tip.” (Goodley et al, 2004, p.83) The key as the researcher is to whittle it down to expose the important parts.

Triangulation was used to validate data, through the survey, the interview and the check in with U.S. Student Affairs professionals. The use of technology to conduct face-to-face interviews was an important part of the process and allowed the researcher to connect in real time and take into account nonverbal reactions. Care was taken in order to validate each informant’s experience and to not generalize one experience from the next. It is important to remember as Goodley et al (2004) note; to allow the interviewee to inform the process – after all the life experience is owned by them. As with all qualitative data validity is determined in the analysis, replication is difficult as the data can only be observed and not measured. The limitations of qualitative research, difficulty generalizing to a larger population, replication, results influenced by researcher bias, however, are overshadowed by its strengths, ability to connect in real time, and personal narratives are more powerful than quantitative data sets (Cohen and Manion, 2000).

The study is grounded in Student Development Theory, specifically social identity theory, as discussed in the literature review and the cultural framework of Pollock and Van Reken (2009).

**STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THEORY**

All theories classified as student development are based on student’s experiencing some form of a crisis in order to move to a higher level of development and identity fulfillment. Based on Erikson’s stages, the theories take his stage 5 (adolescent development) as the pivotal point of developmental change, and as the point at which the individual must over come. As discussed in chapter three, SDT is used as a catchall phrase for all developmental theories (psycho-social, cognitive-structured, typology and person-environment) describe student development during college years, as accommodations of difference, and the development of individual students. Student Development Theory is used to understand a student’s personal growth and learning. Reflected in the current theories is recognition of the vastly different types of students who arrive on campus each year (gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religious preference, age). Absent from these theories is the GN/TCK student.

As discussed in chapter three, social identity theories are grounded in the socio-historical context of the United States, in which some groups have privilege and some groups are oppressed. These theories examine the development of both dominant and non-dominant identities (McEwen, 2003 p.15). We (student services administrators in the U.S.) use student development theory to understand and enhance a student’s personal growth and learning. As noted in chapter two, ‘in locos parentis,’ while no longer explicitly a guiding principal in U.S. HE, is still an underlying directive at most institutions. This philosophy can be seen as a response to the litigious nature of U.S. society. McEwen (2003) states, “social identities ground in the socio historical context of the United States, [racial, ethnic civil rights, women’s rights, gay rights] in which some groups have privilege and some groups are oppressed, examine the development of both dominant and non dominant identities.” (p.15)

Current research shows that GNs/TCKs are a by product of globalization and the changes in migration patterns (Nette and Hayden, 2007; Schaetti, 2006; Weigel, 2010). From my research on current work being conducted in student affairs, there is still no formal academic acknowledgment that GNs/TCKs are products of globalization, nor that they have distinct identity development. The other valid and important point to make at this juncture is these social theories translate into student support services on campus. The majority of institutions have fully staffed (professional staff) service units, Multicultural Centers, LGBTQ Resource Centers, and Women’s Centers, addressing the social, and academic well being of students. SDT, specifically social identity theories, address student development in terms of multiple identities; and how as students develop, these identities intersect to form a new one. Or, as Schlossberg (1989) notes, it is in the margins where individuals take on new roles.

While the language used in SD theories does not involve words like hybrid or third space, it is here that SDT racial and cultural theories reside. As students develop, they begin to understand their social identities: how they interact with others, how cognitive processes affect decisions, and how status and privilege changes standing in a community (McEwen, 2003b; Jones, McEwen, 2003; Chavez, Guido-DiBrito and Mallory, 2003). Being a racial or cultural minority on a U.S. HE campus, depending on the area of the country, carries particular stigmas, both good and bad.

Student Development Theory played a large role in how I developed my method and methodology. I was conscious of the methods used to develop social identity theories – surveys and narrative data collection, as well as the theories being grounded in Erikson’s work. It was important to mirror (even in such a limited study) the methods used to develop current SDT, specifically the age group studied.

**Cultural Framework**

Pollock and Van Reken (2009), Schaetti (2006), and Weigel (2010), all acknowledge that the constraints of social and cultural norms limit human activity; and Archer (2003) talks about the internal conversation that individuals have in attempt to know self. However, it is as Archer contends that some individuals, in this case GNs/TCKs, are not constrained by *one* societal or cultural value system, and are therefore are not handicapped, as a mono-cultural person would be. As these individuals have experienced more than one distinct societal and cultural value system, they are both constrained and liberated by self-knowledge and societal influences. Archer (2003) refers to the ability to be reflexive in terms of self understanding as both empowering and hindering – that knowing self is affected by “private knowledge” and social influences. (p.19-20)

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) are together, and as individuals, highly respected researchers in the field of third culture kids/global nomads. Their work drives much of the research being conducted (Cottrell, 2007; Schaetti, 2006; Weigel, 2010; Quick, 2011). The PolVan Cultural Identity Model is a four-part model that addresses cultural identity in relationship to the surrounding culture. It is important to again stress that a GN/TCK is in a constant search for identity. The model suggests that the nomadic lifestyle of these individuals emphasizes a fluid identity (see chapter three for more detail). This fluidity is dependent on location (country of residence at the time) can change how she or he relates to the dominant culture.

While it could be argued that each individual has a sense of self that remains constant, I agree with Archer (2003) and argue that each individual uses the sense of self to adjust to changing situations, i.e. public vs. private, therefore maintaining a fluidity to that sense of self. A fluid identity is hard to pinpoint: is it constantly changing with no grounding point, or is it the ability to adapt to situations from a point of consistent self-knowledge? I believe we all play roles to fit into situations; but there is a static sense of self that develops overtime that enables us, guides us and influences the choices we make in particular situations/contexts. The Pollock and Van Reken (2009) model suggests fluidity in adapting to a new environment and situation. This fluidity can also be seen in SDT racial and ethnic models as college student move through a series of stages, ‘taking on’ personas until a particular identity ‘fits.’ (Cross 1991; Sue and Sue 2003)

Figure 4.1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Foreigner  Look *different*  Think *different* | Hidden Immigrant  Look *alike*  Think *different* |
| Adopted  Look *different*  Think *alike* | Mirror  Look *alike*  Think *alike* |

PolVan Cultural Identity Model. Cultural Identity in Relationship to Surrounding Culture. ©1996[[21]](#footnote-21)

The PolVan Cultural Identity Model is broken into four components; the TCK, as *foreigner,* looks different and acts differently from the larger culture. The individual’s interactions in the community stand out as different. The *hidden immigrant* plays a different role while they may look alike (blend in with the dominant culture), their value structure or outlook maybe completely different. The struggle for these individuals is that “people around them presume they share similar worldviews and cultural awareness…. No one makes the same allowances for the TCKs’ lack of cultural knowledge or miscues as they would an obvious immigrant or recognized foreigner.” (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009 p.55) The *adopted* individual may look different than the dominant population, but has lived in one place long enough to ‘adopt’ a similar way of thinking in an effort to fit in. The stressor in this situation is when an individual feels more at home in a culture different than their passport country, but is treated as a foreigner. The *mirror* individual is tied most closely to a mono-cultural individual. Although some GN/TCKs are able to ‘pass’ as a member of the dominant culture, it is not until a passport is shown or a story shared that it becomes obvious they are not. Sometimes GN/TCKs who have lived abroad for only a short time are able to ‘fit’ back in to their passport country seamlessly and do not face the challenges that others face.

The PolVan Cultural Identity model gives structure to the ways in which GNs/TCKs interact with the host culture, how individuals work to fit into the larger society as a whole. Pollock and Van Reken (2009) show that GNs/TCKs move between each of the boxes as they change environments. In this particular model, ‘environment’ refers to the countries that individuals are moving to and from; in this particular research, ‘environment’ refers to the country from which the individual student moved to the college campus on which s/he is currently living. Student Development Theories show that students move between various belonging stages as they navigate the four years of U.S. HE. For the purposes of this study and what we know about the development of 18-22 year HE students in the U.S., the most predominant response/box would seem to be hidden immigrant.

The challenges of working with a model that is culture based, raises several questions. While the PolVan Cultural Identity model is a valid model to use to explain challenges the GN/TCK face when entering or re-entering a culture that is foreign to them; it is also problematic as the table assumes the individual will ‘fit’ into one of the listed domains. “TCKs not only have to learn new cultural rules, but more fundamentally they must understand who they are in relation to the surrounding culture. Each move is also a question of identity: How do I fit in? Where do I belong?” (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009 p.56) As has been notated on multiple occasions to this point in the research, SDT guides work, helps develop programs, and create healthy learning environments. But the question is because we have created a category, have we pre-assigned the designation?

It is important to recognize that it is easy to assign people a category or group designation because they exhibit certain characteristics. As researchers we sometimes attempt to make participants fit a particular model or category because it makes the study neat and tidy. Raising questions about the ‘four domains’ in the PolVan model gave me the opportunity to look at the larger theme of what it means to be a GN/TCK and question what happens when someone does not fit? If we assume that the four domains represent everyone and their individual experience, does it mean that there are only four categories with which to assign people to?

Discussion surrounding a new model will begin in Chapter six, which provides the opportunity to expand beyond the PolVan model and incorporate STD into the conversation. As was noted earlier in this work, children learn cultural identity (personal and group) against the backdrop of their home culture. Pollack and Van Reken (2009) even comment that the process of learning culture happens naturally in a mono-cultural environment and nobody notices it is happening until something goes wrong. They also provide terminology for how cultural identity is formed, that the individual ‘catches it from the environment’ that they are a part of.

It is my contention that individual identity is distinct from cultural group identity, although each is affected by the other. Where individual identity takes into account family and community, group identity takes into account the experiences of all members of the community, general consensus of laws, norms and values of the society – including majority religion and governmental structure. The individual comes to a sense of self by including community norms and values, but when the community identity changes because of a move, the individual is forced to redefine identity based on the new community norms and values.

Race theories provide an explanation of groupthink or an individual identifying with his/her particular racial group as a way to stabilize individual identity. Before creating a new holistic identity that takes into account the individual’s race, culture and place in the majority society. Are we making an assumption that in the PolVan Cultural Identity model that all GNs/TCKs look alike? If so what do they look like? In this particular study the participants all self disclosed as white, and all happened to have an American accent. What if that were not true? Does a theory such as this rely on similarity? Can it rely simply on the similarity of experience (GN status)? Is it a racial or cultural model? Hidden diversity (GN/TCK diversity) is “a diversity of experience that shapes a person’s life and worldview but it is not readily apparent on the outside, unlike the usual diversity markers such as race ethnicity, nationality and so on.” (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009 p.60)

As noted in chapter two, the world is distinctly different than it was when the model was created – significant world events have changed the global landscape – September 11, July 7, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For this particular research I focused on American citizens returning to the U.S., it could be suggested that some of the comments generated by the participants reveal a fear on the part of the majority culture that I would label as ‘ignorance’. For example the sentiment expressed by several participants ‘people thought me one way because of where I said I had lived’. Mono-cultural students referred to in this research are Americans that as Pollock and Van Reken state, have ‘caught’ the American culture both the society and the HE culture because they have lived in one cultural environment (the U.S).

Culture and one’s place in it are learned at home and in the larger society (school). Children learn to balance the two because time is spent both at home and in school. The GN/TCK learns a very specific culture in the home and then in the larger (foreign) society in which they live, for some this could be seven or eight different societies before the age of 18 years. (See Table 5.3) Others in the mono cultural society expect, because of a passport and an accent, them to know, understand and accept a culture they have never experienced. For the purposes of this research the PolVan Cultural model is an appropriate starting point in order to categorize the participants for generalization purposes. The creation of the model in Chapter 6 allows for an additional level of understanding of development.

It was important to understand the commonalities of the global nomad/TCK in order to answer the research question. As noted in the introduction, the question was raised: as individuals, if GNs/TCKs are all so different, how can they be studied as a group? Interpreter/researcher bias will affect the way in which the experience of GNs/TCKs is interpreted as a response of host culture; the caution here is how much of a particular culture, and said interaction, can the interpreter understand. We know that a researcher’s position (wide and varied as it is) plays into the type of research conducted. Understanding this, Milner (2007) cautions the researcher of two things: (1) to understand his or her own positionality and whether or not their cultural knowledge of the subjects positions is valid; and (2) to be mindful of the interaction between self and participant, and self and system, providing the following questions as a guidepost:

Self and Participant:

What are the cultural and racial heritage and the historical landscape of the participants in the study? In what ways do my research participants’ racial and cultural backgrounds influence how they experience the world? What do my participants believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do they and I attend to the tensions inherent in my and their convictions and beliefs about race and culture in the research process? What are and have been some social, political, historical, and contextual nuances and realities that have shaped my research participants’ racial and cultural ways or systems of knowing, both past and present? How consistent and inconsistent are these realities with mine? (p.395)

The consistencies between the participants and myself were challenging to navigate. My GN/TCK reality is based on moving once from one wealthy first world English speaking nation to another; I have no experience/reality of a non-English speaking non-first world move. My experience and reality is based in a move and subsequent college experience 20 years ago. What reality was consistent through this research was the feeling of being an outsider; lost and desperately trying to fit in.

Self and System:

What is the contextual nature of race, racism, and culture in this study? In other words, what do race, racism, and culture mean in the community under study and in the broader community? What is known socially, institutionally, and historically about the community and people under study? In other words, what does the research literature reveal about the community and people under study? And in particular, what do people from the indigenous racial and cultural group write about the community and people under study? What systemic and organizational barriers and structures shape the community and people’s experiences, locally and more broadly? (Milner, 2007 p.395)

As Denzin et al. (2006) noted, the qualitative method is not neutral; the approaches chosen by the researcher carry with them political, cultural and pedagogical implications. In the work by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), they discuss finding a purpose for the research, making sure that it fits the hypothesis or question(s) the research wants answered. They provide caution to the researcher about the space between interpretive and critical research, reminding us that we attempt to interpret the experiences of others while keeping our own in check, and trying all the while to place participants and the research on equal footing. Given their concerns, we must as researchers then “uncover the interests at work in a particular situation” (Cohen et al., p.28) and evaluate the geopolitical, pedagogical and cultural frameworks while attending to our own social constructed knowledge. The methods chosen were done so to give the participants the opportunity to share as much of their life history and experiences as they felt comfortable showing. The questions were not developed by critical concerns (retention issues, psychological concerns) or specific themes determined to be a part of the GN/TCK experience, but rather to understand more fully the individual and their particular HE experience. Open-ended questions derive responses that are “meaningful and culturally salient to the participant.” (Mack, Woodsong, McQueen, Guest and Namey, 2005 p.4) The survey and extended open interview allowed the participants opportunities for self-reflection. According to Denzin et al., “culture is emergent in human interaction rather than located deep inside individual brains and hearts.” (2006, p.470) I felt it was important to give students whose ‘multi-cultural’ background can be confusing and frustrating or perhaps liberating time to reflect (participants had to have spent at least one year in college to participate) on their new place on a U.S. college campus. What it gave me, as the researcher was the opportunity to consider how much their experiences/life histories dictated choices they had made and were making. When the GN/TCK does not fit what is accepted as ‘normal,’ how do they cope?

As noted in chapter three, the frustration for most GN/TCKs is to learn new cultural rules for each place they live, and to understand who they are in relationship to themselves and each community. As Pollock and Van Reken suggest, the “constant changing relationship to others can make it difficult to develop a true sense of a core identity.” (2009, p.56) Unlike Pollock and Van Reken, I conducted this research with the belief that a core identity is in place; that the participant’s are attempting to determine how their GN/TCK identity becomes an identifiable part of self. The major identity issues appear to arise when individuals are classified in the hidden immigrant or adopted boxes. Pollock and Van Reken state that these individuals exhibit one of three reactions: Chameleons – those who try to find a “same as” identity; Screamers – those who try to find a “different from” identity; and Wallflowers – those who try to find a “non-identity”. (2009 p.57) The chameleon attempts to find ways to fit in and learns about the culture (TV, clothes, social media) in order to find a place/fit. The screamer wants everyone to know that he or she is different from the norm, through sharing experiences, telling stories or providing background details about his/her life story. The wallflower not only does not want people to know that they are different but they also do not want to make mistakes in the larger culture; so they stay back, and do not interact until they have all the information about a particular situation.

I came upon Barbara Schaetti’s model of Global Identity Development early in my research process; and, while she addresses the adult TCK experience, what was most interesting about her work is the search for identity congruence. While I did not use the model as a resource during interpretation, the specific piece I was interested in was her findings on congruence and when that happened for GNs/TCKs. The connection was made to student development theory, as most of those theories also look to find congruence. Congruence here refers to an individuals attempt to find where sense of self is in agreement (congruent) with the environment; i.e., that social, cultural cues are understood and/or used correctly in context. Pollock, Van Reken (2009), Schaetti (2006) and others show a similar transactional development for TCKs/GNs through repatriation. The return of an individual into a ‘home country’, as shown in the literature review, suggests the GNs struggle with national identity and solidifies his/her frustration with identification. Each individual goes through a search for identity congruence; Schaetti’s (2000) Model of Global Nomad Identity Development shows a similar pattern of identification, crisis and resolution to those SDT theories classified as Social Identity Development. Her model takes into account the “pre-conscious” experience of being different, factors that with a “conscious” experience of difference, and the GNs search for congruence (2000 p.211). Although Schaetti worked with adult global nomads to develop her model of identity development, there are several stages that are applicable to college student development and to the reference group chosen for this particular piece of research.

**SOCIAL THEORY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH**

“Social theory informs our thinking, which in turn assists us in making research decisions and sense of the world around us.” (Mack et al., 2005 p.28) One of the benefits of the qualitative method is the flexibility of design; it allows for adjustments according to what is learned (Mack et al., 2005). Given that we know each individual has a unique reaction, understanding and personal meaning from every situation, it was important to find a methodology that allowed me as a researcher to take that into account while providing the flexibility to make connections. Qualitative methodology does just that - it gives a researcher the opportunity to explore a particular phenomena, to describe variations, explain relationships, understand individual experiences and group norms (Mack et al., 2005). The research is grounded in Pollock and Van Reken’s work as well as U.S. Student Development Theory. Grounding the research here provided a starting point for analysis and understanding; however, care was taken to not let either work cloud the overall analysis.

Ember and Ember (2001) believe that giving someone words (ethnography or narrative) to describe their particular experiences gives meaning to self and others. Cross-cultural research gives each culture “uniqueness” (Ember and Ember, 2001 p.1). As part of the ability/necessity to communicate, they believe that cross-cultural researchers employ a reorganized method of scientific reliability knowing that other researchers will want to test the data. That being said, they acknowledge that society’s diversity provides a backdrop for “infinite numbers of describable characteristics and general cross-cultural relationships.” (p.6) Knowing this focused my method approach toward the narrative - allowing people to tell their own story, retelling their experience as it made sense to them.

“Qualitative methods are the tools in the service of research questions and the theoretical (or practical) bodies of knowledge they seek to expand.” (Haywood Metz, 2000, p.1) For me, a qualitative study made sense, as it was the individual’s story that was important. I knew from the beginning that the stories would be different, but the ability to look for and find themes across those experiences could only be answered by using qualitative methods. Quantitative research would not have been appropriate in order to answer this type of question, as there is no one right answer. Two types of survey methods were employed in this research: a general questionnaire and then an in-depth interview. Ellis (2004) and Gilgun and Abrams (2002) feel that the connection with others through interviews allows the participants the opportunity to share information that would not be otherwise be shared through a questionnaire. I was hopeful that the participants would provide a narrative of their experiences as GNs/TCKs - that they would show how unique their experiences were when compared to monocultural U.S. HE students, and therefore give credence to the data as a pool worthy of study.

As noted by Crichton and Childs (2001), engagement by the researcher, which includes disclosure of background and personal experience, informs the reader and the participant and creates a richer base of data; in this particular study this began when the participants disclosed information in the survey and concluded with the interviews. The data generated relied on the gathering of memories, by asking each informant to recall earliest memories that included moving, school, family life, and recognition of difference; it was important to be cautious of information revealed. Relying on young adults to recall memories of their childhoods that may have been difficult or idealized and asking them to understand how those experiences now affect the choices and decisions they make is potentially risky. Research such as this is full of personal issues; or, as Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont (2003) contend, “memories… are themselves forms of actions. They are, moreover, culturally shaped and socially organized.” (p.193) Keightley (2008) states that memories play a large role in our understanding of the world around us and the experiences we have, including the words chosen to reconstruct those memories.

During data gathering, the concerns surrounding memory recall was taken into account by allowing each participant the opportunity to provide a narrative of their experiences. Franzosi (1998) believes that everyone regardless of age, race, ethnicity has a narrative - that it is “international, transhistorical and transcultural.” (p.517) He goes on to stay that it provides “patterns of social relations, commons threads….” (p.548) While I have not suggested that I undertook ethnographic research, I have relied on the telling of stories; and I can certainly argue that I have lived a similar life experience to the participants in my study. In my experience, when interacting with other GNs/TCKs, once there is an acknowledgment of similarity i.e. GN/TCK status, an unspoken connection begins that is hard to explain to those without the experience. It was my hope that even though I was the researcher conducting a study, that sharing my status would provide a comfort level to the individuals and allow them to share more details.

I also cannot suggest as a researcher that I understand every aspect of the participant’s experience; I have not been to their HE campuses, am not a member of their families or lived in the same countries. But, I was told I was attending an American HE institution; I did and still do find it difficult to relate to others; I did and still do, to some extent, find it difficult to make connections; and I did not come across this concept of GN/TCK until much later in my life. It is these similar experiences that allow me, I believe, to communicate, relate to, and analyze the stories my participants have shared. Goodley, Lawthorn, Clough, and Moore (2004) believe, that when researchers are able to become a part of the research culture [for me that was openly sharing that I, too, was a TCK], then “the researcher and participants interact together to produce the data.” (p.57)

I was hesitant initially about using a narrative form to gather memories. From my own experience as a GN/TCK, I have what I know to be an idealized version of my childhood as a memory. I also recognize that my frustrations as a college student now seem very distant, and what I remember of them seems very limited and inconsequential; but I imagine that at the time my visceral reaction to a situation was, for lack of a better phrase, intense. Asking these participants at this particular point in their academic career and development to inform me of frustrations, sense of difference, sense of belonging, could generate intense reactions that in later years could be chalked up as an experience that was part of college life. My choosing to disclose my status as a GN/TCK could also influence the type of stories the participants were willing to share. My interaction with them was minimal: I did not develop any lasting relationship, and the thirty to forty-five minute interactions was limiting. My intent of disclosure was to create a more intimate and immediate encounter or sense of familiarity, in the hopes that the life experiences they shared would provide a richer data set.

**Methodological Influences**

Why study people’s stories? Why not rely on survey data alone - what value do individual stories have? Frank (2002) talks of the authenticity of people’s stories. He uses Taylor’s (1991) identity argument that states that identity is defined for the self as a reflection of existence in the world from interactions with others, nature, history, God etc. From this position, Frank (2002) believes that “culture exerts enormous pressure on people to settle for identities that are trivial” (p.112). In other words, we develop identities that may not be true to self, but rather allow us to adapt to specific situations and belong in the moment. This is a reflection of Bourdieu’s (1998) notion of symbolic violence that group belonging matters, identity matters in terms of who is superior and who is inferior. Frank believes we “personally and collectively reinvent ourselves as we go along.” (2002 p.114) If stories, as Frank (2002) states, are the attempt of the “self to find identity in terms outside the self” (p.115), then of note is that the community helps define the stories, helping display the values of the community that an individual embraces.

How do stories differ from the everyday conversation – what makes them important as research tools? Goodley et al. (2004) refer to them as such: “The … narrative is woven from the reality of lived experience” (p.77) and “Stories are more than individual tales. They are imbued with theory and practice implications and with humanity.” (p.195) Stories follow a chronology that is interpreted and reinterpreted by the individual telling the story. As Franzosi (1998) notes, it is the individual who places meaning on the events as a way to make meaning. A story differs from everyday conversation in that there is a “relationship between words (context) and social reality, timing, chronology and sequence of events matter in the telling.” (Franzosi, 1998 p.520) A story has a beginning, middle and end, followed in that order, so that in the retelling the events stay for the most part in the same sequence. It is influenced, as Goodley et al. (2004) note, by the individual’s interaction with humanity at large when providing interpretation of the events of a story. Everyday conversation is merely a reaction to the immediate event occurring; there is no time to go back and take stock, re-evaluate or reinterpret an event or provide additional meaning.

A variety of methodologies were read in an attempt to understand the best way in which to connect with the participants and generate good data. The three methodologies that influenced the data gathering and analysis are thematic analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006), transactional analysis (Stewart, 2011), and a practical framework developed by Srivastava and Hopwood (2009).

Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) believe that every individual makes sense of their everyday lives by ascribing themes and patterns to each intersection. Using Schultz’s social phenomenology definition, that people are able to “ascribe meaning to a situation from their daily lives and then make judgments” (p.81), they present a model of thematic analysis that incorporates inductive and deductive reasoning. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane suggest developing a code that follows the “We, Thou, They” relationships between the participant and the data presented (p.84). For them, the most important part of the analysis is to recognize that every comment made by the participant is vital - not just the answer to a particular question.

This raises additional concerns for the researcher: the study can be influenced based on the participant responses. Are the participants responding in a manner that they perceive the researcher to need or want, or are they attempting to please or displease the researcher with the response? It was important to me as a researcher to identify a theme of the global nomad experience as a way to respond to the criticism leveled early in the study’s history – that the experiences are too individualistic to study the group as a whole. “A pattern in the information that at a minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at a maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon.” (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006 p.161) As a cautionary note it prompts the reflective question: are there ways to look at themes that provide a richer set of data when working with participants whose experiences are vastly different but, that generate enough similarities in order to be studied?

As developed by Stewart (2011), transactional “is an inductive approach that draws on elements of the narrative and thematic analysis.” (p.280) Researchers take into account dynamic processes as they seek to identify and generate theories in data and attempt to understand how the participant’s worldviews are being shaped. It is based on a social constructionist framework that language and culture mutually shape one another as people experience the world (Stewart, 2011 p.283). Our contexts and social exchanges govern the construction of the meaning we hope to communicate. The shaping of worldviews and construction of meaning was apparent in several narratives provided by participants. The following is the reaction of *Keith* to what he perceived his professor’s worldview to be:

The professor in charge of it in the very first class gave an analogy that had a Turk in it and he gave a view I don’t even know how the story happened because it wasn’t in character with any Turkish person that I have met. I was shocked and I went and talked to him, he kind of side stepped the issue and said it wasn’t really the point he was trying to make. That really threw me off and actually I transferred out of the school, and a large part of it was because I thought it was narrow and not globally minded.

For Keith, this was a moment when his worldview and understanding clashed with the reality of the moment. He was disappointed; and, he ultimately transferred institutions because of the situation that the academic world (stereotypically perceived to be liberal and open-minded) was not the globally aware place that he had assumed it would be.

“Our constructed meanings will evolve as our experiences are shaped by our transactions with others….” (Stewart, 2011 p.283) Gee (1992) speaks to language dictating the social discourse, by which we understand that the history and context attached to language creates meaning. Depending on the background of the participant, where he or she grew up will drastically influence how a word is developed and shared. In other words, this is one of the ways we develop our national identity. The argument can be made for spoken language - that comments seen as derogatory by one could be seen by another as culturally based to another (whether they be right or wrong). For a participant in the current research, an interaction on her residence hall floor, with a fellow student of Korean descent was perplexing, as she could not understand why the racial slurs and derogatory comments aimed at her (the fellow student) by others did not bother her.

“I remember I felt really shocked, not by what they were saying but I was really shocked at her reaction. She would laugh with them even though I could tell that she didn’t like it. That really stayed with me and I started thinking about how different people who move have different reactions. I feel like her reaction was to pretend that it didn’t happen, because she has always been from this culture and she fits in here so that’s it.” (*Nola*)

In this particular instance, the ‘cultural’ reaction by a student to laugh off the incident was what she had learned in order to deal with a particular situation; for *Nola,* this was not the way she has learned to react to individuals when it was perceived that the comments were derogatory.

Stewart (2011) believes the researcher needs to ask questions that reveal how the participant is potentially shaping answers due to their own history. Asking how the transaction between the language, culture and interpretation helps or hinders the interpretation of data. I tried to do this throughout the interviews, first by acknowledging my own status as a GN/TCK, and then in specific interactions with each participant. During an exchange with *Nola* she appeared to become visibly upset about her own situation – a lack of friends, and feeling as though counseling services would not help her. Her words included the phrase ‘brain washed by the counselors.’ (See appendix 2 for full transcript) I stepped out of protocol and just talked as myself in an attempt to refocus her.

“I completely understand. It is definitely a tough position to be in when you think that you are by yourself. That someone hasn’t necessarily heard what you have said. … I think sometimes change is such an interesting part of who we are and what we experience as global nomads. …” (Self as researcher)

Srivastava and Hopwood (2009) present a practical framework to address the analysis of data, believing it to be “rather than a mechanical process a reflective process.” (p.77) Their process is an inductive one, in that the patterns and themes should emerge from the data, rather than be imposed prior to data collection. However, they suggest that three questions should serve as the researcher’s framework for analysis: “1) What are the data telling me? 2) What is it that I want to know?, and 3) What is the dialectical relationship between what the data are telling me and what I want to know?” (Srivastava and Hopwood, 2009 p.78) They believe that the researcher needs to ask questions throughout the process, refining the initial point of ‘focus’ and determining “if there is a gap between what is being said (interviews) and what is written (theories or frameworks)” (p.78).

In an attempt to find a framework in which to analyze the data and to craft questions in order to understand where I needed to focus my analysis, I looked to Srivastava and Hopwood’s work. Questions 1 and 2 were in the forefront while analyzing, given my own positionality and how that would potentially cloud the research. Are there tensions between theory and data? Does the tension matter? Would an outside or traditional researcher/observer see things differently? I think that here, there is a point to be made about how I as a GN/TCK possibly saw or influenced the participants’ comments. I saw a connection between social identity theory and struggles that an individual is said to go through as part of the theory development.

**STUDY DESIGN:**

The study design sought to engage participants and provide the researcher with as full a picture as possible of each individual’s GN/TCK experience. It was not without frustration and false starts, however. The original design of the study began as a pre-interview questionnaire in order to gather demographic and background data on the participants. The original design also included a request for participants to recall memorable experiences from their childhood. An interview was to then follow which would explore in-depth childhood life histories and college experiences, both socially with peers and interactions with administrators. I originally looked to find participants and ask them to recall life events that they felt were significant to the development of self. The original inception of the study was a generational comparison. Early on in the process the question arose as to how it would relate to HE, and so the original design was kept in place and targeted at undergraduate students. Although initial responses were positive from individual participants, only one participant completed the pre-interview questionnaire and interview. (See appendix 4 for participant response). I received feedback from researchers as part of the TCK research network about the length of time I was asking the participants to devote to the project, that it was too involved a project for one not attached to a U.S. HE institution.

The choice was made to reorganize the pre-interview questionnaire into a survey, incorporating several questions from the interview and placing it on Survey Monkey® [this was based on feedback received from the tckid.com research group and the FIGT Research Network]. Each of the original respondents were sent an email asking if they would be interested in participating in the new format of the survey. Due to the nature of contact and the anonymous responses to the survey, I am not sure how many of the original respondents chose to participate in the new format. I was able to determine that none agreed to be interviewed; and, as a result, their voices and stories are not captured, as they potentially would have been. However, a new set of participants was revealed through snowballing. Several administrators, researchers and TCKs themselves forwarded the survey and asked others to participate that generated a pool of 30 survey takers and 5 participants for in-depth interviews for a total of 31 survey takers and 6 interviewees – this number includes the participant from the original survey design.

Of the 31 survey takers, the average age was 20.54 years. The youngest was 18 years, and the oldest listed an age of 33 years. Age of the participants was important to capture, as I was to concentrate my research on individuals who were 18-22 years old and had at least a year of college experience. Student Development Theories have traditionally been developed using participants of traditional college age and primarily of sophomore standing (year 2). If I am to posit the idea that there is a need for a student development theory that addresses the specific needs of GNs/TCKs, then I felt it was important to look at the needs of GNs/TCKs of a similar age group. Of the 31 participants, twenty-five were female and six were male. Of the participants, only three had moved only once and three had moved eight times; the average number of moves for these participants was 5 times. On average the time spent in another country was 2.5 years with the shortest stay being 1 month and the longest stay 17 years. The reason given for the all the moves was parental occupation; eighteen listed their father’s job, one listed their mother’s job and eight list both parents’ jobs as the reason for moving.

The group is not racially diverse; although race was not asked of the interviewee group, only 1 was not of Caucasian descent. I did not control for education levels of parents, types of professions, race, nor if extended family units had lived overseas. The data set could have been controlled for a very specific type of individual; but I was more concerned with each person having lived overseas for more than 2 years and returning to the U.S. to attend college or university.

The semi-structured interviews in the original study design and the secondary follow-up design allowed me access to individual participant narratives, which provided insight into their personal experiences and frustrations with college life. The secondary follow-up design began with a redesign of the original survey, taking into account some of the questions from the original interview protocol. Conducting the survey through Survey Monkey® gave me the opportunity to control participation through guided questions and statements. As an example, the participants were not able to gain access to the main questionnaire unless they acknowledged via radio buttons that they met all of the research criteria and agreed to the research protocol. This was the case for three demographic informational questions (age, gender, length of time overseas). I was conscious of making sure that my participants were within my 18-22 year old range. While I did not control for gender, I did want to hear both voices and experiences. For length of time overseas, I had determined a threshold of two years, and wanted to be sure the participants hit that threshold. In other studies (Schaetti, 2006 and Weigel, 2010) the threshold of time spent overseas was two years. While there appears to be no strong argument for choice of threshold in any literature reviewed, I wanted to be sure that the participants had spent enough time overseas to experience the difference in culture.

The questionnaire was grouped into four (4) sections: demographic information (places lived, number of siblings); background information (questions regarding moves, identity issues); college (college experiences, salience of cultural background) and student services (interactions with student services staff and programs). Both the survey and interviews were valuable in this study as they both had open-ended questions that allowed for rich data to be gathered. The interviews allowed me to ask more detailed questions about the participants’ time on campus and interactions with student services and academic personnel, which was not addressed in the surveys. The questionnaire was developed after struggling to find participants to participate in interviews, and after I received feedback from the TCK research group that directing people to a website or survey to first garner interest would be better. I wanted to honor the original design of the study, so I asked survey respondents to participate in interviews in order to begin a more in depth conversation.

Survey Monkey® as a tool provides the researcher with data sets for analysis. These will be discussed in the analysis and findings section. An attempt was made to find research on using Survey Monkey® as a research tool, which included reaching out to two researchers who work in HE assessment and who use Survey Monkey® as a tool to gather data: Mary K. Desler of Northwestern University and Jennifer Myers-Pickard of the University of Arizona. Neither of them had come across any research on the specific participant, but noted it was probably long overdue (personal communication, 2011). Kaczmirak (2005) writes on the validity of web surveys, he provides the reader with a basic outline for providing good web based surveys and gives researchers three recommendations (1) be user friendly, (2) use trustworthy software, and (3) be explicit in directions. Of specific note is his recommendation to keep it short, avoid multiple answer types, and using a software solution that the maximum number of potential participants would be familiar with. I specifically chose the software Survey Monkey® for several reasons: (1) it is a recommended software tool through The University of Sheffield, (2) it is a familiar survey tool used on many American HE campuses to gather data, (3) it is a tool used by many undergraduates to gather data for projects and papers, and (4) it is a simple tool to use.

Throughout the study it was important to hear the voices of the students (participants) who, in their everyday lives as college students, are not necessarily celebrated or heard. Inviting the participant to reflect back their experience via transcript checking gave power to their words and allowed them to make changes where necessary. Only one participant contacted me in regards to changes to the original transcript; and as he noted it was to ‘correct the grammar.’ Grundy, Polan and McGinn (2003) talk of the participant as transcriptionist, literally having the participant transcribe the interview from the recordings. They argue that this method gives the data produced more rigor as weight to the narrative and individual words in assigned by the participant. While this may have ultimately given the study more rigor time and the extent of the work did not call for such a method to be employed. Based on the timing critique of the type of data collection employed at the beginning of the study, it seemed more appropriate to invite the participant to read over the transcript and make edits where appropriate, and to provide an option to strike through things deemed private that were not to be shared publicly in a dissertation or future presentation. As it turned out, I did have to chase up several of the participants in order for them to return the edited transcripts. As Grundy et al. (2003) note, it makes the content richer as the participant is able to determine the ‘truth’ written and leads to a more collaborative and conversational tone for the interview. Each participant was informed before and at the end of the interaction (interview) that the expectation was that they review and edit the transcript for content as they saw fit.

**PARTICIPATION IDENTIFICATION**

Global Nomads/Third Culture Kids are difficult to track on U.S. college campuses. For most institutions keeping track of these students is not a priority – most carry U.S. passports, and as such are classified as U.S. home students. As Greg Caldwell, Associate Dean of International Studies (retired, Lewis and Clark University) (personal communication, 2011), notes the small numbers of these students have not made them a priority; but their numbers are growing. He believes it is because the majority of these students ‘fit’ in another category, American, or international student, and institutions in general feel there is no need to count them separately. One outcome of this research is to provide an understanding of the uniqueness of the experiences these students bring to campus in order for them to be counted separately.

Initially, the thought was to use three methods of recruitment: through (a) FacebookTM, (b) TCK research networks, and (c) college campuses. As I was interested in the student’s self-identification as a global nomad, the college campus recruitment strategy was dropped; I was unclear as to how the individual institution would select the students, therefore pre-determining their identification as a global nomad. It is valid to note at this stage that I was initially frustrated with the difficulty of participant selection. I knew that as a group, the participants would be hard to find; but I assumed several hundred would step forward. This was based on an assumption made in the first hour of the original design being posted, when fifteen participants made email contact. Those original contacts soon faded; and, after multiple attempts to make contact via email, I made the decision to redesign the study. It might be concluded that I panicked and redesigned the study before checking with other colleagues and/or my supervisor because of the lack of response. In fact, conversations with other researchers generated comments such as “that’s quite a time commitment you are asking for” (Morse, C. personal communication via LinkedIn, 2011). One researcher in particular who shared her own frustration of actually having to fly across the country to interview 12 students it became clear that a redesign was necessary (Dottie Weigel, personal communication, 2011). (See appendix 3 for original survey design and appendix 5 for redesign)

Contact was made through several avenues. The first was to Denizen®, an on-line magazine produced for global nomads and third culture kids. The editor was contacted (a former student at my last HE institution); and an agreement was made to post the research information on their website, Facebook® group, and to Twitter® followers. I made contact with two research groups, TCKresearch.com and FIGT.com, both of whom provide resources and information to researchers and professionals in the field. Both groups were able to provide access to their members through their websites. From each of these avenues, 52 participants began the survey; 27 completed the entire survey and 9 gave partial answers, 3 of which were useful enough to be included in the analysis. Fourteen participants indicated that they were willing to be contacted for further follow-up; a total of five (5) individuals were interviewed in depth.

Each participant (14) who provided an email address and indicated that they would be willing to be interviewed for the project was contacted via email on four separate occasions. From those fourteen (14) participants, five (5) were interviewed as they responded to the email invitation. An attempt was made to conduct each interview via Skype®; one of the interviewees did not have an operational camera for the interview and one did not have Skype®, so we spoke via phone. Each interview lasted approximately thirty (30) minutes and followed the general format of the survey. The interview asked similar questions to the survey, clarified statements and reposed the questions to elicit more detail; the survey response text boxes were also limited to a word count, so in the interview the participants could feel free to speak for as long as they determined was necessary for a particular answer. Questions centered on the participant’s specific college experiences and interactions with fellow students and staff. Participants were asked about their social interactions and given an opportunity to design a program that would address their needs as a global nomad on a U.S. college campus. (See appendix 5 for interview question detail.)

Although each participant that began the questionnaire was introduced to me as the researcher through a basic description of the research and the University of Sheffield, I felt it was important as a researcher to disclose that I was also a TCK/Global Nomad during the interview process. This was done for two reasons. First, I believed that revealing my status, as a TCK would put the individual participant at ease, giving us common ground; or as Ellis (2004) and Crichton and Childs (2001) state, it encourages participants to take an active role in the research process when they feel connected with the researchers. The second was to change the power dynamic of the interview. In all cases except one, thanks to Skype® I was able to see the participant and they me. One interview participant requested to be interviewed via phone; I did not feel that this changed the dynamic of the interview, as I had already interviewed a participant via Skype® that I had not been able to physically see.

As Ellis (2004) notes, the interview and account given is socially constructed for the purpose of the research study; i.e., interaction between the two is socially constructed, as they would not necessarily interact otherwise. She argues that if a researcher provides his/her own positionality for the participant, it can change the power dynamic and get the participant to share more of their life history than s/he initially was willing to do. Revealing the position of the researcher can also bring with it risk that the participant reveals portions of his or her self that s/he believes the researcher needs to hear. While that certainly may have happened in this study, there is no way to accurately tell; I was not offering payment for participation so there was no incentive to embellish. I do acknowledge, however, there were times when the participants in both the survey and interview began answering some of the questions with “are you asking…” and on more than one occasion during the interview I did clarify.

**PARTICIPANT CRITERIA**

Selection for inclusion in the study was self-identification by the participants that they identify as global nomad or third culture kid. (One participant that ‘certified’ s/he was between the ages of 18 and 22 years, but then listed age as 26 years when specifically asked for age.) There was nothing in the computer program than stopped a participant from continuing if they stated their age above 22 years. As will be noted in the analysis in greater detail, I considered eliminating this person from the study; but with further review of the Survey Monkey® set, it was virtually impossible to do so. Only one potential participant did specifically stated she was a graduate student and asked permission to participate. I responded to her request, asking her not to, as I was concentrating my data gathering on undergraduate students.

At the beginning of the survey, the individual was asked a series of questions including criteria for participation

1) You are between the age of 18 and 22 years old; 2) You have completed at least one year of college on a U.S. college campus; 3) You have lived for at least 2 years in a country different than your passport country due to one or more of your parents occupations; and 4) You have used or participated in student support services provided by student affairs on your campus (student activities, student housing, multicultural student services and or attended event and activities provided by these entities).

While there was no obvious indication in the survey that if a participant answered no to one of the required questions they would be asked to leave the survey, I assume that the reason several people started the survey and did not complete it is because they did not meet the requirements. Selection criteria were given as a guide to the type of participants desired; as part of the selection criteria, detailed information was provided about the study, their role, and how to stop participation if they so chose. (See appendix 7 for full selection criteria.)

My original decision to not work with specific schools kept the total participant number low as the reliance was on the student’s self-identification and motivation to participate. I also attribute the small number of participants overall to the fact that colleges and universities do not track these individual students; that the term global nomad or third culture kid is a relatively new term, and some students and staff are unaware of the implications of the classification. Reliance on the magazine and research networks, these not being necessarily ‘places’ that 18-22 year old individuals monitor as part of their social media networks, kept the numbers relatively low. While low numbers for the purposes of this research are fine, it does raise the question as to whether a large data set could be found to conduct a large-scale population study.

I took into account the concept of cultural research methodology as one of my biggest concerns. It was important for me to celebrate unique experiences while studying these particular GN/TCKs. Providing them with a place to showcase their individual cultural voice while understanding that they potentially perceive themselves as outsiders. These students are counted on the majority of U.S. HE campuses as American because they hold U.S. passports. However, their learning and cultural influences have taken place outside the U.S., even if only for a short time. A personal side note: I was counted as an international student by my undergraduate institution even though I resided in the U.S. – as such, the institution, communicated with me as though I was living overseas. All post arrived at my family home in Chicago in airmail envelopes. As Stuart Hall (1990) has noted, cultural identity reflects the “common historical experiences and shared cultural coded which provide us, as ‘one people with stable, unchanging continuous frames of reference.’” (p.223) He goes on to explain that identities are produced: “culturally it is the past and present that combine to create the present identity – constantly evolving to meet the expectations of the current community.” (p.223)

Key characteristics of the participants will be addressed in the next chapter; however, the group consisted of both male and female undergraduate students, predominantly white middle class with college-educated parents. I did not control for gender, race, time overseas or profession of parents; I was concerned with the experience of a student who had lived overseas for more than two years and is on a U.S. HE campus. Addressing this research again, I would consider only looking at students who had returned to attend college, not those who had returned to the U.S. in high school; also, I would work with one or two HE institutions to develop a larger pool and address specific student services on those campuses.

**APPROVAL OF THE STUDY:**

I completed the ethical review as dictated by the University of Sheffield and received approval for the study in March of 2011. As has been noted the original study documentation changed slightly by adding a survey to the research. It was determined by my supervisor at the time, that the change was not significant enough to warrant reapplication for approval. The review process is completed in two sections: (1) research ethics application form and (2) documentation of the survey and consent form to be used. The research application form included a description of the aims, objective and methodology to be used. (See appendices 8 and 9 for complete documentation of review process and ethics form detail)

**DATA COLLECTION:**

After approval was granted, an email invitation was generated and sent to each of the research networks and Denizen® magazine. It is important to note here that Denizen® generated twelve (12) initial contacts for the research, but only one (1) individual followed through. It was after this disappointing showing that I chose to rewrite the survey and send it to the research networks, TCKkid.com and FIGT.com, as well as to a specific researcher Tina Quick (2011) who had published work on the transition of global nomads to college. Included in the email was a hyperlink, which linked the participants to the survey hosted on Survey Monkey®. No incentive to participate was provided, although in retrospect that may have increased the number of participants. A complete version of the survey is provided in appendix 5.

I have no specific information of how many individuals received the initial email invitation. I also have no information on how many people subscribe to Denizen Magazine, nor how many researchers on the FIGT website forwarded my request on; although the TCKresearch group boasts a contact list of close to 3000 members (I believe as a marketing ploy in order to charge researchers a fee for access), there is no indication how many members met this research projects’ 18-22 year old requirement. I was, however, carbon copied on one email between the researcher Tina Quick and a student affairs practitioner at the University of Virginia, Dottie Weigel, regarding research participants (personal communication, 2011).

As noted earlier, one individual did complete the original format of the study, bringing the study participant total to 31; however, because he did not complete the survey, he is not included in any relevant data table. His interview, however, was analyzed for the themes of belonging, identity and introspection; his responses are included in the global narrative that was created. Overall the group analyzed from the survey consisted of 25 women and 5 men, attending 24 different institutions (some participants attended more than one institution); 29 ranged between the age of 18-22 years, and 2 fell outside that age range. All participants had spent at least two years overseas and had been on a U.S. college campus for at least one year. From this group of 30, five (5) agreed to be interviewed (3 women and 2 men). A third male participant who that had completed the original data gathering process was included in the analysis. A more in-depth presentation of the interview participants will be provided in the data analysis chapter.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The survey was placed on Survey Monkey® and was live for 3 weeks. A total of fifty (50) individuals began the survey and twenty-seven (27) completed all 20 questions. Fourteen (14) individuals provided contact information, indicating they were willing to be interviewed for the second part of the research project. Survey Monkey® as a research tool does provide the researcher with several options for data analysis (table generation, side by side question comparison, and the ability to filter and cross tabulate responses). A more expensive version of the software does provide options for SPSS integration, which is in-line with quantitative research, as well as basic text analysis further analysis of this option proved it was very similar to the concept of Word Clouds. In both instances the software cost was too prohibitive for this particular project and didn’t seem relevant for its qualitative nature.

The survey questions that required a radio button response provided general data about each participant and allowed for comparisons to be made; how they felt about their childhoods, what services they used on campus, and how they rated various identity markers etc. The Survey Monkey® data package graphed the radio button data responses, however, while using graphs in qualitative research write-up allows the researcher to visually show trends and patterns and summarize results for the reader, they are not used to convey data analysis. The qualitative researcher gathers multiple forms of data for review and analysis and the graph included in chapter five shows how varied and similar the experiences of the participants in this study appear to be. Meant only as a pictorial representation of similarities between participants, not a as a numerical representation of participants views and experiences.

All the interviews were conducted via Skype®, except one, and were recorded in their entirety. (See appendix 5 for survey details and appendix 6 for interview questions.) Each interview was transcribed by the researcher, checked for content, and edited twice. The interviews were then sent to each interviewee to be verified for accuracy and meaning. During the interview and again as part of the email sent, the interviewees were cautioned that the interviews were transcribed as the conversations that they were, and were not edited for grammar or sentence structure. It was important that the interviewees understood this, as I did not want the participants to edit out content when given the opportunity to review the transcript; I knew this would potentially change the nature of the responses and the thematic analysis to be completed later. None of the original transcripts were edited or corrected by the participants. One participant did attempt to edit the transcript, but then sent and email to say he had “given up” and it was okay to use as-is (personal communication, 8 September 2011).

**STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:**

The strengths of this study are numerous. Primarily, it gives a voice to a growing yet still hidden population on campus. In an attempt to highlight the experiences of this particular group of students, this study provides the opportunity to generate conversations on campus that are not currently happening - potentially creating change in services provided. The students who participated were engaged and willing to share their experiences; in fact, several suggested that I speak with their siblings. While the study is important in terms of illustrating the experience of global nomads on U.S. college campuses, it only reflects the experience of the thirty-one (31) individuals and not every person who identifies as a TCK. As was noted earlier, the background of the researcher also played a role in the study. Questions developed for the survey and subsequent interviews were influenced by my own experiences as a GN/TCK and my time as a student and an administrator on U.S. HE campuses. Although every attempt was made not to direct questions or lead answers, there were times in the interviews where I did not ask a follow up question because I recognized that I was leading the interview. Multiple researchers (Ellis, 2004; Denzin, Lincoln, and Giarina, 2006; Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont, 2003 and others) note that no research is objective or free from influence from the researcher or the participant. Concern was raised in the beginning of the project that each individual’s experience and story was so different that perhaps there was not enough of a similarity of experience to provide good data. However, as will be shown and discussed in the next chapter on findings, there are multiple similarities in the types of experiences and frustrations from which to draw tentative conclusions, as well as suggest lines of inquiry for further research.

This study is very limited in scope; it is a snapshot of 31 participants who self-identify as a global nomad or a TCK. The study only captured their experiences on their particular campuses at a particular point in time. A longitudinal study is needed with participants that would begin as they entered college, revisiting their development every two years while in school and then at a marked period post HE. Research conducted by Schaetti (2006) and Cottrell (2007) have shown that adults have the ability to be introspective about their experiences and articulate frustrations and triumphs. The findings from this study are similar to other research, and anecdotal evidence on blogs, as well as what Useem et al. (1969) and Pollock and Van Reken (2009) found; leading me to believe that the experiences of these individuals are valid and worthwhile to study.

Because there are no tick boxes on college applications in regards to status as a global nomad, finding students who self-identify as global nomad/TCK are hard to come by. In an email conversation with Dottie Weigel (2012), she acknowledged that she flew across the U.S. to interview students at an institution that does count and track global nomads/TCKs. In order to conduct a larger study, a researcher would need to work with multiple institutions - specifically the registrars - in order to identify students whose nationality is listed as U.S., but whose home address is listed overseas. For the foreseeable future, this, I believe, is the only way to track these students until some form of tick box is added to general college applications or large-scale CIRP[[22]](#footnote-22) studies or until it becomes financially valuable for HE institutions to report the number of global nomads on each campus.

The snapshot nature of the study did not allow for the control of every possible variable with the individual participants. Consistency was maintained throughout the study via interview style. Each participant verified that s/he met each of the protocol requirements. I chose not to control for gender, race, ethnicity, type of institution the individuals attended, country the students resided in while overseas, the amount of time overseas, or their parents’ profession. While all of these variables could be controlled for, that would have generated a very different data set. Further research determining differences between students whose campus offers support services versus students on a campus that does not could also be conducted. For this particular project, I was interested in the experience students who had lived overseas and self-identified as global nomad or third culture kid were having on a U.S. college campus. The snowball nature of gathering the participants also limited the number, and possibly the ‘type’, of students who participated. The limitations of the study participants are varied: they are well-educated students, their experiences overseas have been in wealthy environments (health, social standing, education, experience, financial), and they have returned to the U.S. to wealthy environments (racial standing, educational opportunities). I did not control for the type of occupation a parent was involved in, or the racial make-up of neither each family, nor the type of HE institution that each participant attends. Would the experiences be the same if the participants did not fit the above details? A detailed look at the participants who were interviewed, as well as a discussion as to the length and richness of the interviews will be provided in the data analysis chapter

**SUMMARY:**

This chapter provided the reader with an overview of the methodology and methods employed. An argument was made for why a qualitative methodology was chosen, and why surveys and interviews were used. A snapshot of the participants, the survey and data collection and analysis was given. An understanding of Student Development Theory, cultural frameworks and outlines of the theoretical and methodological influences were discussed as to how they influenced the study, Pollock and Van Reken (2009), Schaetti, (2000), Ellis, (2004), Fereday and Muri-Cochrane (2006), Stewart (2011), and Srivastava and Hopwood (2009). Time was spent noting the change in study design and subsequent success of finding participants. The concern over the limited research on these particular students on U.S. college campuses was also addressed. Limitations of the study were discussed, and suggestions were made, for how future research could address the concerns. Chapter five will provide the reader with greater detail regarding specific findings and analysis of the data.

**Chapter 5**

**Data Analysis and Findings**

This thesis set out to explore the experiences of global nomads on U.S. college campuses. Data was collected from participants using an email survey and interviews were conducted one on one using Skype®. The protocol was developed to answer the following research questions:

**Primary Question:**

Is the life history of the global nomad/third culture kid unique enough to warrant an additional student development ‘theory’ or become a recognized category within current student development theory?

**Secondary Questions:**

1. What is the experience of the Global Nomad on a U.S. college campus?
2. As each informant was growing up, when and how did she/he first become aware of ‘difference’, particularly ethnic and cultural differences?
3. What exposure to or experiences did each informant have with people that were different than him/her in a school setting?
4. Were interactions on campus influenced by the life histories and experiences of the informants?

The findings will be discussed in three sections based on the above questions and data gathered. The first section will show the level of analysis taken and the strategies used. Also, the themes derived from the literature review will be introduced. The second section will provide an overview of the data derived from the survey, including demographic characteristics of the participants and background experiences. The section will also look at the responses of the participants from the surveys in relation to the three themes that emerged from the literature review; specifically, those from Student Development Theory models (social identity models – Marcia, 1966; Josselson, 1987; Helms, 1993; Cross, 1991. Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) cultural domain model; and Erikson’s (1968) identity development.)

As noted in the literature review, we know that students in this particular age group (18-22 years) struggle with a sense of belonging as they enter college, as they seek to establish an identity separate and apart from their parental unit; as current student development theory (in particular social identity theory) shows, these students are entering a period of introspection that belies a maturity level, but accurately reflects where they are in terms of seeing self as a reflection of their current social context. In the third section, the responses from the interviews will be analyzed, paying particular attention to the themes and additional themes that were revealed during analysis. An effort will be made to triangulate the narratives from the interviews and surveys, with time spent on campus, and the themes from the literature review in order to answer the question of what is the experience of global nomads on U.S. HE campuses.

As discussed in earlier chapters, there is no national model of counting of the GN/TCK, so this study sort to find students who self-identified as GN/TCK. Attempts were made during analysis to present the data as is, without assignment to a particular (PolVan) cultural domain, but rather to an agreed upon general theme that all 18-22 year old U.S. HE students struggle with in an attempt to create an individual identity. In this research study it became apparent that the participants exhibited some of the characteristics of PolVan Cultural Domains. Which raised the concern of the potential issues of a self-fulfilling prophecy, noted in Chapter four, were the categories defined to explain the individual experience or visa versa.

**SECTION ONE**

**Data Analysis**

Data for this project was derived from the surveys (n=31) and the six interviews conducted. The surveys generated two sets of data: responses from radio button questions that were graphable answers; and short narrative answers, which were analyzed in a similar fashion to the interview responses. An example of the radio button data is presented using a pictorial graph to provide the reader with a visual example of the similarities of experience of the participants. The choice to include this graph within the thesis and other examples in appendices 10-13 was made as a way to defend the concern that the difference in life histories would not allow for the comparison of experience. As can been seen in the graphs, regardless of the individual experience, there appears to be a trend in the question answers.

**Themes**

During analysis of the narratives (both survey and interview), three themes emerged as most significant from the literature review. These themes mirror the development of the individual through social, environmental, cultural and family identity. During the review of the literature, it became apparent that the sense of self (identity) and belonging are intertwined and are part of the development of individual. The ability to be introspective is highlighted in several theories of identity development (Erikson 1968; Wodak et al. 2009; and Archer, 2003) and student development theory (Cross 1991; Sue and Sue 2003; and D’Augelli, 2004), and is the point at which development is complete or nearing completion for this particular stage of development. Schaetti (2006) also proposes introspection as the last point at which the Adult Third Culture Kid (ATCK) is able to take all of his/her experiences and understand how they have influenced individual development.

These themes address a development process that individuals in this age range (18-22 years) experience: the need to belong to something greater than self and family, and defining a self identity that is greater than the parental or familial unit. GNs/TCKs experience two forms of identity differentiation at this developmental point - one that of establishing an identity that is separate from parents, and one that incorporates earlier experiences that may be in direct opposition to the current cultural environment. Introspection for the GN/TCK is the ability to understand enough about self to determine belonging needs, in conjunction with integrating multiple points of identity, in order to come to a single comfortable identity - what Iyall-Smith and Leavy (2008) refer to as the hybrid identity. The themes will be elaborated on in greater detail later in the chapter.

In an effort to clarify the themes, contact was made with a colleague and an ATCK in the student affairs field, Dr. Catherine Whitcomb. As a retired Student Affairs professional, the student development literature was familiar to her; as an ATCK the Pollock Van Reken (2009) work on Cultural Domains was also known. She reviewed the literature and concurred that the three emergent themes - belonging, identity and introspection - were appropriate to use as a basis for analysis for this thesis. In a continuing effort to test the themes against the survey and interview questions, both of which were written before the analysis of the literature review for themes was conducted, contact was made with two additional colleagues in the field. Both women have more than thirty years of experience each in the field: Dr. Mary K. Desler is a former Associate Vice President of Student Services and is now the Senior Assessment Analyst conducting research on the behavior of students on HE campuses and interprets national survey data for Northwestern University; and Ms. Carretta Cooke, former Executive Director of Multicultural Student Services at Northwestern University, now the Director of Career Development at Dillard University[[23]](#footnote-23). Both women are published authors on issues in student services. I provided both women with a short two-page written document containing my definition of belonging, identity and introspection in the context of the literature review.

Both women are familiar with student development theory and Erikson’s (1968) identity work; however they were not familiar with Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) work. Desler responded with specific notations on questions that she believed fit the themes; while Cooke’s response was that she could see overall themes in the questions developed, she did not attach specific themes to questions. Although Desler and I did not concur on all survey and interview questions related to a particular theme, there was consistency indicating there was some uniformity of thought. These colleagues helped calibrate my initial thoughts regarding the themes. Desler helped illuminate additional questions that she believed addressed the themes, thereby allowing me to engage with questions, which I might have otherwise missed.

**Table 5.1**

**Theme - Belonging**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Survey Questions | Interview Questions |
| Wood | Q12, Q15, Q16, | Q10, Q15, Q18 |
| Desler | Q12, Q16 | Q10 |

**Theme - Identity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Survey Questions | Interview Questions |
| Wood | Q12, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, | Q6, Q8, Q11, Q12, Q13 |
| Desler | Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, | Q6, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13 |

**Theme - Introspection**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Survey Questions | Interview Questions |
| Wood | Q12, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22 | Q1-5, Q6, Q8, Q10, Q13 |
| Desler | Q12, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q19, Q20, Q22 | Q1-5, Q6, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q13 |

**SECTION TWO**

**OVERVIEW OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS**

Responses to the second distribution of the on-line survey generated thirty (n=30) participants, 28 of whom ranged in age from 18-22 years old; there were two outliers, age 33 years and 26 years. I chose to include the two outliers’ comments in the overall analysis. In SurveyMonkey®, there was no way to accurately monitor the thread of conversation for each participant – when a participant chooses not to answer a question the next participant who does drops into the vacant number spot. The system does not create a place marker for each participant. And, as the survey was anonymous, it was not possible to track the individual subjects. Of the 30 participants, twenty-five (25) of the participants listed their nationality as American, four (4) listed dual citizenship with the U.S., and six (6) another country than the U.S. The six students interviewed in-depth note their nationalities to be American. Of the subjects, twenty-three (23) listed their parents as American (5 of whom list American and another nationality) and eight (8) listed parents as having another nationality.

Due to the anonymity of the survey, and as SurveyMonkey® assigns each participant a number, I did not see an argument for assigning a pseudonym. Later in the chapter descriptive paragraphs will be provided of each of the six (6) participants interviewed; for clarity purposes they have been assigned pseudonyms. Survey data will be shown with participant numbers and interview data with pseudonyms. Total number of research participants is thirty-one (n=31) - the additional participant completed the original survey and interview protocols, and his information was deemed valid and included in the analysis.

The participants attend(ed) 24 different HE institutions across the U.S. The institutions are primarily on the east and west coasts and are a mixture of public and private schools. I have no indication from the comments provided on the survey as to whether a specific location in the U.S. was more attractive than another to these particular global nomads. What did become apparent, and will be discussed later in the chapter, was that familial ties and/or the geographic area dictated institutional choice.

Table 5.2

**Institutions all participants have attended to date**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Institutions** | **Geographic Area/Rural/Urban** | **Public or Private** | **Size of Institution** | **Number of participants** | **% Diversity#** |
| University of Virginia | East | Public | 24,350 | 9 | 30 non white |
| Vassar College | East | Private | 2,400 | 3 | 30 non white |
| Skidmore College | East | Private | 2,500 | 1 | 24 non white |
| \*University of Edinburgh | International | Public | 28,974 | 1 | 25 international |
| \*University of Aberdeen | International | Public | 13,351 | 1 | 120 countries represented |
| Emory University | South East | Private | 13,893 | 1 | 35 non white |
| Boston University | East | Private | 33,000 | 2 | 26 non white |
| Villanova University | East | Catholic | 10,467 | 1 | 24 non white |
| Colorado College | Mountain | Private | 2,011 | 1 | 27 of color |
| Bucknell University | East | Private | 3,650 | 1 | 7 minority |
| \*University of Auckland | International | Tertiary | 39,940 | 1 | 10 international |
| Azusa Pacific University | West | Christian | 1,184 | 1 | 39 referred to as ethnic |
| +Simpson University | West | Private | 1,216 | 1 | NA |
| St. Lawrence University | East | Private | 2,400 | 1 | 14 provided break down of students living overseas with U.S passports |
| Loyola University Chicago | Midwest | Catholic | 16,040 | 1 | 32 non white |
| St Johns University | East | Catholic | 21,067 | 1 | 51 non white |
| Northeastern University | East | Private | 20,530 | 1 | 28 non white |
| Webster University | Midwest | Private | 21,278 | 1 | 2 non white |
| \*LaSalle College of the Arts | International | Tertiary | 2,500 | 1 | 40 international |
| Wellesley College | East | Private (all women) | 2,300 | 1 | 42 ethnically diverse |
| \*Seoul National University | International | Public | 26,941 | 1 | 5 international |
| Whitworth University | West | Christian | 2,886 | 1 | 17 non white |
| Westmont College | West | Christian | 1,306 | 1 | 25 non white |
| College of William and Mary | East | Public | 8,200 | 1 | 27 non white |
| +Stonehill College | East | Catholic | 2,300 |  | NA |
| Reed College | West | Private | 1,400 | 1 | 23 non white |
| University of Maryland College Park | East | Public | 26,826 | 1 | 34 non white |

#Non-white = African American, Hispanic Latino and Asian American as counted populations. Percentages based on total student population provided by the institution on line

+ No information provided on line on racial/ethnic or international student breakdown

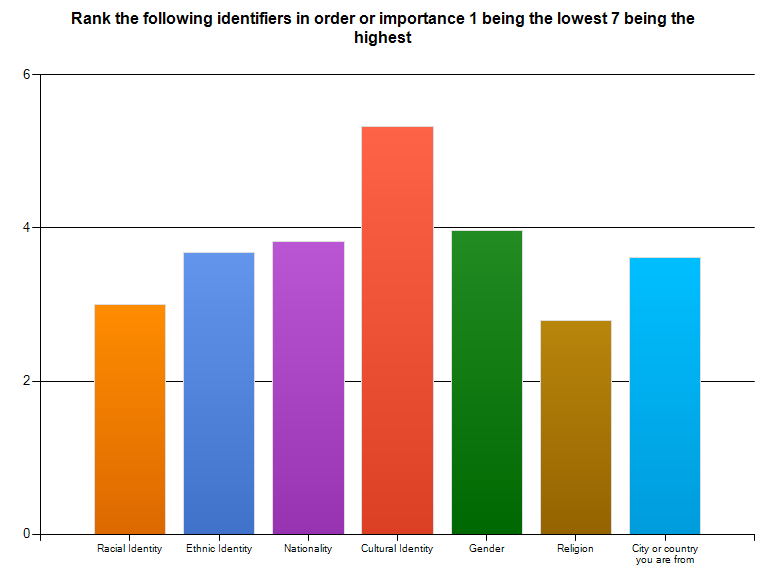
\*Non U.S. HE institutions provide on-line documentation as to percentages of international students rather than by race or ethnicity

From the literature review on GN/TCKs, culture and experience within different cultures plays a significant role in the development of self no matter their age (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009; Schaetti, 2006; Useem, 1969; and Hayden, 2011). Based on the participants’ multi cultural backgrounds, I made the assumption that a diverse HE environment would be of importance in choosing an institution. In order to gain a complete picture of the participants, they were asked three questions related to diversity: importance of institutional diversity on the institution of choice, how salient (in other words, how important) their cultural background was to self before they went to college, and finally to rank individual diversity identifiers in order of importance.

Diversity as a concept was important for all of the individuals in the study, and was ranked the highest in each of the three questions. It was most important in the perceived diversity level of institutional choice; salience of cultural background to self was also listed as high. As the researcher, the definition I was working from was an understanding of self in relation to the larger society. Whilst teaching a master level class at a mono cultural HE institution, I asked students to rank diversity self-identifiers, (similar to those ranked in question 14 in the survey) the group ranked cultural identity lowest. In contrast, as can be seen in figure 5.1, cultural identity was of significance to these participants over all other self-identifiers.

Figure 5.1

**Value of Individual Identifiers to Self**



However, I assumed that because each participant acknowledged that s/he held cultural diversity in high regard, and believed their own cultural understanding to be of high importance, that the institutions chosen would reflect the apparent need for a diverse environment. Based on the data in table 5.1 that shows diversity percentage at the institutions attended, I believe these two things to be in contradiction with each other. Noted in the review of Student Development Theory, students continue to develop through college looking for groups in which to ‘fit,’ gravitating towards groups of similarity i.e. race, gender, sexual orientation. However, familial ties (sense of belonging) or the familial group appears to outweigh the need for a diverse environment in this particular instance.

I transferred to Westmont in California. I have a lot of family ties to Westmont…my sister was going there…. I wanted to be near her. (*Keith*)

I am very happy at UVA my family happens to have a long sort of legacy with it, so yeah I am not going to move. (*Kayla*)

I did not want to go to Vassar; my parents eventually decided I had to go there anyway. They allowed me to defer my admission to Edinburgh for a year so I could go there if Vassar didn't work out. Within a few months, I had decided for certain that I would be leaving Vassar and going to Edinburgh the next year, because I found the environment at Vassar stifling and too homogenous after my experiences growing up. I wanted to live somewhere new, with more diversity (age, nationality, mindset, etc.) of students/residents. (*participant 5*)

**MOBILITY**

Information was gathered on the mobility of each participant as part of the background/demographic section of the survey. Wodak et al. (2009) write on the subject of national identity that which is developed through the interaction between a particular person and the society in which he or she grows up. Perry (1912) speaks to an American nationalist identity (discussed in the chapter 3), a specific agenda created at the turn of the twentieth century in response to immigration and migration that is to ‘help’ make everyone an American. The mobility (where each participant has lived) of each participant ranged from one country at the low end to eight countries at the high end, the median being five countries, all before the students entered college. The average length of time spent in one place by the participants was 2-3 years, the longest 17 years and the shortest ranged from 1-3 months.

The countries are a kaleidoscope of areas of the world - ranging from the United States to Indonesia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Ecuador, and Switzerland, to name a few. Throughout the analysis, it became apparent that identification with the U.S. was hard for these participants; this will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter. While no attempt is made in this research to determine the agenda of the average U.S. HE institution in terms of integrating global nomads on campus, one can surmise (while keeping in mind that each GN/TCKs experience is unique and individual) that the culture of U.S. HE does in fact play a role in how apart from mono-cultural students these students (GN/TCKs) experience college life.

Table 5.3

**Mobility of Participants**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PARTICIPANT | GENDER | AGE | COUNTRIES LIVED IN | Av. LENGTH OF STAY (yrs) |
| 1 | F | 18 | 5 | 3.7 |
| 2 | M | 21 | 5 | 4.2 |
| 3 | F | 21 | 7 | 2.8 |
| 4 | M | 19 | 7 | 2.8 |
| 5 | F | 20 | 6 | 2 |
| 6 | M | 20 | 8 | 2.62 |
| 7 | M | 19 | 2 | 9.5 |
| 8 | M | 22 | 4 | 5.5 |
| 9 | F | 19 | 1 | 12 |
| 10 | F | 21 | 2 | 10.5 |
| 11 | F | 20 | 4 | 4.5 |
| 12 | F | 19 | 5 | 3.8 |
| 13 | F | 20 | 1 | 8 |
| 14 | F | 20 | 2 | 9 |
| 15 | F | 19 | 3 | 4.7 |
| 16 | F | 19 | 7 | 2.85 |
| 17 | F | 22 | 3 | 5.4 |
| 18 | F | 21 | 5 | 4 |
| 19 | F | 21 | 5 | 4.2 |
| 20 | F | 18 | 3 | 6 |
| 21 | F | 21 | 4 | 5.3 |
| 22 | F | 19 | 10 | 1.9 |
| 23 | F | 20 | 1 | 14 |
| 24 | F | 33 | 8 | 4.4 |
| 25 | F | 26 | 3 | 8.3 |
| 26 | F | 22 | 5 | 4.4 |
| 27 | M | 21 | 6 | 3.5 |
| 28 | F | 19 | 8 | 2.4 |
| 29 | F | 19 | 4 | 4.5 |
| 30 | F | 20 | 3 | 6.7 |
| 31 | F | 18 | 5 | 3.6 |

When the participants were asked to provide the reason for moving, father’s occupation was listed most frequently (18); mother’s occupation (1) and a combination of parent’s occupation (8) followed. For those who provided detail on occupation type, a combination of diplomatic work, multinational corporations (including banking), missionaries, and humanitarian aid work were listed. Eldering’s (1995) model looks at the socio-ecological environment of children, and determines that a child develops identity through the parental belief systems and the social and physical settings. The point to note here is that learning takes place in both the larger community and the home and can affect how a child interacts with a community that s/he perceives s/he understands, which seems to carry through to how frustrated or happy the participants were with college choices later in life.

**SUMMARY of mobility**

The data thus far reveals a picture of contradictions for this particular group of participants. The group is highly mobile, having lived in multiple locations (4.6) for an average of 5.4 years. The group of individuals appears to place a high value on diversity, (appendices 10, 11, 12); however, the type of institutions chosen show overall diversity levels as relatively low, perhaps indicating that familial ties to an institution outweigh desire for a diverse environment (table 5.2). In other words, the desire to belong in the community (HE institution) is stronger than the need to be part of a diverse community. While this is a small a non-representative group of all GN/TCKs in the U.S., institution size and location do not appear to be significant. Location of institutions chosen by this particular group weigh heavily to the east coast suggesting that, if familial ties are of importance to these participants, that extended family members live in this area of the U.S. An additional inference can be made here that the type of occupations a participant’s family moved for are located in eastern portion of the U.S.

**CULTURAL DOMAINS**

Highlighted in the literature review and methodology chapters was the work conducted by Pollock and Van Reken (2009). Their work on third culture kids is one of the grounding theories of this work. Specifically, their work on cultural domains (Table 4.1) is important. Participants were asked, “Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?” The participants in the study recognized their difference in reference to others at an early age - 6-9 years. I wanted to understand if the prominence (salience) of cultural knowledge, or cultural background and experience that each participant brought with them to college, would influence how s/he experienced life on campus or the activities in which s/he took part. Was the recognition of difference at such an early age was awareness still prominent enough that it would be reflected in college choice?

The PolVan Cultural Domains will be addressed first, and then, using knowledge gained from that analysis, questions will be analyzed that address campus life and campus activities. The four PolVan categories - hidden immigrant, foreigner, adopted and mirror - are domains which accurately describe the interaction levels experienced by third culture kids in dominant cultures (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). After a thorough analysis of the narrative data provided in the survey, the majority of the participants fall into the hidden immigrant domain (‘look alike, think different’), although there is evidence that some participants also identify with the foreigner domain.

**Hidden Immigrant ‘look alike, think different’[[24]](#footnote-24)**

Participants were asked if there was a point in time at which they recognized they belonged to a culture other than the one in which they were living. Each revealed particular points at which s/he recognized how s/he was different from others. All recalled childhood memories that for some were painful; for some, it was the point at which they realized they belong somewhere else, or realized that they did not belong in a place that they had always felt they belonged to.

P1: My classmates refused to believe that I had been inside pyramids, swam with dolphins or met presidents (things I thought all 9 year-olds had experienced) – it frustrated me to the point of tears.

P15: I went to Japanese school from 1st grade to 6th grade. It became very apparent to me that I was different because I was white, while all of my peers were Asian. That’s when I realized I belonged somewhere else.

P18: My family moved to Tajikistan from Turkey when I was five. Up until that point I thought I was Turkish, even though my parents were American.

P23: When I moved to the United States (after living in Japan for 4 years), I felt like I didn’t belong, even though I am American; I felt more Japanese than American.

When asked if there was a comparative point on their HE campus, when people assumed they were someone they were not, participants revealed times when they felt they did not fit in or belong. Others assumed they were American, when they were ‘found’ out to be different because they did not understand pop culture references, or that they ‘betrayed’ themselves because they were unable to complete a simple task without help or did not recognize a particular food; most participants expressed frustration.

P14: I look and sound like an average person who grew up in the U.S. so that’s what people assume. Nobody knows my background unless I personally tell them; it’s not something people talk about because I usually lay low.

P17: People would assume I’d lived in the USA my whole life, until they realized I didn’t understand slang and some pop culture references.

P23: Most people assume I’m a normal American kid until I tell them otherwise. I guess I am good at blending in…although I sometimes betray myself when I can’t figure out how to use a mailbox or when we’re served something just straight up weird like sweet potato fries in the cafeteria.

**Foreigner ‘look different, think different’[[25]](#footnote-25)**

Roughly one quarter of the participants reported that others assume they are a foreigner (‘look different, think different’) and for some it is a struggle to decide whether to correct others. It is valid to note here that the ‘look different’ is a visual judgment made by others – making the assumption they are different from the dominant culture. For some, the struggle with determining who they were in conjunction with who others assumed they were was difficult to reconcile.

P4: At first I thought I was from France, because I was living in France when I became old enough to start understanding the idea of being from somewhere. Dissonance with this became apparent in the U.S. when I was teased and insulted for ‘my’ culture by Americans who perceived me as Latina/Hispanic.

P5: Before I arrived, my roommates and I wrote to each other by email a few times just to start getting in touch. They later told me that when I first walked into our room they thought I had gone into the wrong room, because they were expecting their roommate to be of Asian descent and I visibly wasn’t. Based on what I said in my emails that fit popular Asian American stereotypes (about attitude to school, my family, and I play violin) they apparently had the strong impression I was Asian, and had discussed this before I arrived.

Assumptions made by others toward the GN/TCKs appear to be based solely on physical appearances during a first encounter. Word choices used by the participants to describe these interactions are negative in nature, suggesting frustration and disappointment with the encounter, i.e., insulted, confused, picked apart, stereotypes, constantly assuming.

P15: People are constantly assuming that I am Hispanic American because I have tanned skin…

P24: Once I tell people that I lived in the Middle East they assume that I am Arab and Muslim when in actuality I am Filipino American and Catholic.

The work completed by Weigel (2010) suggests the same consistency of analysis - which individuals in this age group fall into two categories, hidden immigrant and foreigner. I found that these categories were self assigned (HI) or assigned by others (F). Most individuals in this age group are struggling with how others perceive them; they are attempting to determine which domain represents them, as well as where they feel comfortable. What became apparent was that their understanding of self and the ability to be introspective did influence who they interacted with, and if they chose to participate in activities or not. Given what we understand of student development and the challenges faced by international students entering college life, one can easily understand the additional stressors placed on global nomads when assumptions are made about them. What they know does not necessarily correlate with the reality of their situations. Several participants talked of issues in class with professors, that portraying what was culturally appropriate behavior in the culture that they were raised is not acceptable in American HE, leading one to again refer back to the American/Western identity that these students are struggling to understand and incorporate into their everyday interactions.

P20: “In my creative writing class, most of my peers assumed I was quite snobby because I didn’t talk a lot in class. Yet I am not very argumentative and when the class would have heated debates, I would just observe rather than listen. The professor came up to me multiple times after class and asked if I thought I was too intelligent for the class. I had no idea this was the image I was portraying.”

Research conducted by Leong and Chou (2002), which focuses on mental health issues of international students and sojourners, refers to culture shock as a “crisis of personality or identity because contact with an alien culture is said to tear away all the familiar foundations of the individuals self.” (p.187) Success, they say, depends on how well the individual adapts to, or fits in, a new culture and develops the appropriate social skills. ‘Appropriate’ in this example refers to the ability to successfully communicate and interact with others in the majority culture without conflict or disharmony. In other words, the GN/TCK has learned situationally appropriate behaviors – cultural cues and social norms. As Participant 14 notes, “It makes me uncomfortable because people think they know me and have the right to judge my actions in the context of the life that they think I have led.”

**THEMES**

The literature review was conducted in four specific areas: the development of an identity, the history of U.S. higher education and subsequent development of a profession and development theory (SDT), as well as reviewing the literature surrounding the term global nomad. From the review, three themes emerged as part of the overall development of the college student and global nomad: the need to belong, development of an identity of self, and the ability to be introspective. This section will provide a summary of the themes developed in the literature review. Findings related to each of the themes will be provided in the form of analysis of the narratives from both the survey and interviews. It was important to test the theme in general, and then again against campus life and student services. Findings will be shown as a general theme and then again as ‘on-campus.’

The need to belong is a desire fueled at all levels of age development; an argument can be made that all individuals look for and desire connections with others. In college, this desire is more acute, as students (18-22 years) for the first time are developing identities separate from their parents and familial influences. (For more descriptive information, refer to Erikson section in Chapter 3). Identity development during this period includes students developing an independent identity, taking into account influences from all areas of their lives.  The need to become a ‘group member’ is also high at this stage of development (see section on social identity research in Chapter 3). College marks a major shift in identity development, and can be seen through student development theory, and through all of the SDT theories developed to date. As noted earlier, the cues for this research are taken from social identity theories such as Jones and McEwen (2000), Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001), Helms (1993), Kim (2001), Horse (2001), D’Augelli (1994). In these theories, the ability to be introspective, in terms of identity development and social identity theory comes as all other stages have been passed through, and are ‘successfully’ completed. Not all student development theories are stage theories; but for the purposes of this research and the development of these students, the process involved in stage theories is the most relevant. It is this ability to be introspective, and the successful recognition of who they are in relation to others, that requires maturity on the part of the individual.

**THEME - BELONGING[[26]](#footnote-26)**

From the review of student development theory and the emergent trends of college students, the theme of belonging rises to the top. One can observe this on campus as students attempt to join multiple social groups and work to become members of a new community. This is true for all students, not just GNs/TCKs. We also see the theme of belonging in Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) cultural domain work – that immigrant individuals strive to ‘fit in,’ to not stand out (see table 4.1). When analyzing the data, one is hard-pressed not to find sentiments of the need to belong. (See appendix 14 for more detail on belonging) Participants view themselves as members of communities in which they grow up and express concerns that they are struggling to fit into new groups. Participant 2 shared “I forgot most of my Arabic and was unable to communicate with the locals, leading me to feel apart and separate from them.” Erikson (1968) and others speak to the need to find one’s place in relation to others - that successful resolution of sense of self allows the individual to grow and develop successful relationships with others. It is during this age range that students are mature enough to begin to ask the question, ‘how do I belong?’ Participants shared the difficulties of being out of place, looking for ways to belong and feel part of the community:

P11: New Zealand is technically my birth country/passport country, but when I went back I felt completely out of place.

P17: Starting 3rd grade at an American international school in Prague without a word of English capabilities, it was very apparent that I had moved to a foreign country, and that I belonged in Korea.

**BELONGING ON CAMPUS**

When exploring the theme of belonging on campus, similar patterns of concern arose. Participants were looking for ways to belong with peers, blend into the college community and make friends. Some of the participants appeared to embrace the adjustment process as a way to find their place on campus; others revealed the adjustment was very difficult, especially around the diversity of campus; this led to them wanting to transfer or take time off.

P11: I decided to transfer from Villanova University because it was not diverse enough and I could not relate really with any of the students except for those who were not from the US.

P14: I chose to live at a house for missionary kids/TCKs because I felt it important to be around people like me to help me adjust to a new culture and environment in the USA.

Others had expectations of what life would be like on campus. For most it was a surprise, although participants again raised concerns about diversity levels and feeling different than others - as though they did not belong.

P2: I had not expected that the college community would be as fragmented as it was.

P4: As usual, [I am] the odd one out on grounds - something I'm used to but something that can be very lonely at times.

P24: I was fully aware that I was attending a University that was not as diverse as my high school. Actually, many of my peers were much more understanding and curious about my background than I expected.

**THEME - IDENTITY[[27]](#footnote-27)**

Throughout the body of this work thus far, there has been the discussion of identity (cultural, national, self [social]). Answering the question ‘Who am I?’ can be a loaded question for most global nomads – who am I in relation to what or whom? For most individuals the first question to answer is ‘where am I from?’ – for it is the act of placing themselves that leads an individual to be able to determine ‘who am I?’ We place so much emphasis on the development of social and familial contexts that we are a part of, that the constant moving and subsequent identification with ‘others’ becomes a trying enterprise. Participant 4 provided the most complete description of the issue:

“Introducing yourself as a TCK is really challenging. The "where are you from?" question inevitably leads to people getting the wrong idea. You say "NOVA" [Northern Virginia] where you're technically from but have never lived and they make certain assumptions. But if you tell them the truth they often realize they can't relate or don't want to, or that you're a freak and lose interest instantly. The typical assumption though is that I don't know anything about the U.S., which in some ways is true, while in others having represented the country, as a diplomat abroad is not true. It is very hard either way.”

If one accepts the premise that identity is constantly evolving, and that individuals take on pieces of place, social context, political context and family in an effort to define self, then, the journey of global nomads is potentially unstable if they can not find a stable environment to define self.

Participants provided a multitude of responses in terms of identity that are evident as determining who the self is in terms of others. (See appendix 15 for more detail.) Participant 1 stated, “parts of me were very American, but large parts of me had been molded by the cultures surrounding my childhood as well.” Or, as Participant 18 commented, “it wasn't until I was around 6 and with other expat American children that I realized I was American.” For most of the participants, attempting to understand who they were in relation to a passport identity versus social identity (identification with culture in which they were living) was just a part of growing up.

Decision-making seems to have also been affected by their experiences overseas - everything from how to make friends to how to build relationships:

P10: It affects every decision I make as it has completely changed my mindset.

P12: It makes it hard for me to maintain friendships and relationships because I think of everything as temporary; so I leapfrog over problems or just walk away from the relationships.

P15: It affects a lot how I choose my friends…

Comments from participants show that most are attempting to reconcile the question ‘Who am I?’ at this stage in their development. Some showed that participants were struggling with the question, where as others appear to be embracing their difference and use those differences to grow:

P9: I used to think that I was a normal U.S. teenager, but I learned that I really am not normal or average.

P14: Instead of apologizing for my extravagant, odd and bizarre tastes like I did in high school, I began to own up to it.

**IDENTITY ON CAMPUS**

On campus, participants attempted to define themselves, in relation to what they thought an American college student should be. For some, how they understood a stereotype, in this case an American college student was not what they experienced on campus. This was particularly disconcerting and frustrating for some, as it challenged the stereotypes portrayed in the media or provided by their parents. Participant 19 shared, “I was hoping I would blend in with everyone else and become American given enough time. At the same time I felt very alien and didn’t exactly look forward to getting to know what I considered mono-cultural people.”

For most participants, figuring out who they were in relation to other students’ on-campus was also a challenge. This manifested itself in several ways - from what social events to participate in, whether to participate in the drinking culture, to acclimating oneself to the weekend sport culture. Participant 15 could not relate to the drinking culture on campus and chose not to drink when he “saw how crazy” the drinking culture was on campus. He noted that he had been expecting students to be partying all the time, and that he had heard it was much worse on larger campuses. Several participants chose to adapt to college life by choosing to befriend both people who were very similar to themselves and those who embraced a completely different lifestyle. While not a part of this particular research, it would be interesting to study why some students choose a comfortable path versus and uncomfortable one.

P2: The process of adapting was certainly helped along by my friendship with my roommate, who was from a similar background and experiencing many of the same things I was.

P8: Being in a sorority at UVA has taught me a lot about what to expect after college - it's been an experience where I've learned communication skills.

Several participants spoke of their interactions with others on campus and were surprised by how others viewed them, making assumptions about in relation to the mono-cultural environment of campus:

P1: My friends half-jokingly tend to call me ‘foreign’. I was ‘the Greek girl’. In fairness, I do look a little Greek, but the rest of my life I had been strictly ‘American’.

P3: Even if I say I am Danish they think that I am stating my heritage, not my nationality.

**THEME – INTROSPECTION[[28]](#footnote-28)**

In student development theory, introspection occurs when the individual can see him/herself in relation to others and integrate both of those identities into one identity. It is this act of growth in most SDT models that is the last stage of development. When analyzing student development, it is the theories that speak to the individual’s ability to look inside and come to a resolution about who they are as an individual in relation to the dominant culture. Sue and Sue’s (2003) racial cultural model is the most approachable of all the (racial) models; it involves the individual taking the time to balance the dominant culture with their own cultural heritage to form the new identity. Margaret Archer (2003) argues from a reflexive standpoint that a cultural identity is reflected in the culture in which one grows up. The ability to maintain an internal conversation allows us to measure what we are up against and what is reflected back.

Although Archer was not concerned with the essential task of belonging, I believe it is this reflecting back [introspection] that can change what we put out to others, in effect shaping our behavior in an effort to belong (what they did not tell others about themselves and allowed assumptions to be made). It is, as Archer describes, the opportunity to use personal power for gain. What we put out determines our place as social agents and enables us to conform or transform society or self. She cautions however, “as the incumbent of roles, the actors need their reflexivity to know that the associated duties and expectations apply to them, themselves, rather than just being diffuse obligations, which are binding on no-one in particular.” (2003 p.41)

During the analysis, it became apparent that the participants were able to begin to question who they were in relation to others - to begin to understand the experiences they had had as a child and how they were affecting them now. (See appendix 16 for more detail.) While there is no major academic work on global nomads in terms of ability to reflect backwards [be introspective], Schaetti’s (2006) work provides the most insight especially her work on identity congruence. For the participants in this research, college seems to be the first time they are coming to terms with early childhood experiences and recognizing their own shortcomings.

P11: New Zealand is technically my birth country/passport country; but when I went back I felt completely out of place. I didn't know the same songs as everyone else. I didn't know anything about the national sport (Rugby). I offended a lot of Kiwi's by being too direct and upfront when a more subtle approach would have been considered more polite.

P14: For the majority of my first 7 years, I lived in Ecuador, and identified as an Ecuadorian despite having Bolivian parents. Then we moved again, and I thought I was American due to my citizenship (I was born there, but none of my parents are citizens), and thought that this meant I could claim it as mine. I then got really really confused before deciding I was mostly Bolivian, as that is the base thread of culture of my childhood due to my parents and how that was really the only ‘rock’ or consistency in my life.

P21: Upon my return to the U.S. after living abroad for many years, I felt I couldn't relate to other American kids due to their lack of understanding/ ignorance of other cultures.

At this stage of development, individuals are beginning to understand how past experiences influence current practices. This can be seen in Erikson’s (1968) fifth stage Identity vs. Identity Confusion. As Evans et al. (2010) argue, “individuals seek congruence between external recognition and internal integration of meanings derived from other stages.” (p.50) Some participants saw value in the experiences that they have had, while others regarded them as ‘just the way things are.’ For some, these experiences influenced basic every day choices, i.e. what to eat versus larger decisions affecting future life plans.

P1: The fact that mine was a patchwork of cultures only helped broaden my horizon and often, I believe, allow to me look at situations more holistically.

P9 Decisions as simple as what to eat for lunch, to how and where to meet my family are altered by overseas experiences.

P12: It challenged me to adjust and go through a lot of self-discovery of what it means to come from a background of so many cultures and adjust into a culture, which is partly seen as a ‘home’ culture.

P18: I know that I will forever have a global and multicultural perspective, so the jobs, relationships, the kind of life I will live will always be unique.

**INTROSPECTION ON CAMPUS**

All students entering U.S. HE institutions have adjustment issues; they need to take stock of their past experiences as they continue to develop their identities. Where the challenge lies for GNs/TCKs is in reconciling life outside the U.S., life in the U.S., and the mono-cultural environment of their particular HE campus. Individual experiences give these participants the ability to look beyond their individual experience and begin to try to understand how they fit in on campus. For most, this was quite difficult, and was centered on the theme of ignorance of others. This is captured from a statement made by Participant 11, that others (Americans) assume much about an individual based on outward appearances.

P11: I definitely felt like I had to think things through more deeply than the other people in my classes. I was unable to simply accept what I was being taught blindly as I automatically try to look at everything from the different possible cultural perspectives.

In my own experience, mono-cultural Americans do little to explore beyond the surface of another. Perhaps that stems from cultural anomalies like the nightly ‘World News’ concentrating on the contiguous forty-eight states for stories, highlighting only one or two international news events; or, professional sports where champion teams are referred to as ‘World Champions’, but have only played other American or Canadian teams.

P14: I expected it [campus] to be a mix of people, and to be surprised in some way each time I was introduced to somebody; but over time I slowly realized that I was meeting the same person over and over. I don't know if it's my university or U.S. culture in general, but the people here seem to be the most homogeneous that I've ever come across.

P13: It also caused me to get quite frustrated when professors presented information in a manner, which did not consider other cultural perspectives.

P16: I was afraid that I would be too different and would not get along with American peers. I chose not to tell people I grew up overseas until halfway through the first semester. I knew I was beginning anew and setting up a new home for myself for the next four years. I made adapting/becoming acculturated my first priority and while I tried different things, didn't commit to any activity besides schooling and campus ministry…

We know that experiences on campus set students up for success later in life, that much of the work conducted by Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) and others shows a significant positive effect of attending college. Racial and ethnic student development theory (Cross 1991; Horse 2001; Kim 2001) shows that students who come to terms with their racial and/or ethnic identities, and who integrate into the larger society by coming to terms with their own heritage and the majority racial culture in which they live also, are more successful than peers who do not.

P19: The friends I chose to hang out with my first year were international students from Europe. Then I realized that I didn't fit there either, and gradually developed close relationships with racially similar peers [emersion stage]. My closest friends tend to be 1.5 Asian Americans still, but I have a wider range of friends from different races now.

**SECTION THREE**

Section three will provide the reader with the analysis of the six interviews conducted as part of this research. The interviews were conducted as a way to gain a deeper understanding of the GN/TCK experience. The interview narratives were analyzed using the same three themes; however, they revealed additional levels interpretation – including identity of self in relation to others, as well as relationships with faculty and staff on campus. In addition, with the interviews, I was able to explore institutional diversity congruence in more detail.

**INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS**

Given that the interviewees were also survey participants, the focus of the interviews was time (a) spent and experience on campus and (b) perceived diversity levels. One of the goals of the interviews was to establish how well the participant knew his or her campus and could be introspective about the overall experiences: how a student identifies self on campus, and how s/he fits on campus and was able to understand self in relation to others. The themes used to analyze the survey data were all present in the interviews; however, it became apparent while analyzing the narratives that additional themes emerged: self in relation to others – ‘fitting in’, friendship groups, relationships with faculty and staff; integration programs aimed at supporting global nomads. These other themes will be presented later in the chapter.

**INTERVIEWEES**

*Neil* is a white male, 19 years of age. He is a U.S. national, as are his parents. He has two siblings: one brother 14 years old, and one sister 17 years old. He has lived in seven different locations (Jamaica, Turkey, U.S. (2), Greece, Switzerland, Thailand) all due to his father’s occupation. The average length of stay in any location was 2.9 years. His interview was conducted via Skype® in his residence hall room. The interview lasted 29 minutes. He was very willing to talk and shared a lot about his frustrations of being a global nomad. “My friends typically view me – the American ones - that I am this sort of crazy international kid and sort of semi-helpless in the United States.”

*Cecile* is a twenty-year-old white female, who lived the majority of her formative years in Japan. She is a U.S. national, as are her parents. The family moved to Japan for her father’s job in microelectronics. She is the youngest of three; she has a brother, 23 and a sister, 22. While we conducted the interview over Skype®, she did not have an operational camera on her end, so I was unable to see her (she revealed her race during her interview). Her interview lasted 22 minutes. Her understanding of her identity as a global nomad was very interesting. She felt that she changed in an attempt to fit in at school, but then realized that she had a global experience that she needed to embrace. “I sort of changed who I am for them – but then it wasn’t until afterward, that I started hanging out with more TCKs, that I realized that even though I can change who I am on the outside, that I still have this global experience that most of my friends and most American’s wouldn’t necessarily understand or identify with.”

*Nola* is a 19-year-old white female. She is a U.S. national, as are her parents, who have lived in a total of seven different locations (U.S., U.A.E., Spain, Morocco, Switzerland, Costa Rica and the U.S.) with an average length of stay of 2.9 years. Her family moved due to her father’s occupation in investment banking. She has two siblings: a sister, 14 years old, and a brother, 25 years old. She knew a lot about the term global nomad and quoted from the Pollock-Van Reken (2009) book at one point during the interview to describe her situation. “One of the reactions they mention that people have to growing up among worlds is being a wall-flower; where you become kind of scared of saying something, because you are afraid that if you say something it will show that you are not one of the group. So I’m definitely one of those people.” She became visibly upset during our interview, at which point I chose to break protocol and talk about GNs in general in order to diffuse the moment. By the end of the interview she had composed herself and we ended on a positive note.

*Keith* is a 21-year-old white male who has lived in three different countries (U.S. [6 months, 2 years] Turkey [5 years, 9 years] and Germany [4 years, 6 months]), but six different city locations; the average length of stay in any location was 3.5 years. His family moved because of his father’s occupation with the State Department, but he also spoke of his family supporting their church’s mission while on assignment. He has two sisters, 14 and 19 years old. He was not particularly talkative during his interview, which lasted 21 minutes; he was in his residence hall room, and at one point during the interview his roommate responded to one of my questions. Toward the middle of the interview, the camera froze (both our faces were frozen in awkward positions) although the audio feed never faltered, the video feed did not return. Keith spoke about the fact that his parent’s talked to him and his siblings about being TCKs and that they prepped him to return to the U.S. “My parents didn’t really want me to go to a Turkish high school. They wanted me to be prepared for the American system.” He was quick to comment on his frustration of the lack of cultural knowledge on campus, and that he transferred schools because of an interaction with a professor. “[I was] really put off by the class because it was very narrow-minded and unaware of the rest of the world…. I transferred out of this school, and a large part of it was because I thought it was narrow and not globally minded.”

*Kayla* is a 21-year-old female, and a U.S. national, as are her parents. They moved to Japan when she was an infant. She lived in Singapore until she returned to the U.S. for high school; however, although she views her time in U.S. boarding school as her time ‘overseas’, she views Singapore as her home. My interview with Kayla was done via phone in her residence hall room. At one point the call dropped out, but the connection was re-established. She was very open and willing to talk about her experiences as a global nomad, and recognizes that those experiences are significant in terms of her identity; but she is the one interviewee that had wholeheartedly thrown herself into American college life: “there aren’t many international kids that are involved in Greek life[[29]](#footnote-29)….. I had wanted to try and fit in to sort of – I wanted to try that instead of immediately acclimating myself, I mean try that [before] being drawn to the international community.”

*Jerod* is a 21-year-old white male, who was the only participant that completed the original research design. I have made the assumption that his family is U.S. nationals; on the pre-interview survey he lists his nationality and that of his parent’s as Caucasian. He has three older sisters, 30, 27 and 24 years old. He has lived in two countries, Bangladesh and the U.S., but eight different city locations where the average length of stay was 2.9 years. He was very talkative and his interview lasted for 44 minutes. He was quick to talk about his background, but stated that he had lots of superficial relationships because he believes he is very different from his college friends: “that is characteristic of most of my relationships, unless it is important or there is something [that] has lasting meaning I don’t resonate very well with it.”

Table 5.4

**MOBILITY OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PARTICIPANT | GENDER | AGE | LOCATIONS LIVED IN | Av. LENGTH OF STAY |
| 13 (Neil) | M | 19 | 7 | 2.85 yrs |
| 81 (Cecile) | F | 20 | 2 | 10 yrs |
| 20 (Nola) | F | 19 | 7 | 2.85 yrs |
| 93 (Keith) | M | 21 | 6 | 3.5 yrs |
| 22 (Kayla) | F | 21 | 2 | 10.5 yrs |
| 56 (Jerod)\* | M | 21 | 8 | 2.9 yrs |

\*Subject who participated in original research design

**CULTURAL BACKGROUND**

As I have defined the term ‘salience’ to mean standing out or being prominent, I was interested in understanding how important each participant felt their cultural background was in relation to their sense of self as they entered college. Time was taken to establish each participant’s understanding of his or her cultural background; the interview format provided additional narrative that was not present in the survey.

**Neil:** I guess that the U.S. culture is my culture being an American. Before I went to college I had been overseas for 10 years so the brief little summer trips to the U.S. don’t really do very much culturally wise. I am almost more an embassy kid culture than anything, but even then we weren’t ever very involved with embassy activities.

**Cecile:** Two years before college I returned to [the] United States and I went to a primarily white small town high school, and I think I sort of lost that sense of what it meant to be a global nomad. I think finally entering college, being in a more diverse community with a diverse amount of people, I came to accept my past.

**Jerod:** I really didn’t think of culture when I was overseas. Overseas I felt like I fit in rather well because I was born there; I felt like I was a part of a group of boys, and I actually felt disconnected with America.

Each of the participants have an understanding of how s/he is different, how their individual global experiences make them unique in comparison to the majority society in which they now live. They are also able to see how their ‘cultural background’ impacts other pieces of their lives, as will be shown later in the analysis.

**DIVERSITY**

Each participant was asked demographic questions about institutional diversity in order to understand the overall diversity on their particular campus. Throughout the interviews, most participants stated that racial and cultural diversity was very important when choosing a college; yet when asked about the diversity make up of the institution, most participants state theirs not to be diverse. As noted in the analysis of the survey data, the value that the participants placed on their need and desire to be part of a diverse environment, was not realized on their particular HE campus.

**NOLA:** I feel that the university tends to just do events about diversity where everyone comes for that day and where for that day everyone is thinking about it, and they are thinking we are all so different. And then the next day everything is back to normal. I can tell the university wants to make an effort to educate students about diversity, but they don’t do a good job because all they do is bring in a speaker who talks one day and the message doesn’t last.

As part of the interview, I again asked each participant to tell me how important diversity was to him/her in choosing the HE institution to attend; then asked what s/he thought the racial makeup of his/her campus was. In each case, the participants responded to the question, ‘how important was diversity in choosing a HE institution?’ and all answered ‘very,’ showing that each has an understanding of the concept of diversity, although not necessarily an understanding of how that concept manifests itself on an U.S. HE campus. When probing further, the question was asked if they could describe the racial makeup of the institution (race was used in this instance because that is how diversity is defined in this U.S.). Comments included, “mostly white, mostly east coast”; “they are really big on diversity but we don’t have a lot of diversity on campus, it’s probably 70% Caucasian.” This shows that while the individuals understand and want a diverse environment, their understanding of how diversity is calculated and reported on campus is distinctly different.

**SELF IN RELATION TO OTHERS**

During the interviews, the participants relayed instances of themselves in relation to other people - how they felt they fit in on campus, and which groups they belonged to. What became apparent were the extremes to which the participants felt they ‘fit’ on campus, from completely embracing U.S. college life to being completely alone and on the outside. The questions ranged from cultural makeup of friends, recounting a particular college experience, to participating in social activities on campus. All of the participants relayed some concerns about how they did not understand the ‘typical American’ college experience. I was surprised that, evident in the narratives, there was the sense that the participants felt that activities on campus were only group activities. In order for an individual to attend, s/he needed someone else to attend with.

**Neil:** A lot of the activities are arranged by the traditional things that they do every year, like the ridiculous ever present frat parties, the silly horse races that are just excuses to go drinking in fields. Some of the games and sports that they do, intramurals or American football, I have never done before. I have no interest in [them]. In the general university community a lot of it is more traditional American activities, but there are international activities it is a matter of knowing that they are there.

**Keith:** I didn’t really connect with a lot of kids who had grown up just in the States because, I don’t know, we didn’t have much common ground. The longer I have been, here I have really found that you kind find common ground in a lot of things. When I first came to the States, even now, some things will take me off guard – I just moved into a house and I had to learn how to use a mailbox (chuckles) earlier this summer – yeah its just little things like that that take me off guard.

**Nola:** Greek Life dominates the campus. I joined a sorority to give it a shot, and I really didn’t like it. I actually left my sorority last week because I’d had enough. I was glad that I gave it a shot, because I would have been mad at myself if I hadn’t. I would have thought that I was missing something.

**Jerod:** That’s something that I have never been a part of at any institution - on occasion there will be a friend that will drag me to these sorts of things. … I tend to avoid those sorts of things because I don’t see the value in them, and because you need a buddy to go with you anyway.

I probed further, asking the participants to relay a particular experience on campus where they felt frustrated. Most relayed an experience where either they were interacting with another person or were a witness to an interaction. The participants’ interpretations of these interactions were baffling and frustrating. Jerod spoke of not resonating with others, not being able to connect on what he deemed as important things, and that others [his friends] only cared about superficial things. He went on to share that if he does not make a connection or resonate with an individual on what he sees as an important level, then he is not interested in pursuing the relationship.

**Cecile:** I think that especially with the friends that I have, and the more TCKs and international students that I have met I learned to grow into my self more, … express more of who I am. I have a really good friend who grew up in Israel. She would always say, ‘why don’t you talk about your Japanese experience? Why don’t you tell people about living there because it is such a big part of your life?’ She sort of became a catalyst for me to discuss more about Japanese things - decorating my room in Japanese designs. The people in college have definitely helped me in that respect.

When asked if they believed they had grown or changed since coming to college, several spoke of feeling out of place on campus. Coming to college was an additional culture shock, not just returning to the U.S. Most were finding it difficult to reconcile the multiple identities that had been assigned to them - who they are as they enter college, who they have been told they are, and who others assume they are and who they want to be in this new environment.

**Cecile:** When I was 12 we returned to America, and I never realized that I would experience such an enormous amount of culture shock because everyone said I was American … I looked American, my parents are American, I identified as an American. But when I returned I didn’t know what kinds of TV shows were on. I didn’t know what to wear. I didn’t know the lingo. No matter where I go there is going to be this cultural shock that I’m going to be kind of inferior. But I think that when I was 12 that was a very meaningful moment or few months for me. I realized that every new place, every new environment, is going to be a learning situation … I have to learn to accommodate to that.

**Neil:** I think I have become a lot more … confident and a little bit more independent. Living overseas, I was independent in ways that a lot of my fellow students who grew up in the U.S. are not.

**Kayla:** I have 7 American roommates who have spent their whole lives in the United States, and we joke around a lot. Just last week they asked me to explain what Hong Kong was, especially in relation to China. I am more comfortable now, especially with my major studying foreign affairs in college; and I am more able to answer people’s questions. I am more comfortable with identifying as Asian and having and knowing things about where I come from, I guess, because I study about it in school too.

**Keith:** (chuckle) In a weird way it has really expanded my mind … I had always assumed that I had a more, I don’t know, a more broad outlook on life, because I had been to a lot of places and experienced a lot. Then I came to college and met a lot of people here, and that really expanded my mind in the sense that it made me realize that there is a lot that can be known locally.

**RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY AND STAFF**

It became evident during analysis that a lot of the frustration shared by the interviewees was related to experiences in the classroom and the perceived lack of understanding of faculty. Several of the participants provided examples of how difficult it was to connect with faculty, suggesting that the professors were stereotypical in their descriptions of other cultures and lacked a general knowledge of their [the participants’] experiences.

**Keith:** We had a core class that all the students were required to take and it was basically a western civilization class. It focused a lot … on religions in the Christian tradition and all that. The other international students and I especially, were … put off by the class; it was very narrow minded and unaware of the rest of the world. The professor in charge of it in the very first class made a statement about (chuckle) – he gave an analogy that had a Turk in it, and he gave a view. I don’t even know how the story happened, because it wasn’t in character with any Turkish person that I have met. I was shocked and I went and talked to him. He kind of side-stepped the issue and said it wasn’t really the point he was trying to make. That really threw me off. Actually I transferred out of this school and a large part of it was because I thought it was narrow and not globally minded.

**Jerod:** There was one class I was having some difficulty with – it was just a cultural difference I suppose. I disagreed with the teacher – there was a book we were reading called ‘learning to write.’ The first chapter was ‘everybody is interesting, is original, and has something to say.’ And I thought that sounded pretty trite to me. Some of the things were ideas of equality, things like that. Things it seems that American culture takes for granted.

**Cecile:** So I wish that more administrators and professors recognized that – it’s not – because I’ve written about that for class about being a TCK and I think that they view it as one small event – like moving from one street to the next – but it’s more than that, it changes your whole view on life and I wish they recognized that.

In an effort to probe the relationships (or lack thereof) with professors and staff, I asked whether they believed that college administrators understood their [GN/TCK] specific needs. Most believed not, and provided specific instances where faculty really had no understanding of their experiences or what they were struggling with in the classroom. It appeared that the faculty was making assumptions about whom these particular students are.

**Cecile:** Not necessarily. When it comes to professors … if I write about my experience as a TCK they seem very intrigued but it is almost an unknown phenomena for most professors or administrators.

**Nola:** I read over the summer this book [called] ‘TCK: Growing up Among Worlds’ and one of the reactions they mention that people have to growing up among worlds is being a wall-flower … I’m definitely one of those people, and some professors of mine are not very understanding of that. It’s because I am not talkative, so I felt like they don’t really get me, I guess.

I further probed the responses by asking: ‘Do you think that your experience would be different or enhanced in any way if you thought that they understood you and that you weren’t unique to them?’

**Cecile:** I think definitely it would be more enhanced. I think if they understood more about my experience as a TCK, definitely.

**Nola:** I guess I feel … if I had the confidence to say what I was really thinking, we would get along a lot better. I would be able to form a better connection with my professors. But sometimes I don’t have that confidence with professors, because I am usually quiet about my thoughts.

**INTEGRATION PROGRAMS**

As was discussed in the literature review and at the beginning of this chapter, student services in U.S. HE work to educate, integrate, and help develop students on campus. This is accomplished by providing social programs, psychological assistance programs and general well-being programs. I was interested in understanding not only the degree to which the participants used the services, but also whether they found the services helpful or lacking. As an HE community, the work of Student Affairs professionals is defined by the services we provide. We place value on ‘positive’ ratings from students, and work to adjust and make changes to programs based on levels of participation and feedback, which defines funding of programs. As mentioned earlier, every demographic tick box on an admission form (gender, age, sexual orientation, race, religion) has a service associated with it on campus (Women’s Center, LGBT Resource Center, African American, Hispanic, Latino student services, religious houses and relevant clergy); however, there are no consistent services provided for students who identify as GN/TCK. Participants were asked the question “Have you used any of the following student services on your campus?” – Health Center, Financial Aid, Residence Life, Dean of Students, Counseling Center, Multicultural Student Affairs, Student Activities and Student Union - resources defined loosely under the umbrella of Student Affairs. The highest ranked services were Residence Life, the Health Center and participation in student activities.

The interviews allowed me to understand the experiences the participants had with both the services and the individuals providing them, positive or negative. Given the visible frustration with campus life and integration onto campus that has been revealed during analysis, I wanted to understand if the students could discern when a service was helpful and what suggestions they might have for improvement. For some, the services seemed to be an afterthought - services that ‘others’ used, or ones in which they stayed completely away unless they had to use them, like financial aid. I was surprised by the response from Nola, as it was the most forceful in terms of how a service provided for all students on campus could not possibly be helpful to her.

**Nola:** It [campus] has psychological services but they don’t advertise them. They don’t really mention whom they cater to specifically. There are the international groups or there is the international office – I keep wanting to go psychological services and talk about these things, but I found myself making appointments and bailing on them at the last minute. Part of it is fear that I am going to be … I don’t want to use the word brainwashed, cause that’s not the word … I guess influenced in a way I don’t want to be – by completely opening myself up to someone and asking their advice, and trying to get them to help me. I don’t know if they would just help me from the U.S. perspective and not really respect the other perspectives that are part of me and so I feel sometimes that I really need help.

Her response led me to think that my question regarding services for students of color or multicultural students (Asian, black, Hispanic) may reveal if students believed they fit in to this specific category. Most of the participants (interviewees) knew that their institution had resources for multicultural students; however, the participants either did not take part or perceived them not to be for them. I was surprised by the general nature of the responses, leading me to believe that perhaps the participants, in the manner in which I intended it, did not interpret my use of the term multicultural in the same way.

**Neil:** I am living in the international residence college, which really helps because a lot international students are there. They all kind of know what it is like to live in the States and not be based in the States. A lot of the kids who are not international students that live there are interested in international affairs, and that sort of thing; so they sort of are more sympathetic I would say.

**Cecile:** Yeah, there are a lot of organizations. There are Hispanic organizations; there are African American organizations. We really admire and respect cultural diversity. Every month we have African America month, or Hispanic month, or women’s month. I don’t think there are many for TCKs. There are definitely numerous resources for international students, but not necessarily for TCKs.

**Kayla:** There are a huge number of campus-wide multicultural activities on campus, and there is a lot of outreach for specific cultural groups. The Taiwanese American student association for example has these big bubble tea sales and stuff like that. There are specific groups from specific countries as opposed to just big multicultural fairs in general. There is a lot of opportunity to learn about other places and mingle with other people.

Involvement outside the classroom on U.S. HE campuses is a hallmark of the college experience. Student Affairs personnel provide a myriad of experiences beyond the classroom to augment the college experience. The National Survey of Student Engagement developed and administered by George Kuh (2004) believes that “What students do during college counts more in terms of desired outcomes than who they are or even where they go to college.” (2004 p.1) The participants in this study talked about being involved on campus and participating in student activities. For some there were lots of opportunities to get involved; for others, their interest level was not high, and so participation was limited.

**Cecile:** I feel like a lot of our campus does lots of general events concerning New York or the metropolitan area, which is great – but I wish we had much more of a global aspect watching documentaries on what is going on in Africa, or the environment. I think if the activities would sponsor more global awareness of what is going on in the Middle East, or the hunger in Africa, making more people care…

Cecile’s response above generated a follow-up question asked of all interviewees in an effort to understand what these participants felt they were missing. I asked the participants what an event or activity would look like if they themselves planned it for campus. Most of the answers revolved around programs of an academic nature - debates, diversity programs, film series and discussions, etc. For the majority of campuses across the U.S., these would not be considered traditional student activities.

**Neil:** I have no interest in the general university community. A lot of it is more traditional American activities, but there are international activities; it is a matter of knowing that they are there.

Traditional events would be more in-line with rock shows, formal dances, fraternity parties, comedians, and sports related events especially American football. There would be very few activities that could be construed as being attributed to academics in nature. The majority of mono cultural U.S. HE students are looking to participate in social activities that get they away from the classroom and academics. I asked the participants to describe an event that was social in nature that they would like to see on campus. For the purposes of the exercise there, were no limits to cost or imagination.

**Keith:** I think it would be really cool to start a foreign film and food night one month, and have it go where you get whoever wants to join to watch a foreign film, discuss it and then eat food from the country. I feel that would really broaden people’s perspectives.

**Neil:** When it comes to social activities, they are not really my forte. I would say there are not enough accessible debate opportunities. If you get involved in certain organizations, there are debate opportunities, but they are a little aristocratic in how they accept people since there is a long process with joining and then there are lots of issues with the United States with the ridiculous bi-partisan process politics (chuckles) and student issues with UVA … so that might be something I would consider.

Some participants appeared to struggle with campus life, with what it means to be a student in the U.S. Statement such as ‘the events seem very superficial to me,’ ‘I don’t see value in them,’ ‘the ridiculous ever present frat parties, the silly horse races that are just excuses to go drinking in fields,’ were common among participants. While a similar statement of struggling to fit in could be attributed to mono cultural students, for GNs/TCKs it seems to be exaggerated by lack of understanding about why certain activities take place on campus or are considered traditional.

**SUMMARY**

This chapter provided an analysis of the narratives from the survey and the interviews. Three themes were revealed as part of the survey and were carried into the interview for analysis (belonging, identity and introspection). Time was taken to show the experience of the global nomad on a U.S. college campus through the interview narratives and survey data. The analysis looked at the cultural domains as determined by Pollock and Van Reken (2009) and showed that the majority of the participants fell into the hidden immigrant domain.

When the survey responses and the interview narratives were compared, overall similarities in the data were revealed. The experience of being a GN/TCK does appear to influence the experience on campus; for some participants that was frustration, transferring institutions, not feeling as though they were heard in the classroom, and complete integration on campus and in student groups and activities. For the majority of the students, it appeared that while there was not a specific service, office or entity that was the cause of their discomfort on campus, it was rather the entire experience. As students, they understood they were different from the general population (mono cultural), and that they did not entirely fit into campus life. As has been noted earlier in this work each GN/TCK brings with him/her a unique experience to the HE campus; but it is this experience that gives each a unique lens with which to view HE life.

The interesting point raised from this analysis is that while the students acknowledge and value diversity as a concept, cultural diversity is of high importance in their world lens. Familial ties to an area or institution appear to supersede the institutional or community diversity need.

Chapter six will include more discussion of the findings, and recommendations for further research will be provided.

**Chapter 6**

**DISCUSSION**

The discussion begins with an overview of models and theories used to understand the experience of U.S. HE students and the three main themes discussed in the previous chapter. It then looks again at the concept of the hidden immigrant, and how ‘blending in’ has affected the development and experience of the participants. Using the theories discussed in the literature review (Student Development Theory, Social Identity Theory) and methodology (PolVan Cultural Identity Box, Schaetti’s proposed model of cultural identity development) chapters, I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of what the experience of current global nomads is on U.S. college campuses. The chapter will conclude with a proposed stage model of GN/TCK identity development on U.S. campuses and generalizations about current and future research.

**POSITIONALITY**

This research came about as a result of my own experiences as a global nomad, a global nomad on a U.S. college campus, as an administrator on several U.S. college campuses, and my experiences over the last ten years with college aged global nomads. My own experiences as a global nomad both clouded and complemented the research. As a result of high school experiences, I chose to learn to speak with an American accent and figure out how to use appropriate colloquialisms in order to fit in. By the time I arrived on my undergraduate HE campus, no one knew I was different (hidden immigrant). Yet for me, fitting in and becoming a hidden immigrant meant that I took on a new identity of sorts. I did not embrace my international background until much later in life, when I heard the term ‘third culture kid’ I was 32 years old.

My own status as a hidden immigrant seems to have transformed again. I would argue that a new term to describe me might be Trans National – at home and comfortable in my adopted country (Appadurai, 1990; Bhabha, 1994). Different from an individual who identifies as a GN/TCK, I believe people who are Trans National are as comfortable in their adopted as in their home country, because they have an understanding of cultural norms and references, appropriate social cues, and are able to move freely between the two. However, returning home (to England) to continue schooling has reignited my feelings of being a hidden immigrant. As ‘easy’ as it is to pass in the U.S. because I can speak with an American accent, I too can switch to an English accent - although I will acknowledge, it is a mix of Lancashire, Yorkshire and Kentish accents as influenced by my family. During my studies in Sheffield, there were times that I again missed cultural and social clues; however, one of the most rewarding moments in my EdD journey was when a member of my cohort said, “now you really sound English again!” I recognize that I am different from the participants in this study in that I never returned ‘home’ to live, and I have now lived longer in the U.S. than in my passport country.

My time as a college student seems very distant from my experiences as an administrator; however, the stories and experiences that the participants in this study shared reminded me of my own frustrations - loneliness and attempts to fit in. I would argue entering college is traumatic for anyone moving away from home for the first time. Struggling to find a place in a new ‘culture,’ make new friends, and understand new cultural traditions. My undergraduate college classified me as an international student based on my passport and visa status, but could not quite classify me in terms or residency. Correspondence from the college would arrive at my parent’s house in Glencoe, Illinois (25 miles north of Chicago) in airmail envelopes from Ohio. I was supposed to ‘know’ U.S. culture and have a basic understanding of U.S. college life because, to my fellow students on campus, I had an American accent and was from Chicago. I was not an international student from England. I vividly remember being contacted by the International Office during the first few weeks to participate in a photo shoot of all the new international students; I did not go. It was not until I met an older student who had been assigned as my ‘big sister’ (peer mentor) that I ventured into campus life, and I felt as though I had perhaps found my place.

There was a lot of personal significance to this research, both as a result of the type of educational experience that I had as well as ‘growing’ into my status as a TCK/ global nomad as an adult. I had to keep in mind my own concerns and issues from my undergraduate days, as well as resurfacing global nomad feelings, while writing, interviewing, interacting with participants and analyzing data. As Merrill and West (2009) discuss, the “values, attitudes and biography of the researcher” and socio-cultural knowledge clouds the research and influences the theories chosen to base the research on (p.58). Ellis (2004) advises the researcher to know who you are, and what your biases and values are, in an attempt to keep them from influencing your observations; however, she adds that if that is not possible, then show the readers why there is “something to gain by saturating your data with self.” (p.89)

It is important here to acknowledge that my experience as a GN/TCK and on an American HE campus has colored my research. I believe it is impossible to not have had an effect. My own frustrations - about fitting in, trying to determine who my friends were, what types of activities meant something to me and my experience both good and bad in the classroom - were all revisited each time a participant shared his or her own story. One issue that was ever-present was the notion that as an undergraduate student I did not have a strong social peer support system of others who were like me (GN/TCK). I had a peer support system of mono cultural students, most of who are still very close friends today. However, I believe it is lack of support (perceived or real) of other GN/TCKs or administrators that were well versed in the topic of third culture kids that influenced the type of administrator I have become. I want to make sure that staffs on HE campuses support global nomads as significantly as all other students.

As I conducted my analysis and drew upon the three themes and the participant’s experiences, it is possible that the statements I chose to highlight are a reflection of my own experiences that were articulated by the participants. For example, my frustration in the classroom, trying to understand (like Jerod) why students were consumed with a paper or are particular piece of school work; or how Greek Life made sense in the landscape of campus (at that time Greek Life to me, meant paying others to be your friend). It is this sense of self that has influenced the type of research conducted and the need for further research and development of a student development theory. Hopefully, as additional academic research is conducted on the college GN/TCK population, it will bring visibility and a voice to global nomads on U.S. college campuses.

**THEORETICAL MODELS**

Several theoretical models were discussed throughout this research. I shared several student development theories that helped show how the concept of student development permeates U.S. HE, and dictates how the support services and programs are developed and then executed (Perry, 1968; Kohlberg, 1969; King and Kitchner, 1994; Baxter-Magolda, 1992; Marcia, 1966; Josselson, 1987; Helms, 1993; Cross, 1991; Myers, 1980; Holland, 1992; Kolb, 1984; Astin, 1984; Schlossberg, 1989). Student Development is programmatically a way to encourage learning and development. What we as administrators do is to encourage learning through the development of theory and research on late adolescent and adult development.

I chose to examine student development theory from a global perspective as a philosophy of development used by U.S. HE administrators. As well augment the notion that it is the responsibility of student affairs practitioners to be ‘responsible’ for the development of the whole individual. I focused specifically on racial theories (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1993; Sue and Sue, 2003; Horse, 2001) and social identity theories (Jones and McEwen, 2000; Cross and Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Helms, 1993; Kim, 2001; Horse, 2001; D’Augelli, 1994). in an attempt to highlight the influence of societal issues on developmental practices and show how societal issues influenced models of development. Cross’ (1991) model on psychological nigrescence, to which all other racial and ethnic models take their cue, shows how the concepts of social identity and racial identity intermingle at the outset and how the individual’s social identity is organized around his/her sense of being an American first. Little significance is given to racial group identity. As the individual moves through the eight stages which include denial of self, anti-establishment hatred to emerge with acceptance of self as a multicultural person who internalizes the multiple dimensions of identity.

Bronfenbrenner (2005) and Eldering (1995), both studied the ecology of human development – the interaction between the individual and a particular environment at a particular time during development. As Bronfenbrenner states, human development is “the mutual accommodation throughout the life span between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environment in which it lives.” (p.107) Archer’s (2003) research continues in this mode, showing that social structure also influences the individual, and in turn, how she or he responds in certain situations. Bennett (1993) produced a model of inter-cultural sensitivity, which shows an individual needs to understand where ‘others’ fit in society. At the beginning of his stage model, the individual maintains a separation between self and others - falling into stereotypical traps and unable to understand difference of any kind. The individual moves through five stages from denial to adaptation at which point the individual attempts to understand the other. There is an attempt made to understand and be understood by others and maintain an identity that is marginal to any particular culture (culture in his theory is defined through race.) It could be argued that global nomads are already at a higher level of introspection and development, since from an early age they have developed communication skills that enable a cross-cultural dialogue and understanding.

While only presented as an underlying question in this research, the idea that globalization may be the next societal issue in the U.S. (and around the world) begs the question: should there be a developmental theory addressing the needs and identity development concerns of students who identify as GNs/TCKs? It would be remiss to not acknowledge the influence of the work by Rizvi, Lingard and Lavia (2006) on this research, that globalization changes an individual’s sense of identity and shifts cultural and historical markers on a local and global level. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) introduce the concept of social imagery as “a way of thinking shared in a society by ordinary people, the common understanding that makes everyday practices possible, giving them a sense of legitimacy.” (p.34)

Social imagery helps individuals find common ground place within the prevailing social order. One could argue it changes the values of the nation state, in this case the HE institution, which in turn changes the value of education (academic or co-curricular) presented and ultimately policy reform (development theory). Based on the number of media articles, websites, and consulting groups that have arisen in the last ten years, there has certainly been an increase in interest levels about college-aged GN/TCK students. However, a significant amount of the academic work being published is in reference to students in international schools or lower grade levels, and their experiences and the support services that are provided (Fail, Thompson, and Walker, 2004; Hayden, Rancic, and Thompson, 2010; Hayden, 2011)

Does the experience of the participants, and the potential changing demographics of the U.S. population, warrant a policy reform/development of a new student development theory to address the needs and concerns of these students? While this research addresses GN/TCKs who had lived overseas and were returning to the U.S. for college, there is another hidden population drawing attention: that of the hidden immigrant. The demographics of the U.S. HE campus appear to be changing; potential developmental issues for student services personnel to work with are no longer limited to students of color, different ethnicities, gender, sexual orientation, or religion. They now need to incorporate an additional social identity of the multi cultural (GN/TCK). The work conducted on hybrid identities, as discussed in chapter 3, begins to address some of these issues. It places GNs/TCKs as the ‘prototype’ citizens that are better equipped to communicate and mediate in the changing world (Iyall-Smith and Leavy 2008). The data generated in this study does show the frustration levels of participants as they attempt to communicate and fit in on campus - frustrations that manifest themselves in social situations or in the classroom. Living in more than one culture at a time (development of a hybrid identity) is part of the challenge for the U.S. HE campus and, perhaps, the design of a developmental theory to overcome the prominence of U.S. culture in an attempt to incorporate ‘other’.

**THEMES**

**Research question: “What is the Global Nomad Experience on U.S. College Campuses?”**

Work conducted by Pollock and Van Reken (2009), Cottrell (2007), McCaig (2002), Weigel (2010), Schaetti (2006), Useem et al. (1969) and others on global nomads directed my research. It gave voice to the themes, belonging, identity and introspection, as discussed throughout the data analysis. As with all the research available on these particular individuals, they “ are raised in a neither/nor world. It is neither fully the world of their parent’s culture (or cultures) nor fully the world of the other culture (or cultures) in which they were raised.” (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009 p.4)

**KEITH:** My parents have always made it a point to let my sisters and me know that we were third culture kids, so we were very aware of it. My parents didn’t really want me to go to a Turkish high school. They wanted me to be prepared for the American system; they sent me to Black Forest Academy, an American boarding school in Germany.

As individuals attempt to reconcile their experiences in multiple cultures and with family, they struggle to fit in, belong, and develop an identity that incorporates each aspect of their experience. They come to a place where they can acknowledge their status as a global nomad/TCK (Fail, Thompson, and Walker, 2004; Pollock and Van Reken, 2009).

P17: I befriended a mutual TCK…. She encouraged me to open up about my cultural upbringing, even though surrounding individuals perhaps wouldn’t understand it.

The three themes that emerged as part of the overall development of the college student and global nomad: the need to belong, identity development, and the ability to be introspective; are universal to the development of individuals at stage 5 and 6 in Erikson’s (1968) identity model. This research uncovered that the stages of Erikson’s model, portions of the racial, ethnic and social identity student development theories were relevant to the developmental process of these GN/TCKs. The difference in their journey was a lack of understanding of their passport national identity.

An argument can be made that all individuals look for and desire connections with others.  The ability to be introspective requires maturity on the part of the individual and the successful recognition of who they are in relation to others.  In student development theory, it is the point at which the individual can see him/herself in relation to others and integrate both of those identities into one identity; it is the act of growth. As shown in several excerpts, the participants reveal the frustration in their attempt to integrate into campus life and place blame on the school, the professors, and services provided. Some discussed transferring; others came to the resolution that perhaps every place will be like this and they should stay where they are. In the limited published research on global nomads available, from Pollock and Van Reken (2009), McCaig (2002), Cotrell (2006), Schaetti (2006), Weigel (2010), the ability to understand self in relation to others comes later in life, although some individuals appear to be cognizant of place earlier.

In a review of student development theory and the emergent trends of college students, the theme of belonging rises to the top. One can see this as these students attempt to join multiple social groups, or work to become members of a new community, members of social groups, residential living communities, fraternities or sororities. We also can see the theme of belonging in Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) cultural domain work – that as an immigrant, individuals strive to ‘fit in’ and not to stand out. They want to become what they perceive to be a ‘college student’, to become American, and to understand social cues. When analyzing the data, one is hard pressed not to find sentiments of needing to belong. Participants view themselves as members of communities in which they grew up, and expressed concerns about how they are struggling to fit into the new community.

Several of the participants spoke of not knowing how to answer the question, ‘where are you from?’ Confusion over where to buy food or how to use the post office singles them out and makes others aware of difference. The emphasis on the development of social and familial networks means that the constant moves and subsequent identification with ‘others’ can be difficult, making it hard to maintain friendships and relationships. More than one participant spoke about miscommunication between themselves and their parents - parents wanting one thing for a child and the child feeling as though they needed to negotiate to make changes.

We know from the literature review that all students experience some form of dissonance when they move away to college for the first time. Several participants talked about learning to adapt to American culture - becoming American, given enough time. Steph Yiu, editor of Denizen Magazine notes that what separates us [global nomads] from immigrants or casual travelers is that, instead of developing our identity and worldview in one locale and then leaving, we develop these characteristics while in constant transit. “Everyone thinks they know how you should pick your dream college, and you can find books, guides, magazines and websites for any academic interest you’ve got. But not many of them think about what it’s like to move to the United States by yourself, to a country that you call ‘home,’ and yet did not grow up in.” (Yiu, 2012 p.1)

The data collected did mirror current SDT that were discussed in terms of needing to belong, developing a social identity for a current living context. It was interesting to read through the various narratives of the participants and get a sense that they understood they were different - that they needed to embrace who they were to gain a better sense of self - but that they were struggling with how to ‘tell’ others about their experiences, for fear of the reactions of mono-cultural Americans. Several participants shared experiences of telling stories of their backgrounds where they had been called liars or were laughed at, which in turn made them shut down and become wary of when to reveal who they were.

What was not revealed were visible examples of depression or true loneliness; perhaps it was due to the questions asked or the lack of time spent getting to know each participant on an intimate basis. When asked about services used on campus, only one participant talked of her fear of psychological services and not wanting to be ‘brain washed.’ Several participants talked about the services through experiences with ‘friends.’ While commentary such as this does not necessarily prompt the suggestion of a new theory, it does suggest that the GN/TCK experience on campus is unique and that administrators do need to be aware of the struggles that these students face.

**GENERALIZATIONS**

What has been implied throughout this study is the sense of difference. Difference appears to be in the lack of understanding (both by the host culture and that of the GN/TCK) of social cues - that the participant’s current social identity is at odds with campus social norms, i.e. drinking, Greek life (sororities and fraternities), student activities and football Saturdays. Examining all the research and studies on global nomads would be impossible, as a significant amount of work is unpublished; however, from Useem et al. (1969), Pollock and Van Reken (2009), Cottrell (2007), McCaig (2002) and others, the sense that these individuals feel different than others is consistent. Cottrell’s (2007) research found that 90 percent reported feeling “out of sync” with their U.S. peers, even into their 20s and 30s. (p.1) Noted at the beginning of this study was the question of how can the very different experiences of these students be studied for similarities. But it is that very issue - what makes them different (in terms of assimilation to the host culture) - that makes them similar. Yiu (2012) talks about leaving the “cushy expat bubble, mov[ing] to a foreign country that wasn’t supposed to be foreign, and figure[ing] out for the very first time that we were different.” (p.1)

There appears to be an understanding and awareness of difference, that most of the students seek out others whom they assume are different. It seems irrelevant whether that difference is international friends, living arrangements that take into account other students who have lived overseas, participating in student groups that address diverse world topics, or wishing that more were done on campus. Yiu (2012) talks about adjusting to cultural differences as an ‘invisible immigrant’ and just wanting to know that she was not alone - that everything would be okay. Several of the participants in the study talked about loneliness, negotiating circumstances that eventually allowed them to ‘showcase’ the other side of themselves. This included experiences of needing counseling services and fear that yet another person would not understand their issues, or attempt to define them through a North American lens. What I hope this study has shown is that that frustration manifests itself in many ways – students transferring to other schools, the struggle to make friends, the frustration with classmates and professors, and a desire to want to fit in. The feelings/experiences of participants in this study are similar, if not identical, to the existing research, anecdotal stories and articles. This leads me to the conclusion that the experiences are similar enough that a new student development theory may be of value.

**PICTORIAL MODEL OF GLOBAL NOMAD DEVELOPMENT**

As discussed in chapter four, the PolVan Cultural Model suggests that individuals ‘catch’ their cultural sense from the environment in which they live. For mono-cultural individuals the repetitive cycle of movement between home, school and community allows the individual to develop a sense of self in relation to others. However, in the case of the GN/TCK is has been noted that when the host [country] is constantly changing, there is not an opportunity for the GN/TCK to develop their sense of self in relation to a stable cultural context.

The U.S. HE culture is unique. Typically, students study for four to six years for a bachelors degree in preparation for a graduate degree, in order to participate fully in a chosen career; i.e., one must have a bachelors degree before going to law school to attain a law degree in order to practice law. If a student has chosen a two-year college or certificate program, s/he understands that in order to have a professional career, a degree of some kind is required. For the majority of students, the model is living on-campus in residential programs for the first year, and then moving off-campus (or into Greek living units) for the last three years. Intercollegiate sports is a multi-billion dollar industry in the U.S., no matter the division the school plays in; campus life stops on Saturdays to cheer on the home team. In Division 1 (the premiere athletic division) the athletes receive scholarships in order to attract them to campus to play, some of whom will go on to play professionally. The institution receives a percentage of TV revenue each time a game is televised; there are specialized TV networks for the larger divisions.

Drinking is a part of the U.S. HE culture. Although the drinking age is 21 years in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, this does not stop most underage students. The annual cost to institutions each year, in terms of prevention programs, counseling, and student deaths or near deaths is staggering.[[30]](#footnote-30) Students eat together (at least for the first year) in large dining halls on standardized meal plans. Cafeterias serve ‘American’ food, and an ethnic food night might include tacos or sweet and sour chicken - certainly not what the average GN/TCK would refer to as ethnic food. Campus administrators are largely responsible for providing the social life on campus; in fact, most institutions have departments dedicated to student social life that are 20+ individuals deep. For some campuses, the money spent on student social life is considerable; as an example, my former institution collects on average $1.5 million a year in student fees for student events.

Understanding the nuances of college life in the U.S. appears, at least from this study, to be paramount to how comfortable each of these participants felt on their campus. This is again, a culture that others assume they know. In reviewing the other SDT models that are currently used on campuses to provide services and programs, GNs/TCKs seem to pass through similar stages of recognizing (a) self in relation to others, (b) self in relation to the majority culture, and then (c) an integration of both selves in order to develop a single identity. Where I see the difference between the development stages of the current models and the developmental struggles of the GN/TCK is an understanding of the majority culture, the individual’s national identity. This study has shown the struggle each participant faces/faced arriving on campus and attempting to assimilate into campus life. The major struggles were not schoolwork, nor friends, but rather navigating cultural cues and social situations in a place that for all intents and purposes is ‘home.’

If we as student services personnel are obligate by our code of conduct to provide a holistic program of development for students on campus, then it is surely our responsibility to understand all of our students. Taking the time to understand this particular student who, while we do not officially count them, appear to be growing in numbers on our campuses, and a student that is attracting more research attention. Having a better understanding of these students and their specific developmental process and needs, will be helpful in designing better orientation programs, developing psychological support programs, and designing social programs that address their unique needs.

Given what has already been discussed about identity development, when returning to their passport country, the GN/TCK steps into an unknown environment; one where ‘catching’ the culture is in juxtaposition with the idea that the individual should have already caught the culture; it is here where the concept of ‘sounding alike’ is evident. Because the individual sounds like the majority culture there is confusion as to self-identity versus assumed public identity. The Model of Global Nomad Identity Development is presented as a stage model. Developed to provide a pictorial representation of the stages the GN/TCK progresses through as they resolve and come to terms with integrating their GN identity with their passport identity. As with all stage models the individual progresses through the model as s/he resolves a crisis and is able to move on to the next stage. Unlike traditional stage models, in this particular model (figure 6.1), there are multiple stages happening at the same or in similar time frames, problematizing successive movement. Progression or regression can occur when resolution of crises is successful or unsuccessful.

In reviewing the narratives of the participants there are examples of three different levels of progression through the model. Jerod and Nora, both struggled with opening up and defining self. Both individuals revealed themselves to others and felt that they were judged for who they were and regressed into themselves (became loaners). Both have regressed away from the integration of a national identity and are working towards that goal again. If an individual has unresolved crises and regresses it could lead to the depression, guilt and loneliness that Pollock and Van Reken (2009) and Lin (2011) acknowledge in their research. Erikson’s (1968) theory speaks to regression and states that resolution only occurs when individuals move forward.

In the beginning stages of resolving her national identity is Cecile. Who with help from a fellow TCK acknowledges that she is beginning to embrace her ‘Japanese’ side and express what the experience meant to her by decorating her room with personal artifacts and sharing her personal narrative. Within the model she has progressed to understanding of her national identity in relation to her global identity. In comparison is the example of Kayla who while acknowledging that she chose her institution because of familial ties, has fully embraced her HE experience – joined a sorority – a very ‘typical’ American college experience. She has progressed to a complete immersion in her community seemingly resolving any issues of national identity and has a new holistic sense of self defined.

I have acknowledged earlier in this work that all students in this particular age group, especially those entering college go through similar stages of defining one’s identity, figuring out where they belong and developing the ability to be introspective. One can see this through the other U.S. SDT models that have been discussed. Those models (racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation etc.) use the ‘other’ identity to explain how students develop a holistic self-identity. The resolution of their ‘other identity’ with the majority culture identity is admittedly an assigned identity by the majority society. For the GN/TCK the ‘other’ identity is their passport or national identity in relation to the larger society. It is for this reason that an additional model is needed to address where the GN/TCK attempts to resolve an ‘awareness of place.’ Who they are in relation to the majority culture as defined through their individual experiences. How they go about ‘catching’ a culture that others already assume is theirs.

I would contend (hope) that a model such as this would be used like all other SDT models in graduate programs, as a teaching tool. This model acknowledges the significance of the experience of the GN/TCK, placing this ‘new’ group of individuals into the forefront of student affairs professionals. As noted earlier, this group of students is unknown, not counted and not a part of current student services programs, or professional development programs. The PolVan Reken (1996) Cultural Domain Model is not taught in student affairs graduate programs and is not a widely known model of development. The PolVan model confines the GN/TCK to one of four domains, not allowing for the movement or growth of the individual.

Preparing the next generation of professionals about the changing climate on campuses and the type of student that makes up the student body is vital to the success of these students. Professionals in the field should use this model as a guide as they design programs and services for all students, especially orientation programs designed to acclimate students to campus culture and traditions. Limitations of the newly proposed model include assumptions that each GN/TCK will pass through stages on their way to developing a holistic identity (incorporating all aspects of self); that each individual does in fact struggle with the same three themes highlighted in the model; and that once national identity is resolved, each individual feels more integrated as a member of the majority culture and is able to develop and integrate a new holistic identity as a sense of self. These limitations would benefit from further research.

The model came about in my attempt to understand how the many varied experiences from each of the participants created a sense of similarity in their experiences on campus. The participants shared stories of identifying with one particular culture and then feeling frustrated when challenged by others in the U.S. as to their true identity. Several participants said that their passport country is not necessarily a national identity with which they identify, however, understanding who they were in terms of their passport (national identity) seemed to be a major underlying theme. While the participants in this study are Americans by passport and birth, it is a country that they struggle to understand; what became apparent was a disconnect between what they thought they knew the symbols and discourse of U.S. society and HE to be and what the actual cultural norms were.

Figure 6.1

Pictorial Model of Global Nomad Identity Development

New holistic sense of self defined

Belonging

Choose peer groups and social activities with new identity

Introspection

Able to incorporate past self with new self

Identity Development

Define self in terms of new identity understanding

Understanding of National Identity

Symbols and discourse

Belonging

Peer groups

Social groups

Interactions with others

Peers and Authority figures

Identity Development

Gaining a sense of self

Introspection

Awareness of place

In order to assimilate to campus, the GN/TCKs in this study made attempts to connect with others in various ways. Several found those attempts at connecting to be both good and bad - whether it was dealing with friends or the lack of friends, or trying to make sense of the campus cultural and social norms. For this particular group of participants there were two levels of interactions with others: fellow students and authority figures (professors). Gee (1992) provides us with the concept of the social mind – that discourse is “owned and operated by a socio-culturally defined group of people.” (p.107) As members of a particular social group, we maintain that membership by understanding and using the appropriate narrative. He argues that “school discourse assumes cultural norms,” the dominant norm of society, which does not allow for difference. Relatively few American HE students study abroad each year (270,604 between 2009-2011) according to iie.org[[31]](#footnote-31), where as almost triple that number of international students attended American HE institutions. We know from the literature review as well as the philosophy of student development theory that belonging, identity development and finding place are issues for all new students as they arrive on campus. This happens first as a pivotal point in the developmental process but also as social markers on campus.

Renn and Arnold (2003) and their work on peer influence say, “campus peer culture encompasses the forces and processes that shape individual and collective life on campus in terms of identity, group membership, acceptable discourse and desirable behavior.” (p.262) Current SDT attempts to understand identity development. Group membership and behavior is used by student affairs practitioners to develop programs, in order to assist students in the transition to college, as well as to understand how the development of the young adult presents itself in the programs and services provided on campus. As noted in Chapter 2 and used as reference points throughout this work, SDT shows how students attempt to ‘try’ on a new voice, a new way of interacting with others, in order to establish their own identity.

The GN/TCK experience does not appear to fit the current developmental models, which in turn suggests that their development needs would not be addressed by programs and services provided on campus. As discussed, most of the participants present as hidden immigrants, ‘passing’ in order to fit in and blend; but when interviewed, it became very obvious that they were struggling to find ways to fit in without losing a sense of self. They chose activities with small gatherings of people, shying away from large traditional U.S. HE events (football games, large dances, Greek life), in order to find friendships and like-minded others. When asked to design a social program for campus, the responses were very similar – small gatherings of people that encouraged interactions, discussion, and discussions of larger world events, not the myopic events they perceived traditional campus activities to be.

Several of the participants talked about how they worked to either show or hide their sense of self. For some this appeared to be a game; they were looking for reactions from others. Some were frustrated when others revealed their identities before they were able to, and others needed a support system to encourage them to reveal and embrace ‘the other side’ of themselves. When reading work by Schaetti (2006) and Bennett (1993), once a GN/TCK begins to embrace all sides of self they are moving to a sense of a new identity. In the proposed model, I am suggesting that this happens when they embrace and understand their national (U.S.) identity. Iyall-Smith and Leavy’s (2008) concept of a hybrid identity shows that “the local and the global interact to create a new identity that is distinct in each context…” (p.3)

Schaetti’s (2006) work with adult global nomads/ adult TCKs shows that as the individual develops into adulthood, s/he begins to have a better understanding of self, can be introspective about his/her experiences as children and young adults; and come to some form of closure about his/her experiences overseas. Through my work, I could identify participants who were able to look beyond their immediate environment, understand how their past experiences and present experiences worked together, and would benefit them in the future. It is this level of introspection that I believe is where the individual has reached a resolution about the past and is able to be productive in the future.

The proposed model gives a very rough picture of the stages of development that a GN/TCK goes through in his/her attempt to find a place on a U.S. HE campus. I believe it first begins with an understanding of self. The interactions students have on campus, both positive and negative, are important in their overall development – both with peers, and authority figures (professors and administrators). These interactions come at a time when issues of belonging, fitting in and understanding self converge; it is here that their identity development begins. It is at this point that they begin to embrace and understand their national identity, or what it means to be an American in America. As these students continue to experience college life and American society, I believe that they begin a time of introspection that allows them to define the self, and perhaps beyond the self, on the way to a definition of trans-national.

**SUMMARY**

This research journey validated my own experiences as an undergraduate student on a U.S. HE campus and gave me a greater appreciation of the experiences of these 31 participants. The experience challenged me in several ways. As a researcher, it helped me to understand my own experience in relation to others (there was only one other person on my undergraduate campus that I ‘found’ who had a similar experience as mine – and we did not meet until our last year on campus). As an individual, ‘GN’ helps define whom I want to become as an administrator in order to provide good services for these students. For me, becoming a better administrator means to not get caught in the ‘traditional’ events and activities trap - to attempt to push the boundaries of what is perceived as expected. In my new role on a non-traditional campus that caters to commuter students, where my responsibilities include international students, I am hopeful that it will reinforce how to look beyond the traditional and to try the unexpected. In reading others’ work and the many and varied stories of individuals who identify as global nomads, I am convinced that these students need to be studied. Their experiences of being different, their attempts to fit in and define themselves in a society in which they are not quite sure if they fit, are valid research parameters. The participants in this study, even though each of their backgrounds is vastly different from the next, each struggle to find ways to belong, to understand whom they are and are beginning a journey of introspection to integrate all of their experiences, as they become adults.

**Chapter 7**

**CONCLUSION**

The research began as an attempt to answer questions that I had regarding my own experiences and situations that I found myself in after moving to the U.S. as a teenager. My own experiences in college-involved feeling lost, misunderstood and not part of the crowd. I, like some of the participants in this study, took time to find my place and find a group of friends with whom I felt comfortable. This resulted in hiding a portion of myself, finding it much easier to blend in than stick out. It was not until my thirties when I heard the term ‘third-culture kid’ for the first time was I overwhelmed by the feeling that someone finally understood who I was. I then realized was that I had spent too many years ignoring a very important part of myself that defined my identity.

The study accomplished what I set out to accomplish, which was to answer the research question: Is the life history of the global nomad/third culture kid unique enough to warrant an additional student development ‘theory’ or become a recognized category within current student development theory? As a researcher I wanted to ascertain what made these students unique, was that uniqueness enough to warrant a new model of development, and how did their individual experiences add to our existing research understanding.

As administrators on U.S. HE campuses, we are guided by a philosophy of care to provide support to all students in their academic, social and personal lives. Student development theory provides us with a set of tools in order to design programs and support services that address the needs and development of all students. The use of SDT is becoming more important in defining learning outcomes (a set of skills each student should walk away from college with – whether that be in their academic, social or personal lives) for an ever-increasingly globally diverse student body. While teaching a masters level HE class to graduate student affairs students, I started to realize that my experience as a GN/TCK was not fully addressed in SDT and, therefore, the developmental experiences of similar students was not being addressed either. As an individual responsible for the welfare and development of students on campus, the programs I was designing and services I was providing did not address the needs of this particular group of students.

This chapter will provide the reader with an overall understanding of the research and what this particular study has accomplished.

**CURRENT RESEARCH**

I believed that I knew the experiences of global nomads were different; they did not fall along the same trajectory of other U.S. HE students. Based on the very limited data gathered as part of this study, one can see that the experiences, while widely different, especially the diverse backgrounds of the participants, were very similar in nature. The participants struggled to find a place, to determine when to reveal to others their background and were frustrated with their interactions with faculty and staff on campus. While one could not definitively say that a GN/TCK experience is any more or less traumatic than any new student on an HE campus, the struggle does appear to have a longer adjustment period and involve culturally based issues such as posting letters, food choices or social event choices.

I found that these GN/TCKs do have a unique life history that enables them to look at their environment differently and generates an experience that is not the same as mono cultural students experiencing the same environment. The differences were enough, in light of the evidence the research generated, to warrant a new model that takes into account how they interact with the host [country, institution etc.] and how the individual works to create a new holistic identity.

Analyzing the narratives using the three themes was important in this study for several reasons. It was acknowledged and shown in the literature review, that all students entering U.S. HE institutions experience similar identity development processes. The SDT models highlighted expressed those as belonging, identity development and the ability to be introspective. The narratives of all the participants showed that they too were experiencing similar frustrations and concerns that the current SDT models state mono cultural students face. What became apparent while reviewing social identity models (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation etc.) was the concept of the ‘other identity’. When this was over laid with Pollock Van Reken (2009) concept of ‘catching’ culture, it was obvious at least to this researcher that the GN/TCK also had an ‘other identity’ and the resolution of this was key to the identity development of the individual.

The three themes - belonging, identity, and introspection - revealed opportunities that could be used by administrators to provide services and programs. Those could include orientation programs, providing faculty with information regarding these students in attempts to eliminate academic concerns, or social programs that provide other opportunities for gathering and social group belonging. The secondary questions also provided interesting data, which proved to be some of the more robust data sets. The questions gave additional insight into the experiences of each of the participants. They also gave the participants an opportunity to describe and relive some experiences in ways that provided me with a better understanding of their experiences on campus and their frustrations with U.S. HE.

Most responses from students to the question, ‘*As you were growing up, when and how did you first become aware of ‘difference’, particularly ethnic and cultural differences?,’* showed theyrecognized difference when they were young; although for most, while living overseas, they did not feel out of place. Ironically, the first time most reported being out of place was once they returned to their passport country (the U.S.) - a place that is technically home. Some talked about how difficult it was to understand how they could be so different - transferring from institution to institution, making deals with their parents so that they did not have to stay at a particular institution for the entire four years, or when they determined it was safe to share their background with others. Several participants reported that they still wait for others to encourage them. There were many times when listening to and reading the narratives of the participants, that I relived specific instances from my own experiences.

Responses from participants to ‘*What exposure to or experiences did you have with people that were different from you in a educational setting?,’* were at times overwhelming. The responses generated some strong emotions in the participants (and also in me as a researcher and as a GN/TCK). Each seemed to have a multitude of specific instances on campus. These experiences seemed to revolve around them being singled out (sometimes in a negative manner) for being different. Some were stories of their own interactions with others or witnessing others’ interactions and their shock about the responses of others. Phrases used include words such as ‘brain-washed,’ or I didn’t know this was what I was portraying.’ It did not seem to matter whether the experience was with a person in authority (a professor, or administrator), a fellow student, perceived friend, or even with a service or potential service on campus to assist them (orientation, financial aid or counseling services). It was in reading these particular responses that the generation of the developmental model began to form, and a realization began about the lack of specialized services provided to these students.

‘*Were interactions on campus influenced by your life histories and experiences?*’ All of the experiences the participants were involved in could be traced back to their upbringing and time spent overseas. Most were able to understand and relate how childhood experiences were now influencing their interactions with others. For some, the ability to recognize the opportunities and limitations that their experiences gave them was encouraging in terms of development. Some participants could see beyond the four years of college and recognized that this was just another set of experiences along their particular journey; they were soaking up every aspect of college life. For others, they appeared to be stuck trying to understand why this experience was as difficult (if not more so) for them. In the analysis, it appeared that those stuck were trying to resolve ‘coming home’ and why it was so difficult, and were attempting to resolve where they fit in relation to everyone else on campus. While not a set of data generated for this particular study, several participants shared the communities in which they had been living were diverse and several noted that they had attended international schools. For the most part, if a participant had attended an international school, some form of adjustment services would have been provided to them. It must have been a shock to arrive on a U.S. HE campus to discover little to no services available to help them.

**LIMITATIONS OF METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

The methodology and methods chosen (qualitative and survey interviews) worked well for this particular kind of study. Both gave me the opportunity to interact with participants and hear their experiences in their own words. The snowball effect did capture participants; however, finding a wider pool of GN/TCKs would have perhaps yielded a more robust data set. Time and funding constraints limited me to capturing participants via the Internet and utilizing personal connections at HE institutions. Using a survey did capture a significant amount of data and also provided a useful tool in overall theme analysis. A more robust pretest would have allowed the survey to capture additional data that could have proved valuable. In the end, data generated about family structure and siblings was negligible in the analysis; and additional questions regarding services, and or experiences on campus might have proved to be more useful.

The original study design was ambitious and would perhaps be better suited to a longitudinal study, or one located on one or two HE campuses, that would allow the researcher to develop a longer-term relationship with the participants. Abandoning the first design early on in the research did allow me to capture a group of individuals that may not have been revealed to me in my first attempt. My decision to listen to the constructive criticism provided by other researchers, time constraints, and my own researcher decisions all influenced the design of the interview questions. There were several opportunities in the interviews, for follow up questions and probing that were missed noted while listening and transcribing; however, these missed opportunities are all part of qualitative research and review. Ultimately, the interviews did reveal the overall meaning of what I wanted to capture. In the end, the themes (belonging, identity and introspection) revealed through the literature review and subsequent conversations with former colleagues led to an interesting point from which to start analysis.

Technology helped and hindered with data collection. The internet and connections made via research networks helped find students for this particular study; but being reliant on the technology to find data did not force me to make connections with other students or colleagues to improve or increase the pool of participants. At this stage, I realize I was very complacent about the number of participants my search generated; I could have used additional contacts to find study participants. I did not offer any compensation to the participants (n=31), and am grateful for their participation. The inclusion of compensation may have increased the number of participants, but most certainly would have changed the data collected. The use of Skype® and Survey Monkey®  is widely accepted as appropriate research tools, but I was unable to find any research on either tool as to their appropriate uses or influences in the gathering of data and subsequent analyses. Noted by my colleagues Desler and Meyers-Pickard, research does need to be completed on both tools in terms of influences on data sets.

For my purposes, both pieces of technology helped complete the research and allowed me to capture narratives and data from students who live thousands of miles from my home base. As with all technology, there are difficulties; there was an instance of Skype® freezing during one interview, one participant who did not have access Skype®, and another that had no video capabilities. Whether these three instances changed the data gathered in any way was not a part of this research, but it could be an interesting research study in the future. Survey Monkey® was an accessible tool to design and deliver the survey instrument to multiple people - both from the perspective of a researcher designing an instrument and from a participant navigating said instrument. It is a tool readily used to capture student feedback on many U.S. HE campuses, so it was a familiar piece of technology for the participants. There would have been little-to-no learning curve for them in order to complete the survey. I chose not to pay for additional services with the tool, as I deemed them unnecessary to this particular work; I do not believe that this hindered my methods of analysis.

The analysis of the data stopped and started several times over, as I tried to come to terms with what I was looking for as well as the right method to use. Determining the appropriate way to analyze the narratives for content and themes, I initially looked to Word Clouds. However, after placing several pieces of narrative through the WordSift® software, what became apparent was word usage was outweighing theme development in cloud generation. After reviewing the literature for a second time, themes began to emerge in SDT, the identity research and Global Nomad research. I quickly realized that reading and analyzing the narratives for the themes was going to be the most productive and provide the most robust data set. Using colleagues to check the themes also proved to be valuable, as they verified theme development.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Implications from a study like this are limitless. Adding responsibility of care for a particular group of individuals would need to be picked up either by a trained professional or division. HE campuses would need to understand the financial and programmatic implications of providing additional services and support. The added layer of GN/TCK student development and experience would add to the programs and services already provided by student affairs professionals: women’s development, general development of college aged students, Hispanic and Latino students, black students, gay students, adult returning students, disabled students etcetera. Graduate programs (Masters and Doctoral) in higher education and college student personnel would need to discuss the experiences of GN/TCK students, and would need to provide student affairs practitioners with the skills knowledge in order to provide appropriate assistance.

In this limited study, the student’s experiences with student services as a whole seem to have been positive; there were a few frustrations given. This led me to conclude that the additional services needed would not require a great deal of new training or specialized program development, but rather a delivery of new knowledge to help in the lack of understanding on advisors parts. This new knowledge would include how the lack of understanding with financial aid, fear of counseling services, lack of experiences for students who did not want to partake in traditional activities affects these particular students, all of which are not hard to solve, but require the education of administrators. Because it is hard to grasp the true number of these students on campus, and because there is only anecdotal evidence of students who identify as global nomad who are struggling psychologically on campus, it would behoove HE institutions to address these concerns.

**FURTHER RESEARCH**

Further academic research of global nomads/third culture kids is necessary - not only to fulfill our responsibilities as Student Affairs personnel, but also to address the global changes that are now manifesting on HE campuses. As more individuals enroll on campus that have had experiences and opportunities overseas, an understanding of what this means for the identity and overall development of this age group will become more important. In order to get to this better understanding, layers of research need to be addressed for this group. A nationwide study of enrolled students who have lived overseas during their formative years needs to be conducted. It should include an agreed-upon definition of who those students are. For example, is it enough to only look at U.S. passport holders? Should international students who have lived in multiple countries be included or are those students another type of study? How do we find these students with no systematic counting process in place? A four-year comparison study of their development on campus against that of mono-cultural students could reveal interesting developmental data that addresses social, identity, psychological issues. A four-year study following a group of GNs would also yield data that would help address developmental needs and support services needed for success and retention. The research that is being conducted in international schools could be expanded onto college campuses. It could be used to show how support systems improve retention and success, and be used to develop and mirror proven successful support services.

In addition to the research on the GN/TCK individual, academic research needs to challenge the definition of ‘multicultural’ in the U.S. to include the experiences of the global nomad. In my own work (Wood 2011) I ask the question: ‘is it time for the redefinition of the term?’ I argue ethnicity - race and social identity (LGBT, gender) are ways of perceiving and interpreting the social world, not necessarily a perspective on the world. Ethnicity, race and social identity grant an individual a group identity that, as noted earlier in this study, provides some power and place in U.S. society at the macro level; and, at the micro level, it can determine education, value in society, research funding dollars.

**WHAT IS NEXT**

The value of this particular research is that it provides additional data on a little studied population (HE GNs/TCKs) and gives credence to the notion that this is a group of individuals that is worth studying. Personally, as a student affairs administrator, it provided answers to some questions about the experiences these particular students are having on campus. This gives me the opportunity to provide services and support, whether passive or active, in order to meet the level of care for students imposed on me by my professional standards of conduct. Unfortunately, what this study only revealed is that we have some additional data on how these students ‘feel’ about the services or lack thereof on campus. What needs to be addressed in a follow-up study is if/how the GN/TCK experience on-campus would change if appropriate services were provided.

This thesis gave a voice to these students - allowing them to share, if only for a brief period, what it means to them to be a GN/TCK on a U.S. HE campus. The narratives added to the limited existing research on these students and corroborated the work by the Useem et al. (1969), Pollock and Van Reken (2009), McCaig (2002) and others. The work provided a brief snapshot of the climate on campus (and perhaps U.S. society in general) that it is not a welcoming one for the majority of these students; in fact, it is quite alienating. I am hopeful that the creation of the Global Nomad Identity Development Model will contribute to the existing work generated about GN/TCKs and will provide a starting point for other researchers and student affairs professionals in their development of services and programs. The model augments the PolVan Cultural Domain model, but takes it a step further suggesting that the resolution of national identity plays an important role in the identity development and overall success of the GN/TCK; as well as addressing concerns of self-fulfilling prophecy, and or the assumption that all GNs/TCKs look alike and fit into one of the four boxes.

Higher Education graduate programs in both administration and college student personnel need to be aware of the changing demographics of students, and need to think beyond race and ethnicity in regards to diversity on American HE campuses. This research provides an argument that diversity is ever changing and needs to be addressed if student affairs personnel are to provide a holistic experience for all students that attend American HE institutions. The significance of the ‘other identity’ concept, I believe is a significant contribution to the limited research on these individuals. Administrators need to be aware that if globalization continues at this pace, more of our student population will be made up of these students. It reinforces the point that this group is a hidden population, and that they are facing struggles alone, without full support services. In a small way, it highlighted issues of retention, counseling and psychological issues, orientation and student services, and what we as student affairs administrators are failing to provide.

This age group of students is able to recognize difference and understand the significance of their life experiences in ways that perhaps mono cultural individuals are not able to. These students are able to be introspective about what the GN/TCK experience means - how it has influenced their particular situation at this stage of their lives, as well as potentially what it means as they grow older and incorporate new experiences. Students who identify as GN/TCK are struggling on our campuses in various ways. The services currently provided to students do not address their particular and unique needs; therefore, we need to look at the current services provided on campus and what services should be developed.

In conducting this research, in fact participating in the process of an EdD, I have found my voice - both as a GN/TCK and as a student affairs administrator within U.S. HE. It is from this point that I look forward to returning to a professional position and working to recognize and provide services to this hidden population of students.

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**Appendix 1**

**My Story**

Literally as the decade of the 1970s opened I arrived in this world to two loving parents in a midsized industrial town in the north west of England whose market charter dates back to the 14th century. Two and a half years later my brother arrived to the same parents and from all accounts I wasn’t particularly interested that he had arrived only that my mother would return home and we could continue our swimming lessons that we had started several months earlier. Other than moving house and schools (within the same town) nothing of substance happened in my life until the age of eleven when my maternal grandfather died. My brother and I were fortunate children in that we had two parents who worked which afforded us a comfortable lifestyle. We had two cars, grass in our back garden and were afforded at least two holidays a year, which included holidays in the Mediterranean and Europe.

During the autumn of 1982 my father left for a six week trip to the United States, at the time my brother and I were told that he had been sent to America to determine the viability of a business there. We were not told that there was a possibility of us moving until he returned. January of 1983 my father moved to Chicago, we were to follow seven months later. I am not sure that either my brother or I understood the consequence of my father’s move, even after we spent the Easter holidays in Chicago looking at schools and houses. For me the first time it became real was watching our house be packed into shipping containers and moving into my Nan’s home for the last two months we were to live in England. Twenty-nine years later the only place my brother and I have returned to live is Chicago.

The first summer is mostly a blur as unpacking, discovering our new neighborhood, town and city were a priority as was the constant flow of relatives and close friends that flew to Chicago to help in the transition. During the Easter holiday my brother had toured several local state schools and we had both been “tested” at the local private school where my mother was to teach. The first day of school arrived and we went separate ways, he to the local neighborhood school, I to private school. The intent initially was that the private school could manipulate my curriculum in order for me to be able to return to England to sit for O levels. Although in a different academic environment, we both experienced instances of being singled out, ironically mostly by teachers who thought our accents were ‘cute’ and had us get up in front of the class to read out loud. We made a pact that year to watch as much American television as possible to ‘learn how to speak with an American accent’ so that we could fit in. Almost thirty years later my brother has no trace of an English accent, but I can still ‘switch on’ my English accent. Rumbaut (1997) refers to this as the 1.25 generation whose “experiences and adaptive outcomes are hypothesized to be closer to the 1st generation immigrant adult” (p.349) Hartmut (1997) believes that “adoption of … cultural traits [and] emotional identification with the host society provides integration into the labor market.” (p.312) That socioeconomic attainment and mobility can be linked to language and acculturation.

Life continued to proceed in both America and England and while initially we went home at least twice a year that stopped as the rest of my grandparents passed and cousins grew up and moved on in their own lives. At the age of seventeen, my parents made the decision to stay in the U.S. and not to move back to England. At this point two additional decisions were made neither of which I was able to control. The first, the U.S. government changed the status of visas and foreigners working in the U.S. so that my father had to prove to the federal government that he was the only one capable of doing his job, that no American could, and the second that I would be attending college in the United States. The same year we applied for green card status, which signaled to my brother and me that this was more permanent that we had ever realized; we were told the process would take up to two years. As the Reagan era ended and George Bush Sr. entered the White House immigration took yet another turn. Amnesty was granted to several million illegal Mexican immigrants and the U.S. determined that only a certain number of people would be allowed into the U.S. in any given year. That pushed back my family’s timeline. Another blow came to us a year or so later when we found out that because my father did not have a college degree we had been moved to a ‘lower category’ for non-degree holders. The next blow would come in January of 1991 when I turned twenty-one and was no longer considered a member of my family by the U.S. government and would now have to apply for status as an individual. During the autumn of 1991, the federal government decided to conduct a ‘citizenship lottery’ and placed a million green cards up for grabs for anyone who applied. I won the lottery. Spring of 1992 I was on a plane with my father, back to England to undergo ‘medical testing’ and an ‘interview’ by the U.S. Consulate in London to determine if I would be an appropriate immigrant – I had lived in the U.S. for almost ten years at this point. Years later during a cocktail party on Ellis Island, I was overwhelmed by the realization that my immigration experience in 1992 was eerily similar to what I perceived it had been in the 1800s.

I was granted green card status in the spring of 1992 and went back to finishing my senior year of college. As graduation approached I was frustrated and deflated, as I had no idea what to do with my psychology and criminology degrees. I had been informed that I could not go to work for the criminal courts as I had imagined because I was not a U.S. citizen. The best hope I had was to return to school and become a professor. I fell into a similar summer pattern working at a summer day camp for developmentally disabled children and learned of a university program through one of my colleagues. A local HE institution was looking for a live-in residence director for their developmentally disabled young adults who were being integrated into a college campus life. So began my career in higher education, which has now spanned four institutions and four similar yet very different jobs. I returned to Chicago in 2002 to join a mid-sized private institution with 8000 students to help create a Center for Student Involvement that would integrate the co-curricular and academic learning experiences of students.

My experiences at my last institution, with both students and colleagues gave me insight into a world of privilege that I had not seen before. Now I was working with sons and daughters of movie stars, music stars, industry leaders, politicians and the list goes on. These students had not only visited other parts of the world, but had lived there, had homes there. These students brought to college issues of entitlement, privilege, depression, grief and a whole host of other well-being concerns. Students had died at every institution at which I had worked, some by their own hand some at the hand of another, some I was particularly close to, and others I passed in the students’ union. What I was not ready for was the shear number each year that would choose to end their lives at this school. It shed light on to my own frustrations of growing up, I began to understand how my own issues of adolescence without a strong support group, how being treated like a dancing monkey or being singled out changes ones perceptions of what is acceptable and appropriate. How just wanting to fit in can sometimes be overwhelming, if it were only as simple as learning to speak with an American accent. Too often when I thought I had fit in, made everyone think I was just one of them, I would be found out; either by a good friend, who needed to boast about me to another person that I was different, or by the government that there was another hoop to jump through to be able to maintain my ‘cover.’

**Appendix 2**

**Transcript of Conversation with NOLA**

Transcript of Interview – Subject 20

Recording started in middle of sentence

H: …absolutely no worries. I was a bit early so no worries at all. Thank you again for doing this, I really appreciate it – it is uh really helping me out a lot with my research so and hopefully something good will come out of it. So we are going to chat for about 30 minutes if that’s ok? I will ask you some questions, a lot of them are follow up on what you answered in the survey you completed for me, to get more detail. And again for your information I am looking at the collective experiences of Global Nomads, specifically on college campuses. Because what I am really interested in is understanding whether or not umm the kinds of experiences global nomads have need to be, for lack of a better word assessed differently or treated differently. So do we need to provide additional services to students who have different experiences who are not mono-cultural? So I am going to record this interview if that is all right with you. Everything will be anonymized once the interview is finished it will take me about a week to transcribe everything and I will actually send you a transcription of the interview, if there is something in there umm that you think wow she really didn’t get what I was trying to say or wow that is really not what I meant feel free to make edits as it goes. Umm through out the interview if there is a question that you don’t understand please ask, umm if there is a question that you don’t want to answer that one feel free to say so and we can move on. Umm the only people that will ever see or hear these interviews will be myself and my thesis supervisor no on else will see them, so I wanted to let you know that as well. Do you have any questions or anything?

20: No questions. But I wanted to let you know that my Internet connection quality varies a lot.

H: All right

20: So it is very possible I don’t know - it might get fuzzy

H: All right well we will try and keep our fingers crossed

20: Ok

H: So I first want to ask you some questions about your institution so can you tell me how large your current institution is?

20: It’s about 2000 no 4000 I think its between 3 and 4000 but I’m not sure though

H: Ok

Would you classify it as rural or urban?

20: umm Rural

H: Rural ok – is it primarily a residential campus in that case?

20: Yeah

H: Ok Is the gender makeup 50 50?

20: No oh gender yeah

H: Ok and what would you say the racial makeup is of your institution?

20: Mostly white, mostly east coast

H: Ok. So when you went to college for the first time how salient was your cultural background to your sense of self?

20: Sorry can you repeat that

H: Yeah absolutely sure when you went to college for the first time how salient was your cultural background to your sense of self?

20: There is one word that keeps blanking – how what is relevant?

H: Salient

20: Salient oh ok

H: Yeah

20: umm Well I had talked about the fact that I felt different with my boyfriend at the time…

H: Ok

20: …because he had also moved a lot. So he sort of understood what I was going through, umm but I don’t know for some reason the fact that I was talking about it with him, I never really thought about it in a sad way we just kind of talked about it playfully. I never felt alone or bad about it I guess.

H: Ok. Does your institution have specific resources for students of color or multi-cultural students?

20: It has psychological services but they don’t advertise that. They don’t really mention umm that they cater that to specifically

H: Oh ok do you have a multicultural center or multicultural student groups or anything like that?

20: No there are the international groups umm or there is the international office – yeah

H: Oh interesting Can you describe your cultural make-up of your friends?

20: umm Well (pause) umm my friend groups have changed a lot since I arrived at (SCHOOL). Umm the girls I lived with last year I don’t really hang out with this year, but they are from the U.S. one of them is from California one of them is from New York. Umm they haven’t moved really in the past and I just felt as though they really didn’t understand me very well.

H: Ok so did you change your friend group this year, to students umm to other friends you think may understand you better.

20: Well I am trying to (smile)

H: Ok (chuckle) When you do any kind of work with college administrators or professor in a classroom, do you think they understand your specific needs as a global nomad?

20: umm. Sometimes no. Umm for example there is a professor of mine well – I read over the summer this book TCK: Growing up Among Worlds…

H: Yes

20: …and one of the reactions they mention that people have to growing up among worlds is being a wall-flower which you become kind of scared of saying something, because you are afraid that if you say something it will show that you are not one of the group. So I’m definitely one of those people, umm and some professors of mine are not very understanding of that. It’s because I am not talkative so I fell like they don’t really get me, I guess.

H: Ok do you think your experience would be better, different, umm enhanced if they understood who you were?

20: Yeah

H: Yeah – ok can you explain a little bit more about that?

20: umm (pause) – I am having a hard time putting it into words

H: That’s all right

20: Yeah let me think (pause) I guess I feel sometimes if I had the confidence to say what I was really thinking that we would get along a lot better, that I would be able to form a better connection with my professors, but sometimes I don’t have that confidence with professors because I am usually quiet about my thoughts

H: Ok thank you

On the survey you completed for me, and again thank you very much it was very helpful information, I asked a lot of questions about your experiences overseas and potentially how those experiences influence you even now. So if it is all right with you I would like to revisit some of those questions, not specifically your answers, but the questions in general to get more detail.

20: Ok

H: Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?

20: umm Well – when I was really little I always thought of myself from the U.S. and it wasn’t until I reached late high school that I started to question that…

H: Ok

20: …umm and I started to think more seriously where I do I fit in, because I really don’t fit in any where and uh yeah – I always thought that I was from the U.S. growing up no matter what country I was living in.

H: Ok if you think back to your first year in college is there a particular experience where you think your life history, your experiences influenced a decision that you made?

20: I think the example I used in the written questions was when I broke up with my boyfriend.

H: Ok

20: umm But I mean my experiences influence every decision that I make. But umm I also decided to leave the engineering program, …

H: mmm Okay

20: …that was influenced by moving. I was comfortable doing that because umm I am okay with a change in scene when I feel its necessary I’m okay changing things when it is necessary more than other people – but most of my friends were surprised by such a big switch, but it really felt kind of natural to me and I was really glad that I did it.

H: Ok umm if you think back through all of the experiences you have had so far, can you relay one experience that is most meaningful to you?

20: In (SCHOOL) or…?

H: Whether that be at (SCHOOL) or when you were younger living abroad.

20: I’m sorry an experience related to what specifically?

H: If there is something that stands out to you something significant about your experience living abroad

20: umm Let me think uh (pause) well freshman year there was a girl on my hall who was Korean, I think it took about a month before a lot of the guys on my hall started making jokes about her being Korean but to her face – like just playful jokes.

H: wow

20: But it got really hurtful very quickly, but they still meant it in a playful way, they didn’t realize that they were being hurtful. I remember I felt really shocked, not by what they were saying but I was really shocked at her reaction because she would laugh with them even though I could tell that she didn’t like it.

H: Ok

20: That really stayed with me and I started thinking about how different people who move have different reactions – and I feel like her reaction was to pretend that it didn’t happen, because she has always been from this culture and she fits in here so that’s it.

H: Wow

20: Umm so I remember thinking they can laugh and say all they want, but if there were saying that about a part of me I would not be laughing.

H: Yeah okay. Can you describe how have you changed or grown since coming to college?

20: Well I never used to think about any of this kind of stuff (laugh)

H: (laugh) Ok

20: So it’s been a lot of self-discovery yeah. And I came into college in a serious relationship – we since broke up because he had to join the Israeli army and things got complicated an I have grown a lot from that experience, both from being with him and from the break up – cause it taught me a lot about relationships, not just long distance relationships, but relationships with people

H: Yes, absolutely. So, I would like to ask about the social experiences on your campus – are most of them traditional American activities or are there campus wide multicultural or international activities?

20: Most of them are traditional U.S. activities. Greek Life dominates the campus. And I joined a sorority to give it a shot, and I really didn’t like, I actually left my sorority last week because I had had enough. I was glad that I gave it a shot, because I would have been mad at myself if I hadn’t I would have thought that I was missing something.

H: Sure

20: But there are multicultural activities its just that they aren’t as widely known about – I don’t know if it is just my perception of them, but it seems to me that they are only umm really catering to the truly international student – so I feel as though if I go … I don’t know…

H: Ok all right. If you had the opportunity to design a social program for your campus, there are no limits to cost of imagination, what do you think that would look like?

20: Specifically for ‘teeks’

H: Yes or it could be something to educate the campus

20: Well I don’t really know, but definitely on going, not just one event. Because I feel that the university tends to just do events about diversity where everyone comes for that day and where for that day everyone is thinking about it, and they are thinking we are all so different. And then the next day everything is back to normal you know there needs to be something on going so an actual program. I don’t really know how to do that honestly

H: Okay, but something that is long lasting that would address diversity that is a process rather than a one-time event

20: I can tell the university wants to make an effort to educate students about diversity, but they don’t do a good job because all they do is bring in a speaker who talks one day and the message doesn’t last.

H: Right. Are there any kind of programs, activities or support services for TCKs on your campus or is it just based to international students?

20: Yeah it is just international students

H: Okay okay

20: I have thought about starting a group, but I haven’t just had the initiative (chuckle)

H: (Chuckle) it’s a lot of work

20: Well I don’t know if there are any others here that are like me. I have met one other person that has moved,

H: ok

20: I mean moved relatively often.

H: Well that is something that I am trying to assess as part of this research, first how many of us are there, umm as no one keeps count. We are not a tick box like gender or race on a college admission form so it is really hard to determine how many of us there actually are. What kinds of resources can and should be provided for students on campus – so that is also what this is trying to figure out as well.

If you had to think about the student services personnel on your campus or the professors and you had to think about what they should be educated about in terms of TCKs or global nomads what do you think you would want them to know or what should they know.

20: I think basic social psychology. (chuckle) Honestly because the more you know about that about how situations impact people more than personally I think that makes a really big difference in the way you treat people you are surrounded by , especially if you are teaching them you don’t want to give them the idea you aren’t interested in them. But umm I don’t know – I am taking a social psychology class right now and I’m really liking the ideas and I keep applying it.

H: Yeah exactly. Have you thought about transferring to another institution?

20: I have, umm but my first year here it was hard for me to adapt – maybe that’s just an excuse, but regardless my grades weren’t really good and I don’t think I could have transferred to a place as good or better so…

H: If you had chosen a different institution other than (SCHOOL), if you had chosen a larger school or a school in an urban environment how do you think your college experience would be different and if so how do you think it would be different?

20: I think if I were in a larger school or a school in a city, I actually I don’t know about size, but definitely if I were at a school in a city I would be able to make my own way and do my own thing I guess and feel comfortable. But the fact that I am here in a rural environment I mean I really depend on the social connections. So umm it’s hard for me because you know the people around me don’t understand me and I am forced to try all the time because I can’t make my own way.

H: Ok right – is there a specific example that you would give me when people don’t understand you, is it something you say, something you do, how way you react to something?

20: umm A specific example would be eye contact.

H: Ok

20: I really don’t like making eye contact and I’ve thought about it I think the reason for that is that I am used to looking down kind of in a subordinate way especially in places where I am not really welcome – in countries where I am not really welcome and umm so when I do that here people think I am lying and people think I am being insincere and umm they don’t really try to understand that its just because its where I grew up it is hard to look people in the eye

H: Sure sure. umm Is there any thing else you think I should know or be aware of about your experience on campus? Or anything else you think I should be aware of as a researcher? Looking at specific activities, specific resources for global nomads on college campuses of that you would like to see or you think wow if my institution had done that I would be having a better experience

20: Well umm one point that I have thought about is I keep wanting to go to psychological services and talk about these things and umm I found myself making appointments bailing on them at the last minute. Part of it is fear that I am going to be I don’t want to use the word brainwashed, cause that’s not the word, I guess influenced in a way I don’t want to be, by completely opening myself up to someone and umm asking their advice and trying to get them to help me I don’t know if they would just help me from the U.S. perspective and not really respect the other perspectives that are part of me and so I feel sometimes that I really need help. But… (pause)

AT THIS POINT SUBJECT 20 APPEARS VISIBLY UPSET

A few seconds pass, and I choose as a researcher to begin talking to attempt to deflect the tension.

H: I completely understand. It is definitely a tough position to be in and a tough position when sometimes you think that you are by yourself and that some one hasn’t necessarily heard what you have said and heard what you are trying to have a conversation about. I loved your comment about liking change and that change is not scary or frustrating. For myself as also a TCK and having moved, I actually like change. I embrace change it is something really interesting to be a part of and umm I am always flabbergasted for lack of a better word by folks who have lived in mono cultural environments who are frustrated by that or afraid of that. I always use the example with people that I had a job once where my supervisor used to go to the file cabinet and pull out the files from whatever activity, program or event we were doing from the year before and change the dates. Her idea of change was to change dates on the top of the letters (chuckle) and it used to crack me up that really that was enough…

20: (chuckle)

H: for her. I think sometimes change is such an interesting part of who we are and what we do as global nomads. I think that we forget sometimes that people don’t like change that change is hard for a lot of people. But I completely understand where you are coming from. It is not an easy road, it does get better but it is not an easy road to go down when you think that people don’t understand and you think it’s you.

(pause) Several seconds pass, and Subject 20 appears to be composed.

H: So thank you that is what I have. umm That’s really helpful to me, I appreciate that you answered the questions a little bit more in depth. Because I really think there are a lot of us out here doing the best we can in all of this. Trying to get from one point to the other. Hopefully what comes out of this research is that we do need to look at students who are coming back to the United States especially for college – that we are not international students, that we are not really American students but in between. That there is someone there even if it is just to ask the questions: are you ok?, are things going well?, and what can I do? Even if it is as basic as that.

Thank you again I appreciate it. As I said at the very beginning I will transcribe all of this, I will send if off to you and if there is anything else you would like to add that’s fine, anything you want to edit out because you don’t want something, just make a note of that and it won’t be used at all. [cough] The other thing I will let you know is the interviews get transcribed as a conversation so all of the umms and ahs, I umm a lot I know, will also be transcribed as part of that.

20: ok

(chuckle) I know that I talk in a lot of broken sentences

H: It’s all right, I umm a lot. Again thank you I appreciate it very much indeed and I appreciate your time.

20: Thank you by the way, one quick last note. I don’t know if you are doing any age related research but if you are I have a little sister who just went through this as well as I did except for high school

H: Great thanks, I appreciate that I will definitely. At this point I am concentrating on college as that is my background but maybe further down line. Thank you again. Take care of yourself.

20: yeah yeah Bye

H: Bye

**APPENDIX 3**

**Pre-Interview Questionnaire**

**University of Sheffield**

**The Global Nomad Experience on the U.S. College Campus**

**Pre-Interview Questionnaire:**

The research you have agreed to be a part of is looking at the collective experiences of the Global Nomad. I am specifically interested in how those collective experiences manifest themselves on a college campus. The aim of the research is to assess current student services and whether or not additional attention needs to be paid to students who identify as global nomads. As a participant in this research you have agreed to be interviewed (face-to-face on Skype) by the researcher; as part of that process you are asked to fill out the following questionnaire and return via email to [globalnomadresearch@gmail.com](mailto:globalnomadresearch@gmail.com) at which time an interview will be scheduled. All information will be kept confidential and anonymized for reporting. Thank you in advance for your participation.

**Demographics:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parents Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What took you overseas: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Places Lived: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ For How Long: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

College Attended: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ For How Long: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few minutes to think about your childhood, the moves you made, the places you lived.

Please list eight (8) experiences

With a one line summary statement of the experience

Provide brief details of the experience (no more than two sentences)

Briefly describe specific feelings you had about the experience (no more than three or four sentences)

Choose 3 of the experiences and in no more than 200 words per experience expand in more detail describe those experiences, the feelings you had during that time towards friends, new places, family.

**APPENDIX 4**

**Participant 1 Questionnaire**

**University of Sheffield**

**The Global Nomad Experience on the U.S. College Campus**

**Pre-Interview Questionnaire:**

The research you have agreed to be a part of is looking at the collective experiences of the Global Nomad. I am specifically interested in how those collective experiences manifest themselves on a college campus. The aim of the research is to assess current student services and whether or not additional attention needs to be paid to students who identify as global nomads. As a participant in this research you have agreed to be interviewed (face-to-face on Skype) by the researcher; as part of that process you are asked to fill out the following questionnaire and return via email to [globalnomadresearch@gmail.com](mailto:globalnomadresearch@gmail.com) at which time an interview will be scheduled. All information will be kept confidential and anonymized for reporting. Thank you in advance for your participation.

**Demographics:**

**Name:** Jerrod (anonymized) Age: 21

**Gender:** Masculine **Nationality:** Caucasian

**Parents Nationality:** Caucasian

**Siblings:**  **Ages: Gender:**

30 Feminine

27 Feminine

24 Feminine

**What took you overseas:**

In the 80s, my father and mother became missionaries for World Mission Prayer League (WMPL), working closely with the Norwegian Santal Norwegian Mission Bangladesh (SNMB) for the translation of a Santali Hymnal. I was born in 1989 during their work.

**Places Lived:** **For How Long:**

Bangladesh 1 year

Bangladesh 4 years

CA, USA 1 year

Bangladesh 2 years

CA, USA 9 years

MN, USA 3 years

CA, USA 1 year

MN, USA 2010 - present

**College Attended: For How Long:**

AFLBS, Plymouth, MN 2 years

Association Free Lutheran Bible School

Hartnell Community College, Salinas, CA 1 year

NWC, Arden Hills, MN 2010 – Present

**Please take a few minutes to think about your childhood, the moves you made, the places you lived.**

Most of the experiences I remember are slices of time.

1. Aliaupur, Bangladesh

In this memory, I believe I was four years old at the top of a ramp with my bicycle and my dad. He said something like “Wow you’re goin’ fast.” I remember very few things from this memory except that the concrete ramp was just made, my friends were yard and in one of the tree playing something like tag, and we were zooming around. I just remember that the ramp, the tree, and even the porch were so big, I was exhilarated with the wind and my Father’s words, and generally happy to be with my friends.

1. Center, Bangladesh

In this memory, I think I was six or seven playing with Paul and some other Santali friends, and we role-played. We played a game where we tied people to the tree, escaped, and set people free. In one episode, I was blindfolded and forced up a flight of stairs, and then down again, but this time I fell down the stairs. I felt a sense of heroism and adventure, brotherhood and conflict. Even as I tumbled down each step, turning black and blue and aching, everything was great.

1. LAMB, Bangladesh

In this memory, I’m seven years old, and I was digging in the sand with another missionary girl, just a year older than me. I was happily talking with her, separating all the little diamonds in the sand and we were talking about how we would sell them together. I went into one of the newly made pair of houses there, secretly told my sister I loved the girl and knew that I would marry her one day. My sister told the girl, I locked myself in a room and cried. The girl told me it was okay and she like me too, but I closed up and lost her as close friend despite years of her reaching out.

1. Center, Bangladesh

In this memory, I am about five or six years old, and and I have hidden the whole village’s shoes during a Church service. I’m not sure why I was out of church, but I took the shoes and hid them all in front of the church. When everyone came out, my mother instantly suspected me and told me to bring those shoes back right now. I bolted as fast as I could to the hiding spot where I brought as many of the shoes as I could. I felt very sheepish and silly, cursing the day I was born.

1. Aliaupur, Bangladesh

I am not sure this is an authentic memory as I have heard this story ten thousand times, but our family is sitting on a bed during an electrical storm and my sister was struck by lightning. Mother warned my sister to stay on the bed but to prove my mother was over-reacting she stuck one toe on the concrete floor. At that instant a thunderbolt crashed into the house, gluing her to the floor. I vaguely remember the dog and my dad being glued to the floor as well. I feel my mother over-reacts everyday, constantly, and always, but when she doesn’t she hits gold. During these times, my father whips out the ole Rule Book, “Rule #1: Mom’s Always Right; Rule #2: When Mom is Wrong, refer back to Rule #1.”

1. Dhaka – Center 2002

This memory is nine hours long and encompasses a nostalgic minibus ride from the Capital to LAMB hospital. Crass old men hoot and whistle at my sisters, saying “hey baby, I love you I love you I love you”; the pair of drivers we hired are talking Bengali between themselves; and we are nostalgicating in the back seat with ancient family jokes, songs, and stores. My two younger sisters are quizzing each other on obscure Santali words like “eyelash” and “toenail,” while my oldest sister and my parents are reminding us how long the trip was before the new bridge was made. Street chapattis waft in at every town, and my sisters glare at me enviously after I take my shirt off in the sweltering heat. It was sweltering hot, and I don’t seem to remember even a fraction of what my sister remembers. I’m familiar with all the family stories and jingles but am so frustrated that I can’t remember a word of Santali, even though the whole of the language is perched on the tip of my tongue.

1. Somewhere in Northern Bangladesh - 2002

Monsoon has come. I don’t remember where we were driving from, or where we were driving too, but as my sister is taking black and white photos for a class when a sheet of rain sweeps across the flat landscape. The rains become fierce shortly, flooding all the fields around us as a sharp wind grasps a tree by the roots and tumbles it across the sky. We come to the next town while we must wait half an hour while a hundred men are cutting a huge tree that flattened a row of shops, clearing a path for our car. I am awed by the gasp of my mother as the tree moves across the sky. On reflection, I don’t feel I was afraid or even surprised by storm; everything seemed very natural. I was more interested in my mother’s reaction and I thought a lot about it.

1. Dinajpur - 1995

I am sitting on the back porch talking to our maid’s husband named r-r-att’a. R-ratt’a gets his name from the word for frog because of his chewing tobacco stained lips and his relative tactlessness in a very tactful culture. We were sitting together and he told me that I must behead a chicken for my family dinner, and it will make me a man. He gives me the knife, and I sawed through the chicken’s neck. After the chicken is headless, he picks it up and throws it across the yard, where it very naturally stands up, and runs about. I felt like I was becoming more noble by the second, here I was inducted to be a full-fledged man at 6 years old by someone who was not quite an intimate but by rank, more venerable. On reflection, I don’t recall any revulsion as I sawed through the chicken’s neck every so slowly, but now I feel a cold chill and a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach.

In the interest of space, I know my sentences are perhaps a bit longer; I am able to write more on request. I do not know positively why I chose these eight, these are not the first memories I thought of and there were several others I rejected for one reason or another. Also, I did not edit my submissions or organize them in any particular way, but simply presented them as I remembered them and tried to make them fit writing conventions as best I could.

**Please list eight (8) experiences**

**With a one line summary statement of the experience**

**Provide brief details of the experience (no more than two sentences)**

**Briefly describe specific feelings you had about the experience (no more than three or four sentences)**

**Choose 3 of the experiences and in no more than 200 words per experience expand in more detail describe those experiences, the feelings you had during that time towards friends, new places, family.**

**APENDIX 5**

**Survey Redesign**

# WELCOME

The following survey is designed to capture the experiences of individuals who self­identity as a Global Nomad or a Third Culture Kid.

1. Before consenting to participate in this research project, it is important that you have a complete understanding of the research being conducted and what your participation will involve. Please read the following information carefully. If there is any section you are unclear of or need more information about please ask. You are not obligated to participate in this research project. Thank you for reading and considering participating.

You understand the following:

As part of her EdD research project in Higher Education at the University of Sheffield (UK), Helen Wood is conducting research on the experience of the global nomad (a person who grew up in a country different than their passport country due to a parent’s occupation) on U.S. college campuses.

You have been invited to participate in this research project, answering questions about your experience on campus.

You have been selected to participate because you meet the criteria needed for the study. 1) You are between the age of 18 and 22 years old; 2) You have completed at least one year of college on a U.S. college campus; 3) You have lived for at least 2 years in a country different than your passport country due to one or more of your parents occupation’s; and 4) You have used or participated in student support services

provided by student affairs on your campus (student activities, student housing, multicultural student services and or attended events and activities provided by these entities and others)

You understand that you do not have to partake in this project and that agreeing to do so is voluntary, You also understand that you may withdraw at any time during the research process.

You understand that there are no immediate benefits to yourself as a participant in this research project. Your participation will hopefully provide insight into the experience in of global nomads on the U.S. college campus and help determine if support services need to be specifically provided for these students as well as determine if additional research is needed.

You understand that if at any time you feel the need to stop the survey because of your level of discomfort at the information you need to share or the type of questions being asked you may do so without consequence. If you feel that you have not been treated in a fair and respectful manner, you may contact Helen’s supervisor Dr. Tim Corcoran at the University of Sheffield (t.d.corcoran@sheffield.ac.uk). If you feel that your complaint has not been handled satisfactorily you may contact the University of Sheffield’s University Registrar and Secretary (registrar@sheffield.ac.uk).

You understand that your responses to the questions asked will be kept confidential

and will be stored in a secure manner. Your responses will be anonymized in any and all reporting of data. If specific quotes from your answers are to be used in the thesis Helen will notify you and additional permission will be requested.

The results of the research project will be made available to you, and each participant upon request. If the project is published you will be contacted and provided a detailed description of which section of the research is being published, whether you are in that section and you will not be identified in any report or publication as a result of this research.

The University of Sheffield’s Department of Education ethics committee and the University’s Research Ethics Committee have reviewed the ethics for this research project.

For more information about the project you may contact the primary researcher, Helen Wood at [globalnomadresearch@gmail.com](mailto:globalnomadresearch@gmail.com) or at 1847­812­0559

Thank you for taking the time to read this document in detail.

mlj

I have read and understand the requirements of my participation in this survey.

# INFORMED CONSENT

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the first page of this survey and know that I may contact the researcher for any clarification before continuing.

mlj

Yes

mlj No

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. I may contact Helen Wood [Globalnomadresearch@gmail.com](mailto:Globalnomadresearch@gmail.com) if I wish to withdraw but am not required to do so

mlj

Yes

mlj No

1. I understand that my responses will be recorded and anonymized before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymized responses.

mlj

Yes

mlj No

1. I agree to take part in the above research project. I acknowledge that I will not receive financial or material compensation for my participation.

mlj

Yes

mlj No

# DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Please provide the following demographic information

Name

Age

Gender

Nationality

Parent's Nationality

1. Please list the number of siblings you have, including age and gender

Number of Siblings

Age

Gender

1. Please list the places you have lived and for how long

Places lived

For how long

1. What took you overseas during your childhood and or adolescence?

5

6

# BACKGROUNDQUESTION

1. Thinking back to your childhood would you describe it as:

mlj

Happy

mlj

Full of change and dissonance

mlj

Uneventful

mlj

Sad

mlj

A mixture of the above

# BACKGROUNDQUESTION

1. Was there ever a discussion in your family about your move to another country?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

# BACKGROUNDQUESTION

1. Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

# BACKGROUNDQUESTION

1. At what age did this become apparent?

mlj

0­3 years

mlj

3­6 years

mlj

6­9 years

mlj

9­12 years

mlj

12­15 years

mlj

15­18 years

Please provide an example

5

6

# BACKGROUNDQUESTION

1. Rank the following identifiers in order or importance 1 being the lowest 7 being the highest

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Racial Identity | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj |
| Ethnic Identity | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj |
| Nationality | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj |
| Cultural Identity | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj |
| Gender | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj |
| Religion | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj | mlj |
| City or country you are from | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj | nmlkj |

# COLLEGE

1. Do your experiences overseas play into how you make decisions or choices?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

Please provide an example

5

6

# COLLEGE

1. How important was diversity in your college making decision?

mlj

Very

mlj

Somewhat

mlj

Neutral

mlj

Not at all

# COLLEGE

1. When you entered college how salient was your cultural background?

mlj

Very

mlj

Somewhat

mlj

Neutral

mlj

Not at all

# COLLEGE

1. Please list the college(s) you have attended and for how long

College

Months/Years attended

# COLLEGE

1. Think back to your first year in college. Is there a particular experience where your life history influenced a decision?

5

6

# COLLEGE

1. Did this experience help you grow or change in any way?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

Please provide an example

5

6

# COLLEGE

1. When you first arrived on campus what were your expectations of the university or of your peers?

5

6

# COLLEGE

1. On campus was there a time when people assumed you were someone you were not? What assumptions were made about you?

5

6

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Have you used any of the following student services on your college or university campus? (Check/tick all that apply)

fec

Health Center

fec

Financial Aid

fec

Residence Life

fec

Dean of Students Office

fec

Counseling Center

fec

Multicultural Student Affairs/Services

fec

Student Activities

fec

Student Union

fec

Other (please specify)

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Did you find the services helpful?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Did the service you used resolve the concern or issue that you had?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

Please provide an example

5

6

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Have you participated in any social experiences on campus? (Check/tick all that apply)

fec

Concert

fec

Lecture

fec

Political Speaker

fec

Coffeehouse Event

fec

Comedian

fec

Theatre Production

fec

Cultural Event

fec

Sporting Event

fec

Fraternity or Sorority Event

fec

Inter­Mural Sports Team

fec

Student Group Meeting

fec

Student Government Meeting

fec

Special Interest Group Meeting or Event

fec

Other (please specify)

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Did these events or activities meet your expectations?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

Please provide an example

5

6

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Are student services on your campus received positively?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

# STUDENT SERVICES

1. Are they (student services) effective at providing proactive positive responses to issues or concerns of students?

mlj

Yes

mlj No

Please provide an example either of your own experience or some one you know

5

6

1. Would you be willing to be contacted for a follow­up interview with the researcher? The interview would last no more than 45 minutes and would provide additional information useful to the research.

Please provide a contact email in the box provided.

**Appendix 6**

**Interview Question Detail**

Part two Interview Questions

The research you have agreed to be a part of is looking at the collective experiences of the Global Nomad. I am specifically interested in how those collective experiences manifest themselves on a college campus. The aim of the research is to assess current student services and whether or not additional attention needs to be paid to students who identify as global nomads. As a participant in this research you have agreed to be interviewed (face-to-face on Skype) by the researcher. Thank you for completing the pre-interview survey, the information you provided was invaluable to the research. The following interview will take about 30 mins or so to complete. If at any time you feel uncomfortable about a particular question please let me know. You may stop the interview at that time, and or ask to move onto another question. Please answer each question in as much detail as you feel comfortable with. After the interview is complete, the entire interview will be transcribed and sent to you for verification. At that time you will be able to make notations or clarifications as part of the research process.

The interview will be recorded for research purposes only. All information will be anonymized and identifying information changed. Only myself and my thesis supervisor Dr. Tim Corcoran will have access to the recordings and subsequent transcripts.

If you have no questions at this time, let’s begin

College Demographics:

1. Size of Institution

2. Rural, Urban

3. Residential, Commuter

4. Gender Makeup

5. Racial Makeup

6. When you entered college how salient was your cultural background to your sense of self?

7. Does your institution have specific resources for students of color or multi-cultural students? Can you describe those? (TCKS?)

8. Can you describe your cultural make-up of your friends?

9. When working with college administrators, do you believe they understand your specific needs?

b. If they understood you do you believe your experience would be better? How?

You were asked several questions on the survey about your experiences overseas and how they influence you even now. I would like to revisit some of those questions with you.

10. Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?

11. Think back to your first year in college is there a particular experience where your life history influenced a decision?

What did you consider during that decision making process?

12. Thinking back through all of the life experience you have had so far, can you relay one experience that is most meaningful to you?

13. How have you changed or grown since coming to college?

14. I would like to ask about the social experiences on campus – are most of them traditional American activities or are there campus wide multicultural activities? Can you describe them?

15. If you had the opportunity to design a social program for your campus what would that look like? There are no limits to cost or imagination.

16. Based on your interactions with student services personnel and college administrators are there recommendations you would make about their general effectiveness? Are there things you would want them to learn or be educated about?

17. Have you thought about transferring to another institution? What went into that decision?

18. If you had chosen a different institution other than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ how do you think your college experience would differ?

19. Any thing else you think I should know or be aware of about your experience on campus?

**APPENDIX 7**

**Participant Information Sheet**

**University of Sheffield**

**Participant Information Sheet:**

Before consenting to participate in this research project, it is important that you have a complete understanding of the research being conducted and what your participation will involve. Please read the following information carefully. If there is any section you are unclear of or need more information about please ask. You are not obligated to participate in this research project. Thank you for reading and considering participating.

**The Experience of the Global Nomad on the U.S College Campus**

I understand the following:

As part of her EdD research project in Higher Education at the University of Sheffield (UK), Helen Wood is conducting research on the experience of the global nomad (a person who grew up in a country different than their passport country due to a parent’s occupation) on U.S. college campuses.

I have been invited to participate in this research project, answering questions about my experience on campus.

I have been selected to participate because I meet the criteria needed for the study. 1) I am between the age of 18 and 22 years old; 2) I have completed at least one year of college on a U.S. college campus; 3) I have lived for at least 2 years in a country different than my passport country due to one or more of my parents occupation’s; and 4) I have used or participated in student support services provided by student affairs on my campus (student activities, student housing, multicultural student services and or attended events and activities provided by these entities and others)

I understand that I do not have to partake in this project and that agreeing to do so is voluntary, I also understand that I may withdraw at any time during the research process.

I understand that there are no immediate benefits to myself as a participant in this research project. My participation will hopefully provide insight into the experience in of global nomads on the U.S. college campus and help determine if support services need to be specifically provided for these students as well as determine if additional research is needed.

I understand that if at any time I feel the need to stop the questionnaire because of my level of discomfort at the information I would need to share or the type of questions being asked I may do so without consequence. If I feel that I have not been treated in a fair and respectful manner, I may contact Helen’s supervisor Dr. Tim Corcoran at the University of Sheffield ([t.d.corcoran@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:t.d.corcoran@sheffield.ac.uk)). If I feel that my complaint has not been handled satisfactorily I may contact the University of Sheffield’s University Registrar and Secretary ([registrar@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:registrar@sheffield.ac.uk)).

I understand that my responses to the questions asked will be kept confidential. My responses will be anonymized. If specific quotes from my answers are to be used in the thesis Helen will notify me and additional permission will be requested.

The results of the research project will be made available to me, and each participant upon request. If the project is published I will be contacted and provided a detailed description of which section of the research is being published, whether I am in that section and that again I will not be identified in any report or publication as a result of this research.

The University of Sheffield’s Department of Education ethics committee and the University’s Research Ethics Committee have reviewed the ethics for this research project.

For more information about the project I may contact the primary researcher, Helen Wood at [globalnomadresearch@gmail.com](mailto:globalnomadresearch@gmail.com) or at 1847-812-0559

Thank you for taking the time to read this document in detail.

**APPENDIX 8**

**Research Ethics Application Form**

**University of Sheffield School of Education**

**RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM**

**Complete this form if** you are planning to carry out research in the School of Education which will not involve the NHS but which will involve people participating in research either directly (e.g. interviews, questionnaires) and/or indirectly (e.g. people permitting access to data).

**Documents to enclose with this form, where appropriate:**

This form should be accompanied, where appropriate, by an Information Sheet/Covering Letter/Written Script which informs the prospective participants about the a proposed research, and/or by a Consent Form.

Guidance on how to complete this form is at: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/content/1/c6/11/43/27/Application%20Guide.pdf>

**Once you have completed this research ethics application form in full, and other documents where appropriate email it to the:**

**Either**

Ethics Administrator if you are a member of staff.

**Or**

Secretary for your programme/course if you are a student.

**NOTE**

* Staff and Post Graduate Research (EdDII/PhD) requires 3 reviewers
* Undergraduate and Taught Post Graduate requires 1 reviewer – **low risk**
* Undergraduate and Taught Post Graduate requires 2 reviewers – **high risk**

I am a member of staff and consider this research to be (according to University definitions) : **low risk 🞏**

**high risk 🞏**

I am a student and consider this research to be (according to University definitions): **low risk X**

**high risk 🞏**

\*Note: For the purposes of Ethical Review the University Research Ethics Committee considers all research with ‘vulnerable people’ to be ‘high risk’ (eg children under 18 years of age).

**University of Sheffield School of Education**

**RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM**

**COVER SHEET**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I confirm that in my judgment, due to the project’s nature, the use of a method to inform prospective participants about the project**  **(eg ‘Information Sheet’/’Covering Letter’/’Pre-Written Script’?:** | |
| **Is relevant** | **Is not relevant** |
| **X**  (if relevant then this should be enclosed) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I confirm that in my judgment, due to the project’s nature, the use of a**  **‘Consent Form’:** | |
| **Is relevant** | **Is not relevant** |
| **X**  (if relevant then this should be enclosed) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Is this a ‘generic “en bloc” application**  **(ie does it cover more than one project that is sufficiently similar)** | |
| **Yes** | **No** |
|  | **X** |

I am a member of staff

**X**

I am a PhD/EdD student

I am a Master’s student

I am an Undergraduate student

I am a PGCE student

**X**

The submission of this ethics application has been agreed

by my supervisor

Supervisor’s signature/name and date of agreement

Tim Cocoran

.........................................................................................................................................................................

**X**

I have enclosed a signed copy of Part B

**University of Sheffield School of Education**

**RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM**

**PART A**

**A1. Title of Research Project:**

The Experience of the Global Nomad on the U.S. College Campus

**A2. Applicant (normally the Principal Investigator, in the case of staff-led research projects, or the student in the case of supervised research projects):**

Title: **Ms.** First Name/Initials: **Helen**  Last Name: **Wood**

Post: **EdD Student** Department: **School of Education**

Email: **edp08hnw@sheffield.ac.uk** Telephone: **18478120559**

**A.2.1. Is this a student project?**

If yes, please provide the Supervisor’s contact details:

Tim Corcoran, PhD

(+44) (0)1142228185

t.d.corcoran@sheffield.ac.uk

**A2.2. Other key investigators/co-applicants (within/outside University), where applicable:**

Please list all (add more rows if necessary)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Title | Full Name | Post | Responsibility  in project | Organisation | Department |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**A3. Proposed Project Duration:**

Start date: Spring 2011 End date: Autumn 2012

**A4. Mark ‘X’ in one or more of the following boxes if your research:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Involves children or young people aged under 18 years |
|  | Involves only identifiable personal data with no direct contact with participants |
| **X** | Involves only anonymised or aggregated data |
|  | Involves prisoners or others in custodial care (eg young offenders) |
|  | Involves adults with mental incapacity or mental illness |
| **X** | Has the primary aim of being educational (eg student research, a project necessary for a postgraduate degree or diploma, MA, PhD or EdD) |

**University of Sheffield School of Education**

**RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM**

**A5. Briefly summarise the project’s aims, objectives and methodology?**

(this must be in language comprehensible to a lay person)

**AIMS:** To investigate whether the U.S. college experience of the global nomad (GN) is markedly different from how other U.S. HE students have been conceptualised and serviced to date. To enquire whether student support services provided to US HE students adequately address the needs of GNs. To provide a reconceptualisation of theory and recommendations for services or modes of practice if the findings suggest such.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Provide a detailed history on U.S. Student Affairs (the division providing student support services that include but are not limited to social, housing, medical, counselling and career support)
2. Provide background on U.S. student development theory (the dominant theory in the field)
3. To gather information from the global nomad on his/her specific experience on a U.S. HE campus via semi-structured interviews to create a definition of the term global nomad from which participants can self identify and U.S. Student Affairs can practice.

**METHODOLOGY**: Purposeful sampling will be employed in order to find 10 participants who self identify with Norma McCaig’s (2002) definition of global nomad “people of any age or nationality who lived a significant part of their developmental years in one or more countries outside their passport country(s) because of a parent’s occupation.” (Schaetti, 2000, p.7) The participants will range in age between 18 and 22 years and have completed at least one year of college on a U.S. college campus. Informed consent will be obtained (see A.9.1). Each participant will be asked to provide a maximum 2-page response outlining his or her background in narrative form to submit before participating in the interview. The interview will be semi-structured to explore to the following: 1) the participants understanding of the term global nomad and how they might self-identify; 2) the participant’s assessment of the student support services on campus; 3) the participants assessment of self in relation to other students on campus; and 4) would the participants want or need specialized support services whether they be formal or informal. The interviews will be conducted via Skype and recorded for later analysis. The open-ended nature of the interviews will be designed to elicit full descriptions and perceptions of self and the participants understanding of identity development. The responses will be transcribed for analysis. Context and discourse analysis techniques will be employed to look for themes; specifically highlighting sense of self, experience with student support services, sense of difference and desire for support.

**A6. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?**

As most interviews will take place via Skype or some similar method, I do not believe there is the potential for physical harm

Psychological harm or distress is believed to be minimal, as the interview questions will be designed to ask students to recount past experiences. This could potentially bring up some discomfort for the participants during the interviews each participant will be monitored (verbally and visually) by the interviewer for distress. The participants will be informed that at any time they may request the interview stop or that post interview their contribution to the study be destroyed.

**A7. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project and, if yes, explain how these issues will be managed?** (Especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises.)

There are no issues of personal safety

**A8. How will the potential participants in the project be (i) identified, (ii) approached and (iii) recruited?**

**IDENTIFICATION:** Individuals will be identified in one of two ways 1) through the global nomad Facebook group; 2) through a university’s registrar specifically looking for students who hold passports that are different from the listed home residential address. Ethics and research approval will be obtained from each campus as necessary. The individuals identified will then be asked to self identify as a global nomad based on the definition noted above.

**APPROACHED:** Potential participants will be approached via email or letter. The email/letter will provide detailed information regarding the study and their potential participation.

**RECRUITED**: The participants will be recruited via invitation on Facebook or via email generated by a professional colleague on the participant’s home campus.

**A9. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?**

**X**

**Yes**

**No**

**If informed consent is not to be obtained please explain why.** Further guidance is at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/researchethics/policy-notes/consent>

Only under exceptional circumstances are studies without informed consent permitted. Students should consult their tutors.

**A.9.1 How do you plan to obtain informed consent? (i.e. the proposed process?):**

Each participant will receive an invitation to participate outlining the project, the aims and objectives as well as how their individual responses will be used. Information will also be provided as to who the researcher is, why the project is being conducted, how it will help further the study of the global nomad and support services provided on campus, and what their responsibilities are as a participant in the project. Information sheets will be sent to the identified participants along with the researcher’s contact information so any questions can be addressed. Once participation has been agreed a request will be made for each participant to complete the background narrative question. At the beginning of each interview a review of the information sheet and verbal agreement (because of the use of Skype) will be attained and recorded as part of the process.

**A.10 How will you ensure appropriate protection and well-being of participants?**

Participants will be reminded at each stage of research that they can ask to be removed from the process without penalty to their position as student.

During the interviews each participant will be monitored (verbally and visually) by the interviewer for distress; the participants will be informed that at any time they may request the interview stop or that post interview their contribution to the study be destroyed.

**A.11 What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?**

All information provided by the participants will be anonymized and kept in a locked fireproof storage locker. All data collected will be anonymized as soon as it is received or recorded. The introductory essays will have all identifying information removed when received and stored on a separate USB stick. A specific email address and dedicated Skype address will be created for the purpose of the study. In the event of publication or conference presentation, each participant will be contacted and provided a detailed description of which section of the research is being published or presented on.

**A.12 Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?** (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided.)

**Yes**

**X**

**No**

**A.13 Will the research involve the production of recorded or photographic media such as audio and/or video recordings or photographs?**

**X**

**Yes**

**No**

**A.13.1** This question is only applicable if you are planning to produce recorded or visual media:

**How will you ensure that there is a clear agreement with participants as to how these recorded media or photographs may be stored, used and (if appropriate) destroyed?**

Each participant will be asked permission to audio record their contribution to the study at the beginning of each interview. The audio recordings will be coded for anonymity and locked in a fireproof storage box at the conclusion of the interview. The recordings will only be used for the production of a dissertation and for illustration purposes during conference presentations and lectures. The recordings will not be used for any other purpose unless written permission is specifically requested. Access to the recordings will be limited to Helen Wood (student researcher) and her supervisor Dr. Tim Corcoran, no one outside the project will be granted access to the recordings. The recordings will be used to transcribe the interviews and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the dissertation process.

**University of Sheffield School of Education**

**RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM**

**PART B - THE SIGNED DECLARATION**

I confirm my responsibility to deliver the research project in accordance with the University of Sheffield’s policies and procedures, which include the University’s *‘Financial Regulations’, ‘Good research Practice Standards’* and the *‘Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue’* (Ethics Policy) and, where externally funded, with the terms and conditions of the research funder.

**In signing this research ethics application I am confirming that:**

1. The above-named project will abide by the University’s Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue’: [**http://www.shef.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/researchethics/index.html**](http://www.shef.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/researchethics/index.html)

2. The above-named project will abide by the University’s ‘Good Research Practice Standards’: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/researchethics/general-principles/homepage.html>

3. The research ethics application form for the above-named project is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

4. There is no potential material interest that may, or may appear to, impair the independence and objectivity of researchers conducting this project.

5. Subject to the research being approved, I undertake to adhere to the project protocol without unagreed deviation and to comply with any conditions set out in the letter from the University ethics reviewers notifying me of this.

6. I undertake to inform the ethics reviewers of significant changes to the protocol (by contacting my supervisor or the Ethics Administrator as appropriate

7. I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data, including the need to register when necessary with the appropriate Data Protection Officer (within the University the Data Protection Officer is based in CICS).

8. I understand that the project, including research records and data, may be subject to inspection for audit purposes, if required in future.

9. I understand that personal data about me as a researcher in this form will be held by those involved in the ethics review procedure (eg the Ethics Administrator and/or ethics reviewers/supervisors) and that this will be managed according to Data Protection Act principles.

10. If this is an application for a ‘generic’/’en block’ project all the individual projects that fit under the generic project are compatible with this application.

11. I will inform the Chair of Ethics Review Panel if prospective participants make a complaint about the above-named project.

**Signature of student (student application): Helen Wood**

**Signature of staff (staff application):**

**Date: March 5, 2011**

**Email the completed application form to the course/programme secretary**

**For staff projects contact the Ethics Secretary, Colleen Woodward**

**Email:** [**c.woodward@sheffield.ac.uk**](mailto:c.woodward@sheffield.ac.uk) **for details of how to submit**

**APPENDIX 9**

**Participant Informed Consent**

**University of Sheffield**

**Participant Informed Consent**

**Title of Project:** The Global Nomad Experience on the U.S. College Campus

**Name of Researcher:** Helen Wood, University of Sheffield EdD student

Participant Identification Number for this project:

**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet  
   for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw  
   at any time without giving any reason. I may contact Helen Wood

Globalnomadresearch@gmail.com if I wish to withdraw

1. I understand that my responses will be audio recorded and anonymised before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access  
   to my anonymised responses.
2. I agree to take part in the above research project. I acknowledge that I will

not receive financial or material compensation for my participation.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant Date Signature

(*or legal representative*)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person taking consent Date Signature

(*if different from lead researcher*)

*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

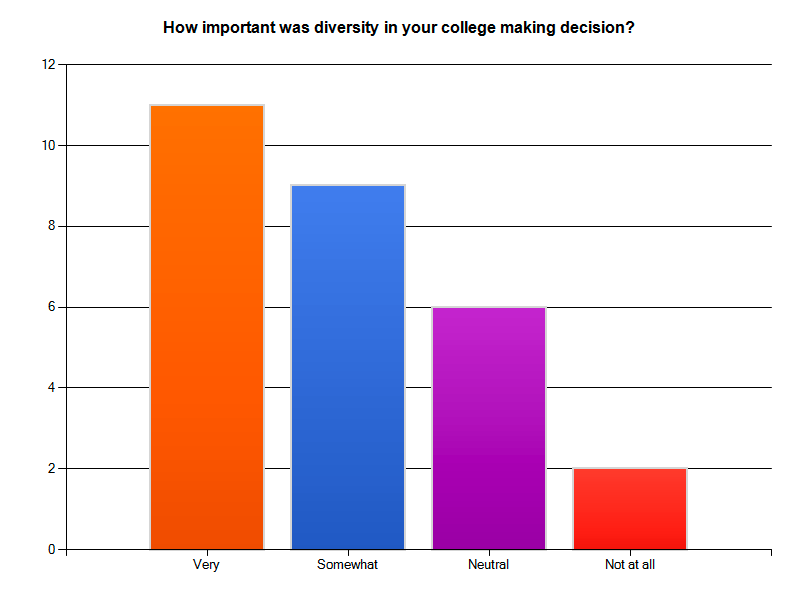
Lead Researcher Date Signature

*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

All attempts will be made to provide a fully signed copy to each individual participant an electronically signed document will substitute for an original signature in all cases. Each informed consent sheet will be reviewed at the beginning of the interview and responses recorded and documented.

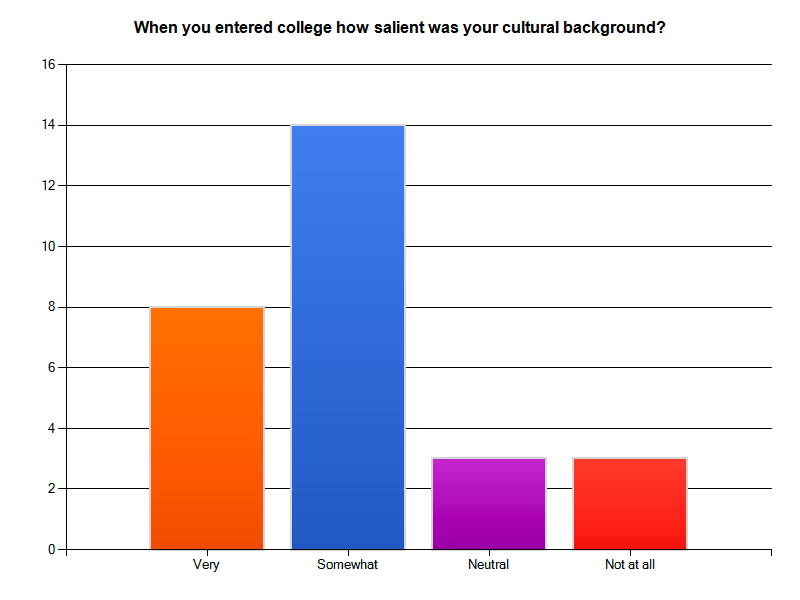
**APPENDIX 10**

**Importance of Institutional Diversity on Choice of Attendance**



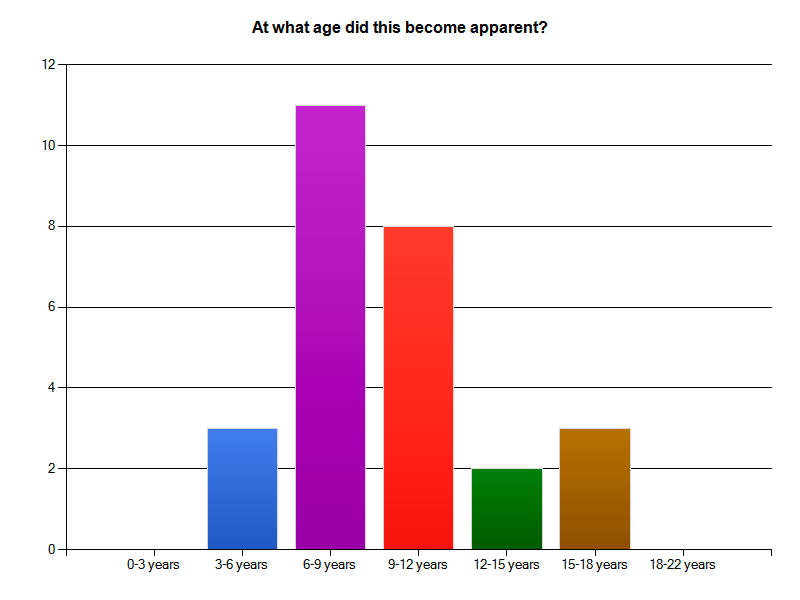
**APPENDIX 11**

**Salience of Cultural Background**



**APPENDIX 12**

**Awareness of Belonging to a Culture Other Than The One in Which They Were Living**



**APPENDIX 13**

**THEME – BELONGING**

*Q12 Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?*

P2: I forgot most of my Arabic and was unable to communicate with the locals, leading me to feel apart and separate from them,

P5: I recognized more with Africa and Thailand than with the US.

P10: The summer that I turned 12 we moved from Morocco to Switzerland, which was our first move in four years and my first move at an age when I was mature enough to feel/recognize the emotion of the experience. I remember sitting on my bed with an old yearbook sobbing and thinking about the fact that I had never wanted to be somewhere else so badly before.

P11: New Zealand is technically my birth country/passport country, but when I went back I felt completely out of place.

P15: That's when I realized that I belonged somewhere else.

P17: Starting 3rd grade at an American international school in Prague without a word of English capabilities, it was very apparent that I had moved to a foreign country, and that I belonged in Korea.

P7: My family moved to Tajikistan from Turkey when I was five. Up until that point I thought I was Turkish, even though my parents were American. Tajikistan was clearly a foreign culture, it wasn't until I was around 6 and with other expat American children that I realized I was American.

P18: I just kind of always knew I was somewhere caught between cultures

P22: suddenly all of my French habits learned in childhood were completely picked apart by "real" Americans.

P23: I felt like I didn't belong, even though I am American; I felt more Japanese than American.

**BELONGING ON CAMPUS**

*Q19 Think back to your first year in college. Is there a particular experience where your life history influenced a decision?*

P1: Having friends from all over the world made me open to far more student groups

P4: I chose to live in the IRC for the obvious reason in that I did not expect to be able to relate with American students as well and that I didn’t want to lose touch with my more or less international upbringing

P5: I had decided for certain that I would be leaving Vassar and going to Edinburgh the next year, because I found the environment at Vassar stifling and too homogenous after my experiences growing up, and I wanted to live somewhere new, with more diversity (age, nationality, mindset, etc.) of students/residents

P8: I joined a Filipino Organization because I was born in the Philippines, and they seemed/are a nice group

P11: I decided to transfer from Villanova University because it was not diverse enough and I could not relate really with any of the students except for those who were not from the US

P14: I chose to live at a house for missionary kids/TCKs because I felt it important to be around people like me to help me adjust to a new culture and environment in the USA

*Q21 When you first arrived on campus what were your expectations of the university or of your peers?*

P2: I had not expected that the college community would be as fragmented as it was.

P4: as usual, [I am] the odd one out on grounds - something I'm used to but something that can be very lonely at times.

P19: I was hoping I would blend in with everyone else and become American given enough time. At the same time I felt very alien and didn't exactly look forward to getting to know what I considered mono-cultural people.

P20: I hoped that I would fit in. Become a "college kid," party a lot and do what I assumed all college kids did.

P24: was fully aware that I was attending a University that was not as diverse as my high school. Actually, many of my peers were much more understanding and curious about my background than I expected.

**APPENDIX 14**

**THEME - IDENTITY**

*Q12 Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?*

P1: parts of me were very American, but that large parts of me had been molded by the cultures surrounding my childhood as well. The way I tilt my head to say "no", like a Greek.

P4: at first I thought I was from France, because I was living in France when I was teased and insulted for 'my' culture by Americans who perceived me as Latina/Hispanic

P12: We were taught to sing, "Maybe It's Because I'm A Londoner" which I identified with, even though I had only been living there a few years.

P13: I became very patriotic after 9/11 when I was living in South Africa, but I identified strongly with the United States at the time.

P14: I lived in Ecuador, and identified as an Ecuadorian despite having Bolivian parents.

P15: It became very apparent to me that I was different because I was white, while all of my peers were Asian.

P16: my first word was in Korean, but my first spoken language was Tagalog.

P18: it wasn't until I was around 6 and with other expat American children that I realized I was American.

P9: In elementary school I was an American kid with a British accent because I was attending a British elementary school in turkey

*Q15 Do your experiences overseas play into how you make decisions or choices?*

P10: It affects every decision I make as it has completely changed my mindset.

P11: there is no way to satisfy the conflicting voices in my head - each culture has its own opinion on what to do

P12: It makes it hard for me to maintain friendships and relationships because I think of everything as temporary so leapfrog over problems or just walk away from the relationships.

P13: The cultures I've lived in have influenced the person I've become.

P15: It affects a lot how I choose my friends -

P17: Identifying different cultures as familiar and less "otherly" thus changes willingness to delve into the culture, understand, tolerate or immerse oneself.

*Q20 Did this experience [from the first year of college] help you grow or change in any way?*

P9: I used to think that I was a normal US teenager but I learned that I really am not normal or average.

P10: I had forgotten how to be self-sufficient - it helped me find my center again.

P13: I ended up learning how to deal with issues quickly. I had to learn how to cook and look after my younger brother. My parents said I became a diplomat/learned to compromise and end fights among and with friends at an earlier age than my peers. I try new things. I've been told I am a lot less judgmental against other countries (but very judgmental of the USA's policies).

P14: Instead of apologizing for my extravagant, odd and bizarre tastes like I did in high school, I began to own up to it.

P16: The experience was the very grounds in which I grew - it became an inseparable part of my identity and my understanding of the world.

**IDENTITY ON CAMPUS**

*Q15 Do your experiences overseas play into how you make decisions or choices?*

P6: I have a very Japanese mindset. Because in Japan we were taught to show respect to elders, I have difficulty creating more than a formal relationship with my professors. While they desire to chat and get to know me on a personal level, because of my cultural upbringing, I have difficulty discussing information outside of the classroom with them.

*Q20 Did this experience [from the first year of college] help you grow or change in any way?*

P2: the process of adapting was certainly helped along by my friendship with my roommate, who was from a similar background and experiencing many of the same things I was.

P4: The IRC allowed me to live in a new form of international community – people from many different countries, but also Americans who had not lived overseas.

P8: Being in a sorority at UVA has taught me a lot about what to expect after college - it's been an experience where I've learned communication skills,

P12: It challenged me to adjust and go through a lot of self-discovery of what it means to come from a background of so many cultures and adjust into a culture which is partly seen as a "home" culture.

*Q22 On campus was there a time when people assumed you were someone you were not? What assumptions were made about you?*

P1: My friends half-jokingly tend to call me "foreign". I was "the Greek girl". In fairness, I do look a little Greek, but the rest of my life I had been strictly "American".

P2: Almost everyone I met assumed that I was from Virginia, like two thirds of the other students at my university. This was usually obvious from the surprised expressions on their faces when they learned that I grew up in the Middle East and speak fluent Arabic.

P3: People often assume I am American. Even if I say I am Danish they think that I am stating my heritage, not my nationality.

P4: Introducing yourself as a TCK is really challenging. The "where are you from?" question inevitably leads to people getting the wrong idea. You say "NOVA" where you're technically from but never lived and they make certain assumptions, but if you tell them the truth they often realize they can't relate or don't want to or that you're a freak and lose interest instantly. The typical assumption though is that I don't know anything about the US, which in some ways is true, while in others having represented the country as a diplomat abroad is not true, and is very hard either way.

P7: people thought I was Mexican or Muslim or something when I am really not.

P8: I generally shatter false assumptions pretty quickly after meeting someone, so I rarely know about the assumptions.

P10: People have thought I was literally someone I wasn't - there is a biracial girl in my year and we are told that we look exactly alike. She has become a friend of mine, and we've discussed how we don't think we look exactly alike at all. Other times, people think my English is a lot better than it should be, because I am from Singapore.

P11: No one believes that I am Latina because I am white and speak very good English.

P14: Nobody knows about my background unless I personally tell them - it's not something people talk about because I usually lay low. I look and sound like an average person who grew up in the U.S., so that's what people assume.

P15: People are constantly assuming that I am Hispanic-American because I have tanned skin and picked up a Californian accent within 3 days of arriving in the country.

P14: People either thought I was really "American" or didn't realize that I'm actually mostly Latin American because my dad is Peruvian and I've grown up there.

P16: I would identify myself as a Korean back then, and it wasn't really a problem until the later years after I returned to Korea.

P17: people would assume I'd lived in the USA my whole life, until they realized I didn't understand slang and some pop culture references

P22: Mostly around my Asian-ness, both from Asians and non-Asians. I think the Koreans expected me to be more Korean; the Korean-Americans expected me to be more American; to others, it may be best if I said I was invisible

**APPENDIX 15**

**THEME – INTROSPECTION**

*Q12 Was there a point in time when you felt or recognized you belonged to a culture other than the one in which you were living?*

P1: In the 5th grade I moved back to the US from Egypt. My classmates refused to believe that I had been inside pyramids, swam with dolphins or met presidents (things I thought all 9 year-olds had experienced)- it frustrated me to the point of tears. From that point on, I think I began to realize that parts of me were very American, but that large parts of me had been molded by the cultures surrounding my childhood as well. The fact that I knew who Hussein Mubarak was long before Egypt's revolution, and was unsurprised by the financial "crisis" in Greece, are both testimony to the small influences that have shaped me throughout my life overseas.

P2: I lived in Jordan between the ages of 2 and 4. During that time, I learned Arabic and assimilated more or less completely into the local culture. But when I moved to Oman, I found myself part of an expatriate community that identified itself as separate and apart from the local Omani culture. I forgot most of my Arabic and was unable to communicate with the locals, leading me to feel apart and separate from them, even though my parents did their best to make friends with Omanis and learn the new dialect.

P4: at first I thought I was from France, because I was living in France when I became old enough to start understanding the idea of being from somewhere. Dissonance with this became apparent in the US when I was teased and insulted for 'my' culture by Americans who perceived me as Latina/Hispanic.

P9: US culture started to confuse me more than the other cultures I was living with.

P10: I felt my first pangs of nostalgia while living in Spain (I'm not sure how old I was, it could have been anywhere from 5 to 9). We were visiting the U.S. every summer and I was starting to grow frustrated with the fact that I couldn't just go over there whenever I wanted. My mom would try to cheer me up by imitating an airplane and flying around a big rocking chair but I would just got angry and hysterical which made her sad and angry (lots of miscommunication through the years between my parents and I). The summer that I turned 12 we moved from Morocco to Switzerland, which was our first move in four years and my first move at an age when I was mature enough to feel/recognize the emotion of the experience. I remember sitting on my bed with an old yearbook sobbing and thinking about the fact that I had never wanted to be somewhere else so badly before.

P11: I lived in Los Angeles from age 11-13 for a year and a half and attended a top all girls’ prep school. I was supposed to sing at Disneyland with my school choir but received 2 weeks notice that we were leaving the country and moving back to New Zealand. New Zealand is technically my birth country/passport country, but when I went back I felt completely out of place. I didn't know the same songs as everyone else, I didn't know anything about the national sport (Rugby), was considered to be a sign of fakeness in New Zealand. I offended a lot of Kiwi's by being too direct and upfront when a more subtle approach would have been considered more polite.

P14: For the majority of my first 7 years, I lived in Ecuador, and identified as an Ecuadorian despite having Bolivian parents. Then we moved again, and I thought I was US American due to my citizenship (I was born there, but none of my parents are citizens), and thought that this meant I could claim it as mine. I then got really really confused before deciding I was mostly Bolivian as that is the base thread of culture of my childhood due to my parents and how that was really the only "rock" or consistency in my life.

P15: My friends didn't treat me any differently because of the color of my skin. But I remember that I would go to the bathroom with my friends, look at my reflection in the mirror and become horrified at how different I looked from my friends. That's when I realized that I belonged somewhere else.

P16: In Kindergarten I sang what I was taught to be "the alphabet" - it wasn't till a few months later that it was made clear to me that I was singing the Tagalog alphabet, not the English Alphabet. The teachers themselves were a little confused, then accepting when they found out I was Korean, but "looked so much like a Filipino baby". The teachers also thought I had a learning disability, but that perhaps more related to suffering from extensive contusions in the cerebral hemispheres when hit by a car at age 3.

P18: My family moved to Tajikistan from Turkey when I was five. Up until that point I thought I was Turkish, even though my parents were American. Tajikistan was clearly a foreign culture, it wasn't until I was around 6 and with other expat American children that I realized I was American.

P19: I can't really pick a date. I just kind of always knew I was somewhere caught between cultures. In elementary school I was an American kid with a British accent because I was attending a British elementary school in turkey. One of my best friends growing up was half Turkish, and the other one was German. My cultural displacement always seemed obvious, although never in a strange way. Just, normal.

P21: Upon my return to the US after living abroad for many years I felt I couldn't relate to other American kids, due to their lack of understanding/ ignorance of other cultures.

*Q15 Do your experiences overseas play into how you make decisions or choices?*

P1: The fact that mine was a patchwork of cultures only helped broaden my horizon and often, I believe, allow to me look at situations more holistically.

P4: My experiences have made me more comfortable, I think, with encountering adversity and dealing with it.

P5: in pretty much all my decisions, from little things like what foods to buy, to my decision about where to go to college (the first time i had any choice in where I moved, instead of going along with my parents)

P9: Decisions as simple as what to eat for lunch, to how and where to meet my family are altered by overseas experiences.

P11: When deciding something, there is no way to satisfy the conflicting voices in my head - each culture has its own opinion on what to do. I have no choice but to throw my hands in the air and listen to the newest one, hoping that my old friends will forgive me for having to live in the present.

P12: I'm so used to moving country's every couple of years that I am unable to think long-term. It makes it hard for me to maintain friendships and relationships because I think of everything as temporary so leapfrog over problems or just walk away from the relationships. When choosing a major for university my main criteria is that it leave doors open for me to travel with work after graduation. I've changed my major 5 times so far because I have so many options, in so many different countries that its hard to choose any one thing. Anytime I have to stay in one country for too long I start to feel trapped and need a change so I will do things like dye my hair new colors. I think I am addicted to travelling and change. The thought of a long-term relationship scares me to death because I feel like a bird that is facing the threat of getting their wings cut off. I broke up with a guy in New Zealand because he wanted to marry me but had an 8-year bond to the NZ air force and I would be stuck there for that long if I stayed with him. I couldn't face it.

P15: I make friends with a lot of other international/expats people in college, how I vote depending on a politician's foreign policy.. I think I try more things than others (If a friend suggests a new food I usually end up trying it, something a lot of my non- International friends don't seem to do).

P18: I know that I will forever have a global and multicultural perspective, so the jobs, relationships, the kind of life I will live will always be unique. Having my friends and families all over the world, my career and residence decisions are always hard to make... but definitely are influenced by where my close relationships are at.

P22: It makes it difficult for me to settle and spend significant amounts of time in a single place

P23: I am a lot more understanding of others, and less judgmental.

*Q20 Did this experience [from the first year of college] help you grow or change in any way?*

P9: I understand US culture a lot more now and I know how my background is different from the average US kid. I used to think that I was a normal US teenager but I learned that I really am not normal or average

P12: It challenged me to adjust and go through a lot of self-discovery of what it means to come from a background of so many cultures and adjust into a culture which is partly seen as a "home" culture

P14: Instead of apologizing for my extravagant, odd and bizarre tastes like I did in high school, I began to own up to it.

**INTROSPECTION ON CAMPUS**

*Q15 Do your experiences overseas play into how you make decisions or choices?*

P9: I have a very Japanese mindset. Because in Japan we were taught to show respect to elders, I have difficulty creating more than a formal relationship with my professors. While they desire to chat and get to know me on a personal level, because of my cultural upbringing, I have difficulty discussing information outside of the classroom with them.

*Q19 Think back to your first year in college. Is there a particular experience where your life history influenced a decision?*

P2: But as I mentioned previously, my academic career and my decision to seek out a roommate (prior to attending college) who had also lived overseas - these two decisions were influenced by my life history.

P3: I decided to transfer due to my life history. I grew up in the international American system overseas and decided that I would prefer that in college too.

P4: Living location is a good example - I chose to live in the IRC for the obvious reason in that I did not expect to be able to relate with American students as well and that I didn't want to lose touch with my more or less international upbringing.

P12: A semester and a half into the year I decided to switch my major from chemical engineering to economics. I realized that I didn't want to study something so new to me, I would rather study something that I could tie to my life experiences in a more solid way.

P13: It more impacts my smaller decisions like what to write papers about or which courses to take. It also caused me to get quite frustrated when professors presented information in a manner, which did not consider other cultural perspectives.

P15: I choose to drink differently or not at all when I saw how the drinking culture is a bit crazy here (and I've been told it is worse in bigger universities). Decided not to do Junior Year Abroad to see what it is like to stay in one place for more than 3 years.

P16: I did not make a very big decision my first year, except to try as many things as possible in the ways of activities/clubs/social groups and such. I was very academic (work ethic ran strongly in my family background). I chose not to tell people I grew up overseas till halfway through the first semester. I knew I was beginning anew and setting up a new home for myself for the next four years, I made adapting/becoming acculturated my first priority and while I tried different things, didn't commit to any activity besides schooling and campus ministry.

P18: I was ready and willing to immerse myself in my friends' cultures, i.e. Arab.

P19: The friends I chose to hang out with my first year were international students from Europe. Then I realized that I didn't fit their either, and gradually developed closest relationships with racially similar peers (emersion stage). My closest friends tend to be 1.5 Asian Americans still, but I have a wider range of friends from different races now.

P21: In America it is customary for kids to drink alcohol frequently; however, after attending high school in the Middle East activities such as these seemed inappropriate and unnecessary.

*Q20 did this experience help you grow or change in any way?*

P11: I definitely felt like I had to think things through more deeply than the other people in my classes. I was unable to simply accept what I was being taught blindly as I automatically try to look at everything from the different possible cultural perspectives.

P18: After my first few months in University I learned to adapt to American culture and realized that drinking is somewhat necessary in social environments in university.

*Q21 When you first arrived on campus what were your expectations of the university or your peers?*

P1: I think I was pleasantly surprised by the open-mindedness and general brilliance of my peers

P2: had not expected that the college community would be as fragmented as it was. Thinking back on it, it makes sense that a large university would create an "impersonal" effect, but it was still jarring for someone who graduated from high school in a class of only 60 to go to a university with over 3,000 other freshmen.

P8: I was expecting smart people. I expected to be book smart, since that's the main metric by which you get into a university. I don't know if I expected maturity, I guess I didn't know what to expect on that mark.

P10: I wasn't particularly excited, so my expectations were not very high. I had heard that people were friendly, and they were.

P14: I expected it to be a mix of people, and to be surprised in some way each time I was introduced to somebody, but over time I slowly realized that I was meeting the same person over and over. I don't know if it's my university or U.S. culture in general but the people here seem to be the most homogeneous that I've ever come across.

P15: I expected everyone to be partying all the time, friendly, over dramatic, open-minded, and happy.

P16: I was afraid that I would be too different and would not get along with American peers.

P17: I wasn't exactly sure what to expect, I suspected they would be average Americans.

P18: I was honestly so excited that I never really had concrete thoughts about it. I guess I expected to have people discussing international politics and laws and issues more than they are right now.

P19: I was hoping I would blend in with everyone else and become American given enough time. At the same time I felt very alien and didn't exactly look forward to getting to know what I considered mono-cultural people.

P20: I hoped that I would fit in. Meet numerous likeminded people. Become a "college kid," party a lot and do what I assumed all college kids did.

P25: I tried to enter with an open mind.

*Q22 On campus was there a time when people assumed you were someone you were not? What assumptions were made about you?*

P14: Each person does this differently, mirroring the setting that they were in before coming to Bucknell, so each person has their own set of assumptions about who I am. For example, a girl from New Jersey might subconsciously assume that I grew under similar conditions and therefore when I wear the wrong thing or say the wrong thing I am at fault because I should know better.

P19: Many of them said later that they found me reserved, although I went out of my way to be friendly. Maybe it was in my body language (not touchy feely) and the things I chose to talk about.

1. Northwestern University is a private research-intensive university with campuses in Evanston and Chicago, Illinois; founded in 1851. It is ranked 21 overall in American HE institutions and 12th in research institutions. The endowment was worth 7.2 billion dollars in 2011, which was ranked 9th overall for American HE. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. www.denizenmag.com, www.tckworld.com, www.internations.org, www.tckid.com [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For the interested reader, ‘my story’ is captured in appendix 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. www.cas.edu “Founded in 1979, The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs.” (p.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/0,,contentMDK:21924020~pagePK:5105988~piPK:360975~theSitePK:214971,00.html [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts\_for\_features\_special\_editions/005225.html [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Classifications of HE institutions began in 1970. http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. http://www.csrees.usda.gov/about/offices/legis/morrill.html [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. http://www.gibill.va.gov/post-911/history-timeline/ [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. http://www.oyez.org/cases/1792-1850/1818/1818\_0. George III granted the original charter of the college in 1769, which included the granting of land. The state legislature in 1816 passed a law that revoked the college’s private status to public, controlled by the state of New Hampshire. The college sued and won on the issue that the original charter between King and college was a contract and therefore could not be undone by the state. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. For more information on the topic of federal aid see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/fpg/index.html, http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Lewis and Clark College was founded in 1867 by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church. It is a private college 60 miles south of Portland Oregon. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. http://chronicle.com/article/Number-of-Foreign-Students-in/49142 (accessed 12 July, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. For more information on the subject of U.S. residence halls see Schroeder, C. C., & Mable, P. (1994). *Realizing the Educational Potential of Residence Halls. Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series*. Jossey-Bass Inc [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. (http://bls.gov/news.release/hsge.nr0.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Each department is considered a separate but equal non-academic function and is usually supervised through three distinct areas of the institution, Student Affairs, Auxiliary Services, and Business Operations. Appleton, J. (1978) Pieces of Eight: The Rites, Roles, and Styles of the Dean, by Eight Who Have Been There. National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. 1972 Title IX women’s access rights in education, http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/titleix.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, http://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. http://www.aaup.org/file/joint-statement-on-rights-and-freedoms-of-students.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See work by Patton, L.D. (2010) *Culture Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity, Theory, and Practice*. Stylus Publishing, LLC and Harper, S.R. and Patton, L.D. (2007) Responding to the Realities of Race on Campus. *New Directions for Student Services*. 120(96) Jossey-Bass for more information on race, identity and the role of cultural centers. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Pollock, D., and Van Reken, R.E. (2009) *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds*. Revised Edition. Brealey, Boston. (p.55) [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. “Each year, hundreds of two-year colleges, four-year colleges and universities administer the **CIRP Freshman Survey (TFS)** to hundreds of thousands of entering students during orientation or registration. The survey covers a wide range of student characteristics: parental income and education, ethnicity, and other demographic items; financial aid; secondary school achievement and activities; educational and career plans; and values, attitudes, beliefs, and self-concept. Published annually in ‘**The American Freshman**’, the results from these surveys continue to provide a comprehensive portrait of the changing character of entering students and American society at large.” http://www.heri.ucla.edu/cirpoverview.php p.1 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Dillard University founded in 1869 is a private historically black liberal arts college located in New Orleans, Louisiana. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Only survey data is used at this point to clarify the PolVan Cultural Domain Model [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Survey data used to clarify PolVan Cultural Domain Model [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Belonging is defined as to be attached as through birth or membership, to be properly situated. \_\_\_\_\_ (2004) Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary. 11th Edition. Merriam-Webster, Inc. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Identity can be defined as the distinguishing characteristic or personality of an individual. Identity crisis – psychological conflict especially in adolescence involving confusion about one’s social role and one’s personality. \_\_\_\_\_ (2004) Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary. 11th Edition. Merriam-Webster, Inc. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Introspection is defined as the act of being reflective, looking inward, an examination of one’s own thoughts and feelings. \_\_\_\_\_ (2004) Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary. 11th Edition. Merriam-Webster, Inc. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Greek Life refers to the fraternity and sorority social organizations prevalent on U.S. HE campuses. The terminology can be traced back to the 17th Century and the founding of Phi Beta Kappa. The first groups were academic in nature and attached to a particular academic department. Today’s groups while maintaining the Greek letters of their originators are now social in nature and profess to help their members better themselves in the social community. The groups number in the hundreds and can be found on most U.S. HE campuses. The groups consist of all-female, all-male and co-educational groups, as well as historically black, Asian and Hispanic organizations. Greek Life struggles to maintain a positive image nationally. Many individual groups struggle with reputations that involve drug and alcohol abuse as well as hazing allegations. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. http://www.alcoholpolicymd.com/alcohol\_and\_health/campus\_fact\_sheet.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. http://www.iie.org/Who-We-Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2011/2011-11-14-Open-Doors-Study-Abroad [↑](#footnote-ref-31)