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EXPLORING THE IDENTITY STATUS OF ADULT THIRD CULTURE KIDS

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EXPLORING THE IDENTITY STATUS OF ADULT THIRD CULTURE KIDS

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
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Abstract

Given the mixed findings on Adult Third-Culture Kids' (ATCKs) identity development, the study explored whether ATCKs' identity problems, particularly identity moratorium, were in fact related to their relativistic thinking developed as a result of their experiences abroad; more specifically, the study tested whether relativistic thinking in ATCKs mediated the relationship between cross-cultural experience and identity moratorium. The study did not find a significant relationship between either cross-cultural experience and identity moratorium, or cross-cultural experience and relativistic thinking, but did between identity moratorium and relativistic thinking.

Introduction

Identity is one of the most researched topics in the body of literature on Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and Adult Third Culture Kids (ATCKs) – individuals who have spent their developmental years abroad (e.g. Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011; Ketting, 1997; Mortimer, 2010; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Research has yielded mixed results, with some studies finding that ATCKs have problems in their identity development and others finding that they do not. Much of the discrepancy in these findings is due to the theoretical framework from which the researchers work. Those examining TCKs' identity from the perspective of Erikson's (1968) psychosocial model have viewed TCK identity development as problematic, delayed, confused, lacking commitment, and resulting in identity moratorium (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Gilbert, 2008; Ketting, 1997; Mortimer, 2010; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Wrobbel & Plueddemann, 1990); whereas those who have adopted more contemporary views of identity, such as sociocultural or narrative approaches, have found the identity development of TCKs to be enriched by their experiences abroad (McDonald, 2011; Meneses, 2006; Moore & Barker, 2012; Priest, 2003; Kilguss, 2008; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008; Walters & Auton-Cuff, 2009). The following study works from Adler (1982) and Kim's (2001) sociocultural views on identity in which identity is seen as fluid, dynamic, and continuously impacted by cross-cultural interaction. Identity development, rather than being seen as a task for adolescence, is considered a lifelong process that is never achieved (Adler, 1982).

Another concept that has been mentioned frequently in relation to TCKs is relativistic thinking. Unlike identity, researchers have not explicitly examined

relativistic thinking in TCKs, although associated characteristics, such as a lack of identification with one set of values, have been found in ATCKs (Gilbert, 2008; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). These characteristics have also been associated with identity moratorium (Kahlbaugh & Kramer, 1995).

Relativistic thinking and identity moratorium share similarities. Both are characterized by a lack of commitment. Identity moratorium is associated with a lack of commitment to one identity, whereas relativistic thinking is associated with a lack of commitment to one way of thinking or one truth (Kahlbaugh & Kramer, 1995). Additionally, researchers have found that relativistic thinking is a significant predictor of identity moratorium (Kahlbaugh & Kramer, 1995).

Working from Adler's (1982) and Kim's (2001) sociocultural views on identity, the following study seeks to extend studies finding ATCKs to be confused and lacking commitment in their identity. This study proposed that relativistic thinking, developed as a result of living abroad, would help explain the relationship between identity moratorium and cross-cultural experience.

Literature Review

Given that the exploration of TCK identity requires a general understanding of the TCK experience and profile, the manuscript will first provide an overview of this experience. It will then present the literature on identity development in ATCKs, relativistic thinking in ATCKs, and the relationship between relativistic thinking and identity development.

The Cross-Cultural Experiences of TCKs

A brief overview of the TCK experience. The term *Third-Culture Kid* was coined by Drs. John and Ruth Useem, anthropologists and sociologists studying an expatriate community in India during the 1950s (Useem, 1993). The “third-culture” referred to the expatriate communities in which dependents were growing up (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Pollock and Van Reken (2001) offered the following description of a Third-Culture Kid:

A Third-Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experiences, the sense of belonging is in relationships to others of similar background. (p. 19)

When reaching adulthood, TCKs are called Adult Third-Culture Kids (ATCKs). For the sake of brevity, TCKs and ATCKs will both be referred to as (A)TCKs for the remainder of the paper. Although much of (A)TCK research has focused on U.S. (A)TCKs, (A)TCKs hail from and hold citizenship in a range of countries (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Additionally, the families of (A)TCKs are sponsored by a range of agencies, including national governments (for the families of diplomats), national militaries (for the families of service women or men), missionary organizations (for missionary families), and corporations (for the families of business women or men) (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001).

(A)TCKs as cross-cultural individuals. Pollock and Van Reken (2009) note that (A)TCKs are similar to other cross-cultural individuals (i.e., bi-racial or multi-racial

individuals, immigrants, refugees, borderlanders, individuals of minority status, and international adoptees) due to their experience with two or more cultural environments. (A)TCKs are differentiated from other cross-cultural individuals, however, by their high mobility patterns (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Unlike other cross-cultural individuals who typically interact with two different cultures, (A)TCKs are exposed to and reside in many different cultures (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). In one study, some (A)TCKs reported living in as many as ten countries prior to their eighteenth birthday (Melles, 2012). In Hoersting and Jenkins' (2011) study, (A)TCKs had experienced an average of 2.4 international moves, with some (A)TCKs moving only once and others moving six times. Additionally, (A)TCKs spend much of their childhood and adolescence living in a country other than their "home" country (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). In Hoersting and Jenkins' study, participants had lived an average of 9.5 years abroad before their 18th birthday, with some participants living as few as two years abroad and some living as many as eighteen years abroad.

Despite originating from and living in heterogeneous cultures and countries, (A)TCKs have been found to share a number of characteristics, including openness to experience (Dewaele & van Oudenhoven, 2009), a tolerance of differences (Peterson & Plamondon, 2009), multicultural identities (Moore & Barker, 2012), restlessness (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Cottrell & Useem, 1994), and a delayed adolescence (Cottrell & Useem, 1993; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001).

Identity

The concept of identity, while used appropriately by most people, lacks a commonly accepted definition that captures all meanings for which it is currently used

(Fearon, 1999). While Erikson is typically considered the father of identity research, a number of additional theories have been developed that relate to identity. The following section will briefly discuss these theories, and how they have been applied to (A)TCK identity.

Erikson's psychosocial approach. Erikson (1968) defined identity as "the awareness of . . . self-sameness and continuity . . . [and] the style of one's individuality [which] coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others in the immediate community" (p. 50). Erikson viewed ego identity as being shaped by an individual's biological characteristics, the individual's unique psychological needs and interests, and the cultural milieu in which the individual lives, and believed that most identity formation work would occur during adolescence during the Identity versus Role Confusion psychosocial stage. Erikson described identity formation as the process through which the individual no longer seeks to become like others:

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 on the process by which a society (often through subsocieties) identifies the young individual, recognizing him as somebody who had to become the way he is and who, being the way he is, is taken for granted. (p. 159)

Identity formation results in identity achievement or identity confusion, which Marcia (1988) described in more detail.

Building from Erikson's psychosocial theory, Marcia (1988) discussed the dimensions of exploration and commitment in relation to the achievement of a cohesive identity. While commitment refers to the adherence to particular beliefs, goals, and values, exploration refers to the examination of various life options and alternatives (Marcia, 1988). From these two dimensions, Marcia derived the four independent identity statuses: Achieved Identity, Diffused Identity, Foreclosed Identity, and Identity Moratorium (see Table 1).

An Achieved Identity status, characterized by both high exploration and commitment, has typically been considered the gold standard of identity research. Individuals with an Achieved status are seen as having successfully negotiated Erikson's (1980) identity versus role confusion psychosocial stage. Additionally, researchers have found a positive correlation between identity achievement and low neuroticism, high conscientiousness, and extroversion (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993); an internalized locus of control (Waterman & Waterman, 1970); higher grade point averages (Cross & Allen, 1970); connectedness to and separation from families (Kamptner, 1988); openness with families (Bosma & Gerrits, 1985); and traditional gender roles for females (Clarke & Kleine, 1984).

In contrast, the other identity statuses have been typically correlated with poor psychological wellbeing. Identity Foreclosure (i.e., low exploration – high commitment) has been associated with closed-mindedness and rigidity (Marcia, 1980), authoritarianism (Marcia, 1967), an idealized relationship with parents (Adams, Dyk, & Bennion, 1987), and a resistance to change (Marcia, 1994). Identity Diffusion (i.e., low exploration – low commitment) has been associated with apathy, disinterest, and

depression (Marcia, 1980; Marcia, 1993); poor academic performance (Berzonsky, 1985); drug use (Jones, 1992); emotional distance with one's family (Adams et al., 1987); and a lack of social support (Meeus & Dekovic, 1995).

Marcia (1966) provided the following description of the individual in the Moratorium (i.e., high exploration – low commitment) identity status:

The moratorium subject is in the crisis period with commitments rather vague; he is distinguished from the identity-diffusion subject by the appearance of an active struggle to make commitments. Issues often described as adolescent preoccupy him. Although his parents' wishes are still important to him, he is attempting a compromise among them, society's demands, and his own capabilities. His sometimes bewildered appearance stems from his vital concern and internal preoccupation with what occasionally appear to him to be unresolvable questions. (p. 552)

Identity Moratorium is thus characterized as a period of turmoil and confusion during which the individual seeks to come to terms with incompatible values and beliefs (Marcia, 1966; Schwartz, 2001). Identity Moratorium has been associated with high anxiety (Marcia, 1966; Schwartz et al., 2009; Schwartz et al, 2011); the use of denial, projection, and identification to control anxiety (Cramer, 1995); depression and depressive symptomatology (Schwartz et al., 2009; Schwartz et al, 2011); low sense of worth (Schwartz et al., 2009); low self-esteem (Schwartz et al, 2011); and a weak sense of self (Ickes, Park, & Johnson, 2012). It has also been found to be related to a number of more positive traits, however, including a high locus of control (Schwartz et al, 2011), openness and curiosity (Luycks et al., 2006), openness to experience (Tesch

& Cameron, 1987), and a lower endorsement of authoritarian values than the Achieved Identity status (Marcia, 1967).

In response to criticism that Erikson and Marcia's theories dealt primarily with male identity development, Grotevant, Thorbecke, and Meyer (1982) proposed a second domain to assessments of identity development. The interpersonal domain assessed development related to friendships, dating, sex roles, and recreation, whereas the ideological domain assessed development related to occupation, politics, religion, and philosophy. Grotevant et al. argued that a framework of interpersonal relationships – to be differentiated from the actual establishment of interpersonal relationships – is an important aspect of identity formation and may be a precursor to the development of intimate relationships.

(A)TCK identity from Erikson's psychosocial approach. A number of researchers have examined identity development in (A)TCKs from Erikson's psychosocial approach, finding (A)TCKs to experience problematic identity development. Additional researchers have used Erikson's terminology or concepts without explicitly mentioning Erikson.

Pollock and Van Reken (2001), in their foundational book on (A)TCKs, claimed that identity formation is the greatest challenge that (A)TCKs face. While Pollock and Van Reken did not explicitly mention Erikson, it is clear that they were referring to his psychosocial theory when they stated, "Every person must go through certain stages of life successfully in order to function as an independent adult. At least in Western culture, it is during the teenage years that several of these critical developmental steps take place" (p. 150). They described (A)TCKs as having a delayed adolescence,

referring to Useem and Cottrell's (1993) finding that 90% of their (A)TCK participants felt "out of sync" (p. 1) with their age group. Further examination of Useem and Cottrell's reported findings are necessary, however. Participants in the study did not report feeling younger or delayed in comparison to their monocultural peers, but merely different from them. It is others that reported problems with (A)TCK participants' behavior:

Some young adult TCKs strike their *close peers, parents, and counselors* [emphasis added] as being self-centered adolescents, as having champagne tastes on beer incomes (or no incomes), as not being able to make up their minds about what they want to do with their lives, where they want to live, and whether or not they want to "settle down, get married, and have children" (Useem & Cottrell, 1993, p. 1)

It is also important to note that Useem and Cottrell (1993) concluded that the problems, themselves, had less to do with being an (A)TCK than what they describe as the "American scene" (p. 2), suggesting a lack of fit between the home culture and the third-culture experience.

While Gilbert (2008) recognized that identity development could begin before adolescence, she adopted Erikson's belief that it should be resolved by the end of adolescence. From this angle, she concluded from her study that the existential losses experienced by ATCKs rendered identity formation challenging: "The end result of existential losses is a prolonged, possibly chronic liminal [in-between] condition, in which TCKs maintain an ongoing state of uncertainty about safety and trust, identity, where they belong, and where their home truly is" (p. 107). Like Pollock and Van

Reken (2001) and Useem and Cottrell (1993), Gilbert referred to ATCKs as experiencing a delayed adolescence as a result of their experience abroad.

In their literature review and qualitative study on belonging and identity in ATCKs, Fail, Thompson, and Walker (2004) noted that when evaluated from Erikson's psychosocial theory, (A)TCK identity development is considered problematic: "In light of the theory of *adolescent* [emphasis added] identity development, the literature suggests that TCKs face many challenges as their identity formation is constantly being challenged by new and changing environments" (Fail et al., 2004, p. 326). They accepted Erikson's conceptualization of identity as stable and permanent, stating that (A)TCK identity development "must surely be challenged" (Fail et al., 2004, p. 324) due to the changing nature of an (A)TCK's environment.

Wrobbel and Plueddemann (1990) sought to examine the long term psychosocial effects of the overseas experience on missionary kids. Working from Erikson's psychosocial theory, they asked a number of questions related to missionary kids' psychosocial development and compared missionary kid development to the general population. Of the sample of 292 missionary kids, ranging in age from 24 to 69, only one quarter had high to very high resolution scores on the Identity vs. Identity Confusion scale; whereas over 40% of the scores were in the low and very low resolution categories. Wrobbel and Plueddemann concluded that the group of missionary kids had not resolved the conflicts in the developmental stages as successfully as their monocultural counterparts.

Only one study to date has determined the identity statuses of an (A)TCK sample. Ketting (1997) examined the identity statuses of missionary kids and

immigrants between the age of fourteen and thirty-seven (mean of 22 years), exploring whether identity status was related to gender, ethnicity, family closeness, socioeconomic status, cross-cultural experience, age when cross-cultural experience occurred, and the presence of a support group. Although many of her hypotheses regarding gender, family closeness, socioeconomic status, and support group differences were not supported, she found significant differences in identity status between her subgroups. Seventy percent of the missionary kids in her sample were in a Moratorium status despite being older (mean age =27) than other subgroups, whereas only 21.6% of immigrants and 50.5% of individuals who had not moved were in a Moratorium status (p. 62). The research thus suggested that (A)TCKs may struggle to commit to one identity and may be overrepresented in the Moratorium identity status.

These studies suggest that when evaluated from Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory and Marcia's (1988) identity statuses, (A)TCKs are found to have identity problems, including role confusion, identity Moratorium, and a lack of commitment. This phenomenon is perhaps best portrayed in McDonald's (2010; 2011) work. McDonald (2010) originally argued that Erikson's developmental model would be partially applicable to (A)TCKs and proposed that (A)TCKs experience confusion due to their changing environments. Consequently, in a later study on the wellness of (A)TCKs, McDonald (2011) hypothesized that (A)TCKs would have significantly lower scores on the Five Factor Wellness Inventory (5F-Wel; Myers & Sweeney, 1999) than the normative, monocultural population. Her findings revealed the opposite, however. (A)TCKs scored higher on both the overall wellness score and each of the subscales, including those examining identity. The findings from McDonald's studies

suggest that Erikson's psychosocial model may paint a picture of (A)TCK identity that is pathologizing and, in fact, not accurate. When evaluated from the perspective of Erikson's psychosocial model, (A)TCKs are likely to be seen as experiencing identity difficulties regardless of their psychological wellbeing.

Postmodern approaches to identity. In addition to Erikson's (1968) work, a number of other theoretical approaches to identity have emerged. Two in particular, the sociocultural and narrative approaches, have been used to understand (A)TCK identity and merit further attention.

Narrative approaches to identity. In the early 90s, Gergen (1991) noted the incongruence between Erikson's definition of identity as self-sameness and postmodernism:

For increasing numbers the attitude of anything-goes applies to the construction of selves. For the postmodern, life is rendered more fully expressive and enriched by suspending the demands for personal coherence, self-recognition, or determinant placement, and simply being within the ongoing process of relating. (Gergen, 1991, p. 133-134).

McAdams (1996) proposed the narrative approach to identity to respond to the cultural shift toward postmodernism. It is based on six qualities of the modern self (McAdams, 1987; McAdams, 1996).

1. Each individual develops his or her identity. It is not given by others.
2. This identity work occurs in everyday life and by every individual.
3. The self is multilayered, including an inner depth.

4. Identity develops over time with individuals continuing to make sense of their lives.
5. The self seeks to find coherence in his or her identity development through time through self-narrative.
6. The pure relationship allows for the deepest connections between selves.

Thus, from the narrative perspective, identity is fluid, changes with time, and is made sense of through self-narratives. McAdams (1996) differentiated between the *I* and the *me*, seeing the *I* as the narrator of the story and thus the creator of identity, and the *me* as the product created by the *I*. The life story, and identity, is therefore the manner in which the *I* arranges the *me* into a temporal sequence (McAdams, 1996). The *I* may pull from characteristics from three different levels to create the self-narrative. Level 1 consists of personality traits and are considered features of the *me*. Level 2 consists of goals, personal strivings, and values, all of which are contextually situated. Finally, level 3 consists of the psychosocial identity constructs that incorporate the past, present, and future. McAdams (1985, 1987, 1993) proposed that the structure and content of life stories could be understood in terms of narrative tone, imagery, theme, ideological setting, nuclear episodes, imagoes, and generativity.

A couple of researchers have used McAdams' (1996) narrative approach to explain (A)TCK identity (Meneses, 2006; Sears, 2011; Walters & Auton-Cuff, 2009).

While Meneses (2006) originally approached her qualitative study on (A)TCK identity, language, and memory from Erikson's psychosocial theory, she described having to switch to a postmodern approach on identity to describe and understand her data.

Meneses (2006) proposed that life stories could unify the often divergent experiences of

(A)TCKs, rather than a commitment to one way of being. She dismissed Marcia's (1988) identity statuses, noting that they provided little clarity to the understanding of (A)TCK identity. She concluded,

The issues that emerged among the adult third culture individuals appeared to be connected to a difficulty with commitment, possible due to the high mobility experienced by these individuals in their childhood and/or adolescence (...)

What appears to be a lack of commitment to a national identity is therefore more of an unwillingness to conform to the social mandated concept of nationality and not a lack of personal investment in the choices (...) The idea that an achieved identity must necessarily have committed to one alternative seems unidimensional and obviously does not ring true for the third culture individual. (Meneses, 2006, p. 181-183)

Similarly, Hamachek (1971) argued that a different approach to identity should be used with individuals from cross-cultural backgrounds. He proposed that cross-cultural individuals consider themselves a *self-in-process* rather than a *self-as-object*, proposing a view of identity that is dynamic and fluid, rather than static and permanent. Meneses (2006) recognized the need for a paradigm shift in future research – one which would recognize the instrumental role that culture played in identity development.

Walters and Auton-Cuff (2009) also explored the identity of (A)TCK women from a narrative approach, noting that traditional theories, such as Erikson's psychosocial theory, were inappropriate for the (A)TCK population. They found that association with the (A)TCK culture, whether through reading the (A)TCK literature and research or spending time with other (A)TCKs, was instrumental in their

participants' identity development, normalizing their experiences. One participant described her experience reading a book about (A)TCKs: "...I was in tears a lot just because it was like oh that explains why....why I acted certain ways in the past...why I was always different." (Walters & Auton-Cuff, 2009, p. 767). Another theme that emerged from participants' stories was the idea of being different. For many, being different played a key role in their identity. One participant explained, "...our identity is an anti-identity, the only way we can define ourselves is how we are not" (Walters & Auton-Cuff, 2009, p. 764). Walters and Auton-Cuff recognized the unique experiences of (A)TCKs and stressed the importance of abandoning traditional developmental frameworks when evaluating these experiences.

Conducting a study proposed by Grimshaw and Sears (2008), Sears (2011) found that the (A)TCKs adapted their identities in response to new social circumstances while also maintaining hybrid or multiple identities that incorporated all aspects of their life. She found that participants maintained a unified sense of self through their self-narratives. Participants described their identity in terms of their international moves, began their descriptions of their identity at the chronological beginning (their birth), and voiced the desire to write a book about their experiences. Sears noted, "Viewing themselves as people who move appears to offer a means of making sense of their multiple attachments and experiences and allows them, within a community that shares this life-style, to sustain an integrated identity" (p. 81). Sears concluded that when identity is viewed from a narrative perspective, it allows identity to be fluid, negotiated in response to the context, and never finalized, and, consequently, is appropriate for use with (A)TCKs.

Sociocultural approaches to identity. In sociocultural approaches, society plays a key role in identity development, providing identity alternatives to an individual (Kroger, 2007). Mead (1934) is credited as first providing an alternative to Erikson's conceptualization of identity (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007). Mead posited that individuals self-define from their perception of others' verbal or non-verbal responses to them. Thus, individuals are aware of the impact that they have on others, and adjust their future responses accordingly (Mead, 1934). In sociocultural approaches, a *multiple personality* is the norm, given that individuals relate differently to different people (Kroger, 2007). These multiple personalities may hold conflicting moral stances (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007; Kroger, 2007). Additionally, identity is seen as adapting over time with changes in context or new messages received from new people (Kroger, 2007). "Stability in one's sense of identity is likely only if social contexts remain unaltered or if one continues to receive nonconflicting messages from significant others about who one is or should be in the world" (Kroger, 2007, p. 21).

While Adler (1982) and Kim (2001) focused primarily on the impact of multiculturalism and intercultural experiences on identity, their views on identity stemmed from a sociocultural approach. Like Mead (1934), both Adler and Kim viewed identity as being continuously shaped by others' responses: "The impressions received from surroundings, from others, and from the self, as well as the retention of these impressions for future reference – all become integral parts of an evolving person" (Kim, 2001, p.191). The principles of the sociocultural approach conflict with Erikson's (1968) definition of identity as being stable and fixed. Additionally, like

Mead, both Adler and Kim's definitions allow for multiple personalities and conflicting values and opinions.

A number of (A)TCK researchers have rejected the application of Erikson's theories to (A)TCK identity and have advocated the use of sociocultural approaches. Priest (2003) discussed how (A)TCK researchers have pathologized the struggles of (A)TCKs by using a monocultural frame of reference, such as Erikson's psychosocial model. Priest discounted Wrobbel and Plueddemann's (1990) findings that missionary kids scored low on psychosocial development, noting the inappropriateness of the measure used and the fact that Erikson's work was developed and normed within monocultural settings. Priest also addressed Moss' (1985) findings that missionary kids were lonely and her speculations that they were too dependent on their families, noting "if American peers were taken into the social settings in which MKs [missionary kids] grew up, it would be the American transplants who would struggle with the demands of everyday life and who would lack 'autonomy skills'" (p. 188). Finally, Priest discounted Sharp's (1985) observations that missionary kids are insecure in their peer relations, commenting that Sharp did not describe whether the peers were monocultural or cross-cultural individuals. Priest concluded,

In short, for neither of these circumstances is a psychological development model the most helpful way to construe what is going on. And yet a large proportion of the research literature on MKs is directly dependent on development models that were never designed to take into account intercultural dynamics. (Priest, 2003, p. 189)

Priest argued that (A)TCK researchers should reconsider the role of culture in future studies of (A)TCK struggles.

Schaetti & Ramsey (1999) recognized the importance of re-conceptualizing traditional definitions of concepts such as home and identity when considering the (A)TCK experience, noting that researchers often impose limits that are not appropriate. They described identity as dynamic and determined by culture:

We all contain within ourselves multiple intersecting identities [...] In any given moment, one of those identities may be more relevant to us than others. At the same time, the identities in our backgrounds continue to make up the whole of who we are. Liminality reminds us to stand tall at the intersection of our multiple identities, aware of our contradictions, and proud nonetheless to acknowledge all the facets of who we are. (Schaetti & Ramsey, 1999, p. 3)

Grimshaw and Sears (2008) reviewed the literature on TCK identity before proposing a study to explore how international school students negotiate and maintain a sense of identity despite a constantly changing environment. Grimshaw and Sears recognized the two divergent voices in (A)TCK research: one that suggests that identity formation for (A)TCKs is never quite achieved; and another that proposes that ATCKs can establish “new hybrid forms of identity” (p.262). Acknowledging that (A)TCK identity may not be appropriately addressed by traditional identity theories (i.e. Erikson or Marcia), Grimshaw and Sears proposed using symbolic interactionism – a sociocultural approach- to understand identity formation. They adopted Hawkins’ (2005) definition of identity as “an ongoing negotiation between the individual and the

social context or environment” (p. 59) and argue that non-traditional theories of identity are most congruent with the (A)TCK experience

Moore and Barker (2012) asked whether ATCKs experience a confused cultural identity, a multicultural identity, or multiple cultural identities, and whether and how they were able to alternate between two or more cultural identities. They found that (A)TCKs were best described as having multiple cultural identities or a multicultural identity, rather than a confused identity. Participants described being able to shift naturally between identities according to the cultural setting:

It’s not like I think, oh, okay, I’m in Brazil. I need to act a certain way. It just comes to you naturally because that’s what I’m used to. I don’t even think about it. It just happens. Depending on where you are, you just act a certain way.

(Moore & Barker, 2012, p.557)

Another (A)TCK described a more unified identity that was nevertheless adaptable: “I have one identity, but I understand both cultures. I know how to put them together in one piece which is me. I know how to mix both of them in a way that I can adapt wherever I’m at” (Moore & Barker, 2012, p.557).

Unlike Erikson’s psychosocial theory, narrative and sociocultural approaches have provided a non-pathologizing framework from which to view the (A)TCK experience. Researchers working from these approaches have found (A)TCKs to have integrated, yet multiple identities that they change according to the context.

Impact of cross-cultural experience on identity development. A number of researchers have recognized the impact of culture on identity development (Côté, 1996; Gergen, 1991; Mead, 1934; Shotter & Gergen, 1989). Even Erikson (1968) included

the individual's cultural milieu in his tripartite theory of ego identity development. For many of these researchers, identity development was assumed to take place in one culture (Kroger, 2007), although Gergen (1991) argued that even technologies that connect us with a more global world can impact one's identity, leading to a fragmented sense of self.

Others have written about the impact of biculturalism or multiculturalism on identity (Kroger, 2007; Rotheram & Phinney, 1987), although researchers have not reached a clear conclusion as to whether biculturalism or multiculturalism has a negative or positive impact on identity development (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987). Stonequist (1935, 1964) saw the bicultural individual as being forced to choose between the two cultural identities, causing an inner conflict, whereas more recent research has suggested that both cultural identities can be incorporated into one's sense of self with positive results (Berry, 2005; Fitzgerald, 1971; McFee, 1968; Ramirez & Castenada, 1974).

In her theory on communication and cross-cultural adaptation, Kim (2001) discussed how cross-cultural experiences impact identity development. Kim proposed that cross-cultural experiences result in three facets of intercultural transformation: (a) increased functional fitness, (b) improved psychological health, and (c) intercultural identity. Kim defined intercultural identity as "the acquired identity constructed after the early childhood enculturation process through the individual's communicative interactions with a new cultural environment" (p. 191). For Kim, it is the exposure to and internalization of new cultural elements that leads to an achieved sense of identity.

Rather than passively ascribing to elements of the home culture, the cross-cultural individual actively constructs his or her identity from learning:

Strangers are better able to manage the dynamic and dialogical interaction between the original culture and the new cultures. They are also better able to experience different cultural worlds with increasing ease, with greater capacity to make deliberate choices of actions in specific situations rather than simply following the dictates of the prevailing norms of the culture of childhood. (Kim, 2001, p. 192)

This development of an intercultural identity is accompanied, simultaneously, by both individualization and universalization (Kim, 2001). Individualization allows one to distance oneself from social categories and the pressure to conform to social norms. The self and others are viewed as unique individuals rather than social stereotypes. At the same time, one also develops a universalistic outlook – what Yoshikawa (1978) described as “a new consciousness, born out of an awareness of the relative nature of values and of the universal aspect of human nature” (p. 220). One is able to see the similarities and humanness in all people, and feels a unity with humanity. An intercultural identity thus celebrates the uniqueness of each individual and the self while simultaneously recognizing the larger connection to humankind.

Relativistic Thinking

Cunningham (1967) offered the following definition of relativism:

A view is generally said to be relativistic if it maintains that there are no absolute principles in some order of knowledge. . . . [Relativism] asserts that judgments vary according to the subjects who make them at different times, or

in different places, or under some other circumstances. (p. 220)

Although a range of definitions exist, most characterize relativism as the acceptance of contradictory knowledge systems and the recognition that knowledge is subjective, allowing truth to change according to the context in which it is made (Cunningham, 1967; Kramer, 1983). Relativistic thinking is thus contrary to thought which is absolutist or dichotomous (Marchand, 2001).

Research and theories exploring the development of relativistic thinking have yielded mixed findings. Perry (1970) focused on the intellectual and ethical development of college students and observed relativism emerging later in this development. Perry proposed nine intellectual and ethical positions that could be organized into four stages, ranging from the most simplistic to the most complex: (a) dualism, (b) multiplicity, (c) relativism, and (d) commitment. In the dualistic stage, individuals believe that there are right and wrong answers. In the multiplicity stage, individuals believe that some things are absolute and others are not. In the relativistic stage, individuals recognize that some solutions are better than others depending on the context. In the final stage, commitment, individuals make commitments in various domains. Perry (1981) was particularly interested in the transitions between these stages:

The drama lived in the variety and ingenuity of the ways students found to move from a familiar pattern of meanings that had failed them to a new vision that promised to make sense of their broadening experience, while it also threatened them with unanticipated implications for their selfhood and their lives. . . .
(Perhaps development is all transition and “stages” only resting points along the

way.) (p. 78)

Perry (1981) saw relativism as the major stepping stone to commitment, one that individuals must confront in order to move forward in their intellectual and ethical development. He noted that some individuals would respond to relativism by escaping or retreating. Perry defined escape as “alienation, abandonment of responsibility. Exploitation of Multiplicity and Relativism for avoidance of Commitment” (p. 80) and retreat as “avoidance of complexity and ambivalence by regression to Dualism colored by hatred of otherness” (p. 80).

Unlike Perry (1981), Kohlberg, Levine, and Hower (1983) did not see relativism as a developmental milestone or a universal phenomenon. Kohlberg et al. conducted a longitudinal study of the moral development of schoolboys and found that most participants did not exhibit relativistic thinking, even when they were in their late teens and early twenties. Kohlberg et al. concluded that relativistic thinking was not a normative stage in the development of moral reasoning.

Influenced by Perry’s (1970) work on epistemological development, Kitchener and King (1981) developed the Reflective Judgment Model to describe the changes that occur in individuals’ understanding of knowledge. The term *reflective judgment* was chosen to reflect the understanding that not all things can be known (King, *n.d.*). In this model, relativistic thinking is the fifth of seven stages and is considered quasi-reflective thinking. A number of studies have suggested that both education and age impact an individual’s understanding of knowledge (Kitchener & King, 1990), but that education has a stronger impact (Shoff, 1979; Strange & King, 1981). Kitchener and King (1990) recognized that other events can also impact an individual’s understanding of

knowledge:

[...] there is no reason to believe that the passage of time alone should influence developmental change unless it corresponds to some other intervening event (e.g. maturation of neurons or *involvement in an environment that challenges epistemic assumptions* [emphasis added]). (p. 69)

Other researchers have focused on intervening events that lead specifically to the development of relativistic thinking. Kramer (1983, 1989) and Labouvie-Vief (1980) found that relativistic thinking emerged as individuals were faced with contradictory opinions and values, forced to play irreconcilable roles, and pressured to make a choice of one direction over many.

Cross-cultural experience as a predictor of relativistic thinking. Most of the research examining the relationship between cross-cultural experience and the development of relativistic thinking has focused on study-abroad programs. Sutton and Rubin (2004) examined the learning outcomes of students participating in study-abroad programs. They found a significant difference in knowledge of cultural relativism between students who had studied abroad and those who had not. Study abroad continued to be the strongest predictor of knowledge of cultural relativism, accounting for 10% of the variance, when controlling for academic achievement and academic major. Academic major was a significant predictor, however, with business majors scoring lower on the knowledge of cultural relativism than education, journalism and media, and social science majors.

Wilson (1985) explored the behaviors of high school exchange students upon their return to the U.S. from Japan. She asked returnees how they responded to

stereotypical questions about Japanese culture and analyzed their responses. Their responses fell into five themes: (a) recognizing cultural relativism, (b) telling the facts, (c) speaking positively, (d) using humor, and (e) feeling angry/frustrated. Eighty percent of students identified their usual responses as recognizing cultural relativism. Research has suggested that even limited cross-cultural experience, such as in a study abroad program, can impact the development of relativistic thinking (Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Wilson, 1985).

A foreign country might be considered the ultimate “environment that challenges epistemic assumptions” (Kitchener & King, 1990, p. 69). In a foreign country, one is confronted with values, customs, and truths different from one’s own (Okech & DeVoe, 2010). Exposure to these differences, as a cultural outsider, can challenge one’s own beliefs, knowledge, and values, whether one is simply observing or participating in the different culture (Callister & Cox, 2006; Talburt, 1999). Kim (2001) described this process in the Stress-Adaptation-Growth component of her cross-cultural adaptation theory. Individuals experience stress as a result of the incongruencies between the individual and the new culture. This stress is most severe during the initial exposure to the new culture but decreases with time as the individual is motivated to engage in and adapt to the new culture. Stress is thus adaptive, motivating individuals to develop new ways of thinking and behaving that are congruent with the new culture. This cyclical process of stress-adaptation-growth repeats itself with the level of stress decreasing as cross-cultural adaptation and growth increases. Growth, for Kim, includes the recognition of the relative nature of values:

Like hikers climbing a high mountain who finally see that all paths below

ultimately lead to the same summit, with each path presenting unique scenery, becoming intercultural is a gradual process of freeing one's mind from an exclusive parochial viewpoint so as to attain a greater perspective on the more inclusive whole In becoming intercultural, then, we rise above the hidden grip of culture and discover that there are many ways to be "good," "true," and "beautiful." (Kim, 2001, p. 193-194)

Thus, for Kim, the stress experienced during cross-cultural adaptation eventually leads to relativistic thinking. Kim refers to the third-culture experience in her description of this process.

Relativistic thinking in (A)TCKs. For the (A)TCK, who lives in many different cultures during his or her developmental years, this stress-adaptation- growth occurs with each new culture and is likely to result in higher levels of relativistic thinking (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Pollock and Van Reken (2001) describe this development:

More difficult . . . are the value dissonances that occur in the cross-cultural experience. . . . TCKs often live among cultures with strongly conflicting value systems. One culture says female circumcision is wrong. Another one says female circumcision is the most significant moment in a girl's life; it is when she knows she has become an accepted member of her tribe. . . . In each situation, which value is right? Which is wrong? Is there a right and wrong? If so, who or what defines them? (p. 92)

Very little research has explicitly examined relativistic thinking in (A)TCKs, however, although some authors have mentioned it (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Schaetti &

Ramsey, 1999).

Straffon (1999) used the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to measure the intercultural sensitivity of (A)TCKs attending an international school. He found that only 3% had ethnocentric worldviews (i.e., worldviews that consider one's own culture as defining reality) while the majority had ethnorelative worldviews (i.e., worldviews that recognize that one's own beliefs and behaviors are just one version of reality). Straffon found that the length of time spent in an international school was associated with higher levels of ethnorelativism and lower levels of ethnocentrism. One (A)TCK echoed these findings in Sellars (2011) qualitative study: "It [living in another country] has made me a little skeptical about any particular position as being privileged or being right" (Sellars, 2011, p. 55).

Relativistic Thinking and Identity

Both relativistic thinking and identity moratorium are characterized by a lack of commitment. Despite the similarities between the concepts, research linking the two is limited, however. Only one study (Kahlbaugh and Kramer, 1995) to date has explicitly examined the relationship between identity status and relativism, although some researchers have examined related concepts, such as epistemic understanding.

Identity status and epistemic understanding. Both Boyes and Chandler (1992) and Krettenauer (2005) examined the relationship between epistemic understanding and identity development. Epistemic understanding refers to an individual's beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the process of knowing (Krettenauer, 2005). There are three main levels of epistemic understanding: absolutist, multiplicitic, and evaluativism (or post-skeptical rationalism) (Boyes & Chandler, 1992;

Kuhn et al., 2000; Moshman, 1994). The absolutist thinker believes that there is one truth, while the multiplistic thinker recognizes that the concept of “truth” imposes one’s own point of view on others (Moshman, 1994). The final level, evaluationism, is centered between the extremes of absolutism and multiplism (Moshman, 1994). At this level, individuals recognize that one viewpoint is preferable in certain situations (Moshman, 1994). Krettenauer’s definition of the multiplistic thinker echoes the definition of relativism, in part due to the focus on the subjectivity of knowledge and judgments, and the rejection of absolutism: “A multiplist understands knowledge as mainly determined by one’s personal point of view This implies that knowledge is nothing but personal opinion and that appealing to truth is equivalent to imposing one’s opinion on others” (p. 186).

Boyes and Chandler (1992) hypothesized that adolescents’ epistemic understanding would impact how they would respond to the identity formation process. They found that individuals reporting identity moratorium or achievement supported a multiplistic stance; whereas individuals with identity foreclosure or diffusion supported absolutist stances. Krettenauer (2005) built from Boyes and Chandler’s work, conducting a longitudinal study on the relationship between adolescents’ epistemic understanding and identity formation. He found that adolescents with a multiplistic epistemic stance had higher moratorium scores. He concluded that identity moratorium and achievement depended upon the epistemic development of the individual. These findings suggest that an individual’s understanding of knowledge may impact his or her identity development, with relativistic thinking, which appears related to multiplistic thinking, being related to identity moratorium.

Identity status and relativism. Kohlberg and Gilligan (1971) recognized the relationship between relativistic thinking and identity moratorium, although they did not empirically examine the relationship. Rather, they reflected on participants in a previous study:

For our extreme relativists or amoralists, there seemed to be an additional task in the need to free themselves from their own early “rigid” morality. In Erikson’s terms our retrogressors were living in a late adolescence psychosocial moratorium, in which new, and non-conforming patterns of thought and behavior are tried out. (p. 1080)

Kahlbaugh and Kramer (1995) looked specifically at relativism and identity formation in college students, hypothesizing that relativistic thinking would be positively related to identity moratorium and negatively related to identity achievement. They found that relativistic thought was a significant predictor of higher moratorium scores and lower identity achievement scores, suggesting that relativistic thinking is involved in the identity crisis. Additionally, they found that women had higher moratorium scores than men. Preliminary research, thus, indicates that there may be a relationship between relativistic thinking and identity moratorium. Given the scarcity of research in this area, however, further research is needed to corroborate the relationship between relativistic thinking and identity moratorium.

It is worth noting that ideological moratorium and interpersonal moratorium were not differentiated from one another in any of these studies, yielding limited research on how relativistic thinking may differentially impact these two variables (Boyes & Chandler, 1992; Krettenauer, 2005; Kahlbaugh & Kramer, 1995). No

additional research to date has examined the differential impacts of relativistic thinking on ideological and interpersonal moratorium. Given that the definition of relativism is related to knowledge and ideas (see definition on p. 21), it is expected that relativistic thinking will be more closely related to ideological moratorium than interpersonal moratorium.

Relativistic thinking and identity in (A)TCKs. The references to relativistic thinking in (A)TCKs are often times made in relation to identity development (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Schaetti & Ramsey, 1999). Pollock and Van Reken (2001) seemed to be describing relativistic thinking when they discussed the identity challenges that (A)TCKs face as a result of spending their developmental years abroad:

Some TCKs who flip-flop back and forth between various behavioral patterns have trouble figuring out their own value system from the multicultural mix they have been exposed to. It can be very difficult for them to decide if there are, after all, some absolutes in life they can hold on to and live by no matter which culture they are in. In the end, TCKs may adopt so many personas as cultural chameleons that they themselves don't know who they really are. (p. 93)

Pollock and Van Reken clearly recognized a connection between values and identity, and how the development of relativistic thinking may pose a challenge for (A)TCKs as they develop their own identity.

Schaetti and Ramsey referred to relativism in their description of the liminal nature of the Third Culture and noted how it impacts the identity of (A)TCKs. Unlike Pollock and Van Reken (2001), however, they suggested that the relativistic thinking enhances rather than hinders (A)TCKs' identity development:

Their developing world views become balanced in liminality as they learn through daily interaction that truth is contextually relative. . . . Exposed to multiple cultural traditions during their developmental years, global nomads have the opportunity to achieve identities informed by all, constricted by none, balanced on the thresholds of each. (Schaetti & Ramsey, 1999, p. 4)

Thus, the connection between relativistic thinking and identity has been seen as both negative and positive in (A)TCK research. Further research is needed in this area.

Cross-Cultural Experiences, Relativistic Thinking, and Identity Development.

When (A)TCKs are asked about the impact of their cross-cultural experience on their identity development, many speak of an identity that changes according to the context. Recall, for example, Moore and Barker's (2012) study in which participants reported being able to shift identities according the cultural setting. In Mortimer's (2010) qualitative study, 59% of the 88 participants reported that living abroad had positively impacted their identity with 27% describing having developed a multi-national identity. One participant stated: "No one can place me in a box. I can behave the way I like, no one can consider me extravagant or abnormal because they cannot refer me to a unique culture or a defined set of values or customs" (Mortimer, 2010, p. 46). Over one quarter of participants, however, believed that their experience abroad had negatively impacted their identity, with 10% reporting that their identity would change with the people around them:

I have no real concrete sense of who I am. I feel like I embody and reflect the identities of the people I am around. I feel like I can be so many different (sometimes contradicting) things dependent on my social environment that

sometimes I feel wary that I am perceived as hypocritical by those around me as my values and beliefs seem to change so often. (Mortimer, 2010, p. 47)

Four participants described having conflicting parts of themselves: “I feel like I have a jumbled identity, that I have no clear understanding of either culture, and that my identity is a mix of conflicting values” (Mortimer, 2010, p. 47) Mortimer concluded that the main identity problem voiced by (A)TCKs was a lack of a stable identity, suggesting, like Erikson, that stability and consistency are fundamental in identity achievement.

The (A)TCKs in these studies seem to voice thoughts characteristic of relativistic thinkers; they recognize that what is considered appropriate and truth is dependent upon the culture in which they are in and they adapt their values, beliefs, and behaviors accordingly. It appears that the lack of consistency in what they believe and how they act may be confusing to some, however. Some realize that, unlike their peers, while they have explored a variety of identity options, they have not committed to one identity. For others, however, not subscribing to one set of cultural norms or values is liberating.

Bennett (1993) discussed the relationship between cross-cultural experiences, relativistic thinking, and identity development in her article on cultural marginality. She described the cross-cultural individual (including [A]TCKs) as culturally marginal (i.e. on the margin of each culture) and argued that individuals can respond to such cultural marginality with constructive marginality or encapsulated marginality. Bennett described encapsulated marginals as individuals who are tossed about by conflicting cultural loyalties and who are unable to develop a unified identity. Like encapsulated

marginals, constructive marginals are impacted by the conflicting cultural loyalties but they take responsibility for choosing a value set. Bennett described how the epistemological development of the individual drives this individual's transition from encapsulated marginality to constructive marginality:

Typically, individuals who have experienced deeply shifting frames of reference across cultures do not assume this kind of dualistic position....The encapsulated marginal shares this multiplicity, being pulled in at least two directions for every thought, feeling, and behavior....In terms of the cultural marginal, this stage of *contextual relativism* allows random cultural-frame-of-reference shifting to become grounded in context. The individual assesses the cultural context before developing a position, taking care to be appropriate in the relevant cultural system. The cultural marginal who can master this stage has become a constructive marginal, capable of constructing identity and making commitments in the face of ambiguity. (p. 117)

Bennett (1993) clearly recognized that the relationship between cross-cultural experience and identity is mediated by the individual's relativistic thinking. Cultural marginality has a negative impact on identity only because of the individual's level of intellectual and ethical development (Bennett, 1993). Bennett believed that embracing contextual relativism allows an individual to develop identity and commitment. Like Boyes and Chandler (1992), Krettenauer (2005), and Kahlbaugh and Kramer (1995), Bennett did not explicitly differentiate between the ideological and interpersonal aspects of identity. Her references to intellectual and ethical development suggest that she is referring to the ideological component of identity, however, suggesting that the

relationship between cross-cultural experience, relativistic thinking, and ideological moratorium is more established than that between cross-cultural experience, relativistic thinking, and interpersonal moratorium.

If assessed from Erikson's (1968) definition of identity, Bennett's (1993) cultural marginal would not be considered to have an achieved identity. Erikson's definition of identity requires "self-sameness and continuity" (p. 50) – that is, that the individual's identity be stable. The cultural marginal, however, moves between identities: "Consciousness of one's cultural marginality, of one's role in creating a unique cultural identity, has been called a state of 'dynamic in-betweenness'The suggestion here is of continual and comfortable movement between cultural identities" (Bennett, 1993, p. 118). The recognition of contextual relativism (i.e. that different circumstances call for different values, truths, and mores to be held) may cause cultural marginals to constantly move between multiple cultural identities, adapting their identities according to the various cultures to which they are exposed. They may move between as many identities as the cultures they have been exposed to during their developmental years. This movement, evaluated from Erikson's standards would imply identity moratorium.

Consequently, the current study sought to examine how relativistic thinking, identity moratorium, and cross-cultural experience are related in (A)TCKs. It was expected that relativistic thinking would mediate the relationship between cross-cultural experience and identity moratorium. Given the ideological nature of relativistic thinking, it was expected that the mediation effects of relativistic thinking would be more significant in the model using ideological moratorium as a dependent variable

than it would in the model using interpersonal moratorium as an independent variable.

Method

Participants

The participant pool was restricted to individuals over 18 who had lived abroad (i.e., in a country other than their “home” country or passport country) for more than 12 months between the ages of 1 and 18. In order to differentiate between immigrant and (A)TCK status, this move had to have been considered temporary and the participants’ parents must have had the intent of returning to their “home” country or of moving on to another country. One hundred and forty-two (A)TCKs fully completed the survey and were used in the analysis. Thirty-nine participants (27.5%) were male, whereas 102 were female (71.8%). On average, the sample was 45.5 years old ($SD= 14.8$), with a range of 18 to 70 years of age. Participants held citizenship in 24 countries, although the majority held citizenship in the United States (58.5%; $n = 83$) or Europe (21.1%; $n = 30$). Participants were highly educated, with 7% ($n = 10$) having completed a doctorate degree, 33.8% ($n = 48$) a master’s degree, 30.3% ($n = 43$) a bachelor’s degree, 11.3% ($n=16$) vocational training or an associate’s degree, and 14.8% ($n=21$) reporting still being in college.

On average, participants reported having spent 8.7 years ($SD= 4.9$) abroad during their childhood and adolescence and having lived in 3.10 countries ($SD= 2.0$). Participants had lived in a total of 98 different countries. Most frequently lived in countries are presented in Table 2. Over half of participants (54.2%) had lived in the US at least once before their eighteenth birthday.

Over one third of participants (38.7%; $n = 55$) reported having moved abroad for military purposes, 23.2% ($n=33$) for mission work, 15.5% ($n = 22$) for a parent's corporate work, 7% ($n= 10$) for diplomatic work, 7% ($n= 10$) for educational purposes, 7.7% ($n = 11$) for a variety of other reasons, and 0.7% ($n = 1$) for political asylum. Over two-thirds (77.9%) of participants had repatriated to their home culture.

Measures

The Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ; Forsyth, 1980) and the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOMEIS-2; Bennion & Adams, 1986) were administered to participants. Additionally, demographic information and information pertinent to the (A)TCK's cross-cultural experience were collected.

Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ; Forsyth, 1980). The Ethics Position Questionnaire is a 20-item questionnaire that measures idealism and relativism. While the two subscales of the instrument (i.e., idealism and relativism) were originally developed to categorize individuals into one of four ethical ideologies (Forsyth, 1980), they have most frequently been used as stand-alone scales (Forsyth, n.d.). Thus, although both subscales were administered, only the second subscale, that measuring relativism, was used for the current study. Forsyth (1980) described the relativism subscale as distinguishing between individuals who "reject the possibility of formulating or relying on universal moral rules when drawing conclusions about moral questions" (relativism) and those who "believe in and make use of moral absolutes when making judgments" (absolutism) (p. 175). The subscale, thus, places individuals on the continuum between absolutism and relativism. The 10 items of the Relativism subscale are administered in a 9-point scale, with responses ranging from 1 (*Completely*

Disagree) to 9 (*Completely Agree*). Total scores on the subscale range from ten to ninety, with higher scores indicating higher levels of relativism. Sample items include “What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another” (Item 12) and “Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment” (Item 18). The measure was normed on college students and has yielded internal consistency for the relativism subscale ranging from .73 to .84, and a test-retest reliabilities of .66 (Forsyth, 1980; Forsyth, Nye, & Kelley, 1988). A negative correlation was found between the EPQ and Hogan’s Survey of Ethical Attitudes, providing convergent validity for the EPQ (Forsyth, 1980). The Cronbach’s Alpha for the current study was .87.

Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOMEIS-2, Bennion & Adams, 1986). The revised EOMEIS-2 is a 64-item questionnaire that allows a researcher to categorize participants according to Marcia’s (1966, 1980) four identity statuses based on their commitment to and exploration of identity. The revised EOMEIS extended the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS) to include an assessment of both ideological and interpersonal content domains of identity, integrating Grotevant, Thorbecke, and Meyer’s (1982) suggestion. The current study used the individual’s scores on two continuous scales: Interpersonal Moratorium and Ideological Moratorium. Sample items from the Interpersonal Moratorium scale include “I really don’t know what kind of friend is best for me. I’m trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me” (Item 61) and “I just can’t decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many that have possibilities” (Item 57). Sample items from the Ideological Moratorium scale include “In finding an acceptable viewpoint to

life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration;” and “Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.” Items are administered on a 6-point Likert scale with responses ranging from A (*Strongly Agree*) to F (*Strongly Disagree*). Total scores on each subscale range from 6 to 64. In this study, scores were recoded such that with lower scores indicated lower levels of moratorium, and high scores, higher levels of moratorium. Internal validity for a college-aged sample was .58 and .75 for these respective scales (Bennion & Adams, 1986). Bennion and Adams (1986) found concurrent validity with the Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory (EPSI; Rosenthal, Gurney, & Moore, 1981). Additionally, the EOMEIS-2 has been used with missionary kids, suggesting that it would be an appropriate measure for use with (A)TCKs (Ketting, 1997). Cronbach’s Alpha for the ideological and interpersonal moratorium subscales were respectively .81 and .72 in the current study.

Cross-cultural experience. As noted above, (A)TCKs are differentiated from other cross-cultural individuals by their patterns of high mobility (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009). Because of the definitional role that mobility plays in the cross-cultural experience of (A)TCKs, participants were asked about the total number of countries in which they had lived before the age of 18. Takeuchi and Chen (2013) argued that cross-cultural experience is a multidimensional construct, however, and that it should be measured as such. Consequently, a cross-cultural experience composite score was calculated, following the steps taken by Sinangril and Ones (1997) in their study of experience abroad and work practice adjustment. Sinangril and Ones chose both number of years abroad and number of countries lived in as variables to contribute to

the composite score because they assess both the length (number of years abroad) and the diversity of cross-cultural experience (number of countries lived in). Participants were asked about (a) the total number of countries in which they lived before the age of eighteen, and (b) the number of years they spent living abroad before the age of eighteen. Z-scores were calculated from participants' responses and averaged for each participant to yield a cross-cultural composite score (Sinangril & Ones, 1997). Z-scores for the number of years spent abroad ranged from -1.50 to 2.13 with an average of 0.05 ($SD= 0.99$); whereas those for number of countries lived in ranged from -1.12 to 10.68 with an average of 0.18 ($SD= 1.27$).

Procedure

Participants were recruited using a snowball sampling method, via the social networking website Facebook, the Families in Global Transition Network (FIGT), and various (A)TCK websites. The researcher emailed all personal contacts who met the inclusion criteria, administrators of (A)TCK and Military groups on Facebook, and administrators of (A)TCK websites with the link to the survey website. The researcher requested that recipients complete the survey, forward the survey to their (A)TCK contacts, and/or post the link to the survey on the (A)TCK or Military Facebook group page or website. The survey was developed and posted using Qualtrics software and was open for 16 weeks after being approved by the University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board.

Research Questions

Below are the proposed research questions:

1. Does an (A)TCK's score on the relativism subscale of the EPQ mediate the

relationship between the (A)TCK's cross-cultural index scores and scores on the interpersonal moratorium subscale of the EOMEIS-2 after controlling for demographic variables (as determined by preliminary analyses)?

2. Does an (A)TCK's score on the relativism subscale of the EPQ mediate the relationship between the (A)TCK's cross-cultural index scores and scores on the ideological moratorium subscale of the EOMEIS-2 after controlling for demographic variables (as determined by preliminary analyses)?

Analysis of Data

To test the mediation model (see Figure 1), Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach was used. The process, involving four regression analyses, was conducted twice with ideological moratorium and interpersonal moratorium serving as the two dependent variables. For example, in order to test whether relativistic thinking would mediate the relationship between cross-cultural experience and ideological moratorium, the following steps were taken:

Step 1: Simple regression analysis with cross-cultural experience as the predictor and ideological moratorium serving as the criterion variable (path c).

Step 2: Simple regression analysis with cross-cultural experience as the predictor and relativism as the criterion variable (path a).

Step 3: Hierarchical regression analysis with cross-cultural experience entered in the first step, relativism in the second step, and ideological moratorium as the criterion variable (path b).

Step 4: Hierarchical regression analysis with pertinent demographic variables entered at the first step, relativism entered at the second step, cross-cultural

experience entered at the third step, and ideological moratorium serving as the dependent variable (path a).

The four steps would then be repeated using interpersonal moratorium as the dependent variable.

Results

Preliminary and Descriptive Analyses

Sample means, standard deviations, and coefficient alphas for the cross-cultural index, relativism, ideological moratorium, and interpersonal moratorium are reported in Table 3. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. Coefficient alphas for each scale ranged from .72 to .87. Bivariate and point biserial correlations (see Table 3) revealed a strong significant positive relationship between the ideological and interpersonal moratorium subscales, moderate significant negative relationships between age and the ideological and interpersonal moratorium subscales, and weak but significant positive relationships between cross-cultural index and the ideological and interpersonal moratorium subscales, and between relativism and the ideological and interpersonal moratorium subscales. There was no significant relationship between cross-cultural index and relativism.

One-way between-groups analyses of variance, t-tests, and correlations were conducted to explore the impact of demographic variables (i.e. education level, marital status, sexual orientation) and variables related to cross-cultural experience (number of countries lived in, number of years spent abroad, schooling type, TCK type, awareness of TCK community, number of years spent abroad as an adult, number of countries

lived in as an adult, repatriation status) on the criterion variables, ideological moratorium and interpersonal moratorium. Age and gender were significant demographic variables and were entered into the following analyses. In terms of variables related to cross-cultural experience, repatriation status, and schooling type (see Table 5) were significantly related to one or both of the moratorium subscales and it was planned to code these variables and enter them into the hierarchical regression analyses at step 4. Number of years spent abroad was also significantly related to identity moratorium, but was not entered into the analyses because this variable was used to calculate the cross-cultural index.

Testing for Mediation

Relativism as Mediating the Relationship between Cross-Cultural Index and Ideological Moratorium. It was planned that four regression analyses would be used to determine whether relativism mediated the relationship between cross-cultural index and ideological moratorium. In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of ideological moratorium scores on cross-cultural index scores (CCI; path c), ignoring the mediator, was significant, $\beta = 3.136, t(138) = 3.634, p < .001$. Step 2 showed that the regression of relativism scores on cross-cultural index scores (path b) was not significant, $\beta = -2.444, t(130) = -1.132, p = .260$. Due to the lack of significance at the second step, the third and fourth steps of the mediation model were not conducted.

Relativism as Mediating the Relationship between Cross-Cultural Index and Interpersonal Moratorium. As with the first model, it was planned that four regression analyses would be used to test whether relativism mediated the relationship between cross-cultural index and interpersonal moratorium. In Step 1 of the mediation

model, the regression of interpersonal moratorium scores on cross-cultural index scores, ignoring the mediator, (path c) was significant, $\beta = 2.375$, $t(133) = 3.220$, $p = .002$. In step 2, the regression of relativism scores on cross-cultural index scores (path a) was not significant, $\beta = -2.444$, $t(130) = -1.132$, $p = .260$. Due to the lack of significance at the second step, the third and fourth steps of the mediation model were not conducted.

Ancillary Analyses

The relationship between cross-cultural exposure and identity moratorium merits further exploration. Given that the cross-cultural index may not have been a reliable measure of cross-cultural exposure (see discussion), the relationships between number of years spent abroad and both ideological and interpersonal moratorium were examined in more detail. Correlational analyses between number of years abroad and ideological and interpersonal moratorium yielded significant positive relationships. When entered into a hierarchical regression model, however, controlling for current age, number of years spent abroad was no longer a significant predictor of ideological moratorium, $\beta = .126$, $t(139) = .992$, $p = .323$. Similarly, when entered into a hierarchical regression model, controlling for age, number of years spent abroad was no longer a significant predictor of interpersonal moratorium, $\beta = .147$, $t(134) = 1.325$, $p = .188$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether relativism mediated the relationship between cross-cultural experience and identity moratorium. Findings from both mediation models suggest that relativism does not mediate the relationship between cross-cultural experience and ideological and interpersonal moratorium. There

are a number of potential explanations for the lack of significance in the mediation model.

The most basic explanation for the lack of significance is that the cross-cultural index developed for this study may not have been a reliable measure of cross-cultural exposure. As noted earlier, the cross-cultural index was calculated by averaging participants' z-scores on two variables - the number of countries they had lived in before the age of eighteen and the number of years they had spent abroad before the age of eighteen. While these variables may serve to quantify cross-cultural exposure, they may not always do so reliably. For example, a military dependent may have spent all of her childhood and adolescence abroad, living in twelve different countries in eighteen years. In each of these countries, however, she may have both lived and attended school on the military base, only interacting with the host culture when she left the base. Another (A)TCK may have spent only three years abroad during his childhood, and lived in one country other than his passport culture. He may have been fully immersed in the host-culture, however, attending a host-culture national school, participating in national extracurricular activities, and spending all of his free time with host-culture nationals. While the first (A)TCK would have a higher score than the second on the cross-cultural index, her actual exposure to other cultures is likely to have been more limited than that of the second (A)TCK. The relationship between other continuous measures of childhood cross-cultural exposure (i.e. an (A)TCK's frequency of interaction with individuals of another nationality or his or her frequency of interaction with the surrounding expatriate community), identity moratorium, and relativism were also examined as part of preliminary analyses (see Table 4), and did not reveal any

significant relationships. This suggests that relativism likely does not mediate the relationship between the *amount* of cross-cultural exposure and identity moratorium.

It is possible that the *type* of cross-cultural exposure may be related to relativism and identity moratorium. Findings in the preliminary analyses support this theory. For example, significant differences were found between low exposure schooling (includes homeschooling and Department of Defense Schooling) and high exposure schooling groups (includes international schooling and host culture schooling) in levels of relativism, ideological moratorium, and interpersonal moratorium after controlling for age, with the high exposure schooling group reporting significantly higher levels of identity moratorium and relativism. While these findings are not conclusive and merit further attention, they suggest that the type of cross-cultural exposure may play a more important role than the quantity of cross-cultural exposure when it comes to relativism and identity moratorium.

A second explanation for the lack of significance in the mediation model is that the relativism subscale of the EPQ may not have appropriately addressed the relativism developed by (A)TCKs as a result of their experience abroad. While the EPQ is a widely used measure of relativism (Forsyth, n.d.), it focuses mainly on ethical relativism (right vs. wrong) and does not assess other areas of relativism such as cultural relativism (right vs. wrong for a particular culture). It is possible that the mediation model results might have differed if conducted with cross-cultural relativism rather than ethical relativism. Measures of cross-cultural relativism are lacking, however.

A third explanation for the lack of significance in the mediation model is that cross-cultural exposure may not, in fact, predict higher levels of identity moratorium. This theory is supported by the findings in the ancillary analyses. When current age was accounted for, the relationships between number of years spent abroad during childhood and both ideological and interpersonal moratorium were no longer significant. While previous researchers have found (A)TCKs to be more confused, delayed, and conflicted in their identity development (e.g. Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Useem & Cottrell, 1993; Wrobbel & Plueddemann, 1990), it is possible that they did not account for age in their findings, and thus may have been attributing problematic identity development to cross-cultural exposure when it was, in fact, due to the age of participants.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this study. First, the demographic makeup of the sample limits generalization to all (A)TCKs. Despite participants holding citizenship in many countries, over half of participants held citizenship in the United States and over a fifth in Europe. Additionally, over one third came from a military background, while less than one fifth came from a corporate background. This study might be replicated with a similar sample size of participants holding citizenship in different countries and with a similar sample size from each sponsorship background.

Second, the instruments present some limitations. Both the EPQ (Forsyth, 1980) and the EOMEIS-2 (Bennion & Adams, 1986) are self-report measures, allowing social desirability to influence participants' responses. Additionally, the EOMEIS-2 was developed and normed on individuals ranging in age from 18 to 45 with an average age

of 22.6 (Bennion & Adams, 1986). Participants in this study ranged in age from 18 to 70 with an average age of 45.9, and a number of participants noted the lack of pertinence of questions related to parental influence and dating.

Another limitation worth noting is related to the response rate. Although 337 participants started the survey, only 169 (50.15%) completed it. Given that majority of participants completed the demographic information and the EPQ but not the EOMEIS-2, it is thought that the length of the EOMEIS-2, which is composed of 64 items, was off-putting to participants. It is possible, however, that those completing the survey differed from those not completing the survey, and that the low response rate may have impacted the findings.

Implications

Despite the model's lack of significance, this study raises some important questions. Researchers examining (A)TCK identity from Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory had viewed their identity development as problematic, believing that the exposure to different cultural traditions caused confusion, a delay in development, and a lack of commitment (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Gilbert, 2008; Ketting, 1997; Mortimer, 2010; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Wrobbel & Plueddemann, 1990). This study, however, did not find there to be a significant relationship between the quantity of cross-cultural exposure and identity moratorium when accounting for age. Consequently, researchers and those working with (A)TCKs should explore how much confusion and lack of commitment in identity development is age-appropriate and how much is related to their experience overseas.

Additionally, the discussion related to the quantity of cross-cultural exposure versus the type of cross-cultural exposure raises an important question for (A)TCK researchers: Which specific aspects of the (A)TCK experience contribute to the development of the particular personality traits and relational patterns associated with the (A)TCK profile? In her article on the top eight (A)TCK research needs, Lambiri (2005) encouraged researchers to test the theories making up the (A)TCK profile. She wrote,

The question is whether they [scales] can be used to validate the TCK profile. Three of the widely accepted traits of TCKs are their openness to other cultures, their cross-cultural sensitivity and their comfort with diversity. If TCKs took one of these tests would the results match the expected patterns? In other words, would those tests be reliable? Are TCKs in fact more culturally sensitive? If so, which ones and why? (Lambiri, 2005, p. 8)

Despite Lambiri's (2005) encouragement, few (A)TCK researchers have used quantitative methods to test the (A)TCK theories and even fewer have sought to link specific components of the experience to particular traits and/or patterns (Melles, 2013). Some variables that distinguish the (A)TCK experience that might be examined as predictors in future research include the number of countries lived in, the number of years spent abroad, the age at first move abroad, schooling type, (A)TCK type, the geographical location of the countries lived in, the relative difference between the host culture(s) and passport culture(s), the frequency of interaction with individuals of a different nationality, the frequency of interaction with the expatriate community and the age at repatriation. This study has suggested that some cross-cultural variables (i.e.

schooling) may be related to specific traits in the (A)TCK profile, whereas others (i.e. number of years spent abroad or number of countries lived in) may not. Isolating the variables that do predict specific (A)TCK traits may allow for the development of theories that may be tested in other populations. The development of theories that may be generalizable to other populations may increase the visibility and pertinence of (A)TCK research.

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Appendix A: Tables and Figure

Table 1

Identity Status by Level of Exploration and Commitment

		Commitment	
		Low	High
Exploration	Low	Diffused	Foreclosed
	High	Moratorium	Achieved

Table 2

Twenty Most Frequently Lived in Countries

Country Lived In	Percentage of Participants Having Lived in Country
1. United States of America	54.2%
2. Germany	23.2%
3. United Kingdom	20.4%
4. Japan	19.0%
5. Tanzania	13.4
6. Canada	7.7%
7. Italy	6.3%
8. Vietnam	6.3%
9. France	5.6%
10. Philippines	5.6%
11. China	4.9%
12. Spain	4.9%
13. Sweden	4.9%
14. Thailand	4.9%
15. Taiwan	4.2%
16. Belgium	3.5%
17. Kenya	3.5%
18. New Zealand	3.5%
19. Zimbabwe	3.5%
20. Jordan	2.8%

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, Alpha Coefficients, and Correlation Coefficients

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	α	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. CCI	0.07	0.71							
2. Relativism	47.93	17.67	.87		-.01	.29**	.27**	-.44**	.10+
3. Ideological Moratorium	20.80	7.57	.81			.24**	.20**	.06	.06+
4. Interpersonal Moratorium	22.98	6.29	.72				.64**	-.43**	.17*+
5. Age	45.5	14.8						-.37**	.14*+
6. Gender									-.13*+

Note. CCI = Cross-Cultural Index.

+ All correlations are bivariate correlations, other than those indicated.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 4
Summary of Intercorrelations between Relativism, Identity Moratorium, and Continuous Indicators of Cross-Cultural Exposure

No. Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Countries Lived In as a Child		.29**	.19**	-.13*	-.26**	.14**	.11*	.28**	.10*	-.09	.14	.13
2. Years Spent Abroad as a Child			.24**+	-.24**	-.66**	.31**	.17**	.14**	.20**	-.10	.24**	.25**
3. Repatriation Status				-.07+	-.02+	.00+	-.06+	.30**+	.38**+	.00+	.27**	.19**+
4. Awareness of TCK Community					.13*	-.15**	-.04	-.17**	-.11*	.18*	-.09	-.12
5. Age at First Move						-.17**	-.11*	-.02	-.05	.10	-.17*	-.21**
6. Freq. Interact Nationality							.43**	.08	.11*	-.08	.03	-.08
7. Freq. Interact. Expat								.00	.05	.00	.00	.00
8. Countries Lived in as Adult									.61**	.08	.03	-.01
9. Years Spent Abroad as Adult										.07	.09	.06
10. Relativism											.24**	.20*
11. Ideological Moratorium												.64**
12. Interpersonal Moratorium												

Note. # Countries lived in as a child = Number of countries lived in as a child; # of years spent abroad = Number of years spent abroad; Freq. Interact. Nationality = Frequency of Interaction with Individuals of a Different Nationality; Freq. Interact. Expat = Frequency of Interaction with Expatriate Community; # Countries Lived in as Adult = Number of Countries Lived in as an Adult; # Years Spent Abroad as Adult = Number of Years Spent Abroad as an Adult.

+All correlations are bivariate correlations, other than those designated.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 5
Schooling Type Differences in Levels of Relativism and Identity Moratorium

Measure	Low Exposure		High Exposure		F	<i>p</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Relativism	46.08	17.90	52.80	16.31	8.141	.000
Ideological Moratorium	18.08	7.29	22.51	7.95	-2.84	.005
Interpersonal Moratorium	21.11	6.42	24.27	6.28	-2.48	.033

Note. Schooling types were combined into two groups to equalize differences in group size. Homeschooling and Department of Defense Schooling were categorized as having low exposure to cultural differences, while International Schooling and Schooling in the Host Culture National System were categorized as having high exposure to cultural differences. Those having received schooling in multiple conditions and those who attended a boarding school were excluded from the analysis due to the difficulty in determining their level of exposure to cultural differences. Age was controlled for in each of these analyses.

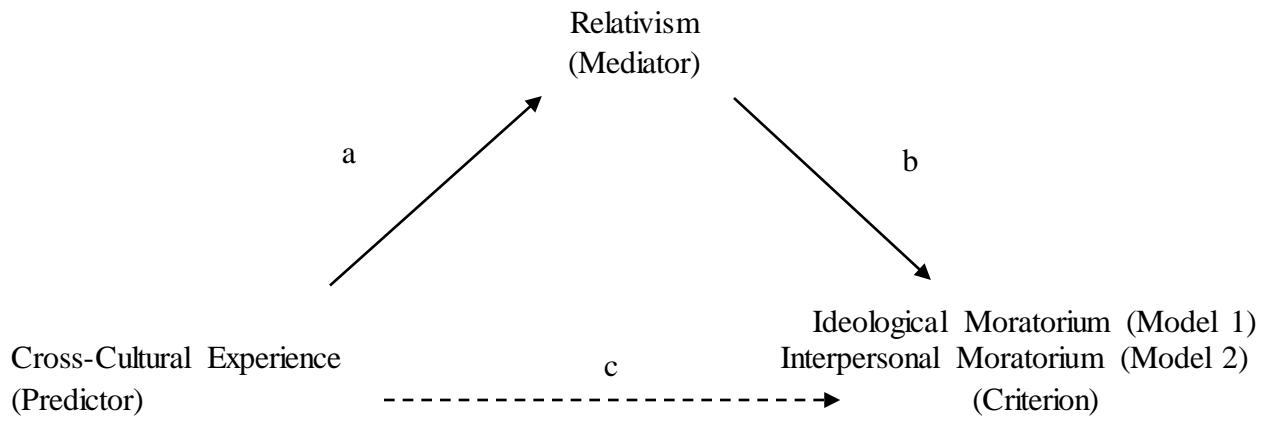


Figure 1. The mediation models.

Appendix B: Demographic Information

1. Did you live abroad before turning eighteen (18)? a. Yes b. No
2. Did you live abroad for twelve (12) months or more? a. Yes b. No

[If No to either one or both question one (1) and two (2), proceed to Exit Page. If Yes to both question one (1) and two (2), proceed to question three (3)]

I would like to know more about you. The information that you provide will not be used to identify you in any way.

3. Gender: a. Male b. Female c. Other (please specify): _____

4. Age: _____

5. Please respond to those descriptors with which you identify

- a. Race: _____
- b. Ethnicity: _____
- c. Nationality: _____
- d. Indigenous Group or Tribe: _____
- e. Religious group: _____
- f. Cross-Cultural Identity: _____
- g. Other: _____

6. What is the highest level of education that you have **completed**?

- a. Junior high/middle school
- b. High school
- c. Some college
- d. Vocational training
- e. Associate's degree
- f. Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional degree
- g. Master's degree or equivalent professional degree
- h. Doctorate degree or equivalent professional degree
- j. Other (please specify): _____

7. Marital Status:

- a. Single b. Partnered c. Married d. Divorced e. Widowed f. Other:

8. Sexual Orientation: a. Heterosexual b. Homosexual c. Bisexual d. Other

9. Current Occupation: _____

Please answer the following questions in reference to your experiences abroad as a child or adolescent (i.e. before you turned 18).

10. In which countries do you hold citizenship? _____

11. Why did your family move abroad (select all that apply):

- a. Missions
- b. Military
- c. Corporate job
- d. Diplomatic work
- e. Political asylum or refuge
- f. Education
- g. Other (please specify): _____

12. How old were you when you moved abroad for the first time? _____

13. How many of your childhood or teenage years did you spend living abroad?

14. What was the total number of countries in which you lived prior to turning eighteen? _____

15. What were these countries?

16. How frequently did you interact with individuals of a different nationality?

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes
- d. Often
- e. All of the time

17. How frequently were you involved with the expatriate or international community in your host culture(s)?

- a. Never
- b. A few times a year
- c. A few times a month
- d. Every week
- e. Every day

18. How did you receive schooling when living in your host culture?

- a. Homeschooled
- b. Host culture national school
- c. International School
- d. Boarding school in country of origin
- e. Boarding school in another country
- f. Other: _____

19. Have you repatriated to your home culture? a. Yes b. No

20. If yes, how old were you when you moved back to your home culture? _____

21. Had you heard of Third-Culture Kids (TCKs) prior to this study? a. Yes b. No

Appendix C: The Ethics Position Questionnaire

Instructions: You will find a series of general statements listed below. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. You will probably disagree with some items and agree with others. We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with such matters of opinion.

Please read each statement carefully. Then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing in front of the statement the number corresponding to your feelings where:

1= Completely disagree	4= Slightly disagree	7= Moderately agree
2= Largely disagree	5= Neither agree or disagree	8= Largely agree
3= Moderately disagree	6 = Slightly agree	9= Completely agree

1. A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.
2. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.
3. The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.
4. One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.
5. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity or welfare of another individual.
6. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.
7. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.
8. The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society.
9. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.
10. Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most perfect action.
11. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.
12. What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.
13. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic: what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.
14. Different types of moralities cannot be compared as to "rightness."
15. Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.
16. Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in make judgments of others.
17. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.
18. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.
19. No rule concerning lying can be formulated: whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.

20. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.

Appendix D: The Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status

Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects you own thoughts and feelings. If a statement has more than one part, please indicate your reaction to the statement *as a whole*.

A= Strongly Agree
B= Moderately Agree
C= Agree
D= Disagree
E= Moderately Disagree
F= Strongly Disagree

1. I haven't chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I'm just working at whatever is available until something better comes along.
2. When it comes to religion, I just haven't found anything that appeals and I don't really feel the need to look.
3. My ideas about men's and women's roles are identical to my parents'. What has worked for them will obviously work for me.
4. There's no single "lifestyle" which appeals to be more than another.
5. There are a lot of different kinds of people. I'm still exploring the many possibilities to find the right kind of friends for me.
6. I sometimes join in recreation activities when asked, but I rarely try anything on my own.
7. I haven't really thought about a "dating style." I'm not too concerned whether I date or not.
8. Politics is something that I never be too sure about because things change so fast. But I do think it's important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.
9. I'm still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what jobs will be right for me.
10. I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.
11. There's so many ways to divide responsibilities in marriage. I'm trying to decide what will work for me.
12. I'm looking for an acceptable perspective for my own "life style" view, but I haven't really found it yet.
13. There are many reasons for friendship, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I've personally decided on.
14. While I don't have one recreation activity I'm really committed to, I'm experiencing numerous leisure outlets to identify one I can really get involved in.
15. Based on past experiences, I've chosen the type of dating relationship I want now.

16. I haven't really considered politics. It just doesn't excite me much.
17. I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there's never really any question since my parents said what they wanted.
18. A person's faith is unique to each individual. I've considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I can believe.
19. I've never really seriously considered men's and women's roles in marriage. It just doesn't seem to concern me.
20. After considerable thought I've developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an ideal "life style" and don't believe anyone will be likely to change my perspective.
21. My parents know what's best for me in terms of how to choose my friends.
22. I've chosen one or more recreation activities to engage in regularly from lots of things and I'm satisfied with those choices.
23. I don't think about dating much. I just kind of take it as it comes.
24. I guess I'm pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.
25. I'm really not interested in finding the right job, any job will do. I just seem to flow with what is available.
26. I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my mind but I'm not done looking yet.
27. My ideas about men's and women's roles come right from my parents and family. I haven't seen any need to look further.
28. My own views on a desirable life style were taught to me by my parents and I don't see any need to question what they taught me.
29. I don't have any real close friends, and I don't think I'm looking for one right now.
30. Sometimes I join in leisure activities, but I really don't see a need to look for a particular activity to do regularly.
31. I'm trying out different types of dating relationships. I just haven't decided what is best for me.
32. There are so many different political parties and ideals. I can't decide which to follow until I figure it all out.
33. It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.
34. Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.
35. I've spent some time thinking about men's and women's roles in marriage and I've decided what will work best for me.
36. In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration.
37. I only pick friends my parents would approve of.
38. I've always liked doing the same recreation activities my parents do and haven't ever seriously considered anything else.
39. I only go out with the type of people my parents expect me to date.
40. I've thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

41. My parents decided a long time ago what I should do for employment and I'm following through their plans.
42. I've gone through a period of serious questions about faith and can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.
43. I've been thinking about the roles that husbands and wives play a lot these days and I've trying to make a final decision.
44. My parents' views on life are good enough for me. I don't need anything else.
45. I've tried many different friendships and now I have a clear idea of what I look for in a friend.
46. After trying a lot of different recreation activities I've found one or more I really enjoy doing by myself or with friends.
47. My preferences about dating are still in the process of developing. I haven't fully decided yet.
48. I'm not sure about my political beliefs, but I'm trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.
49. It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.
50. I attend the same church my family has always attended. I've never really questioned why.
51. There are many ways that married couples can divide up family responsibilities. I've thought about lots of ways and now I know exactly how I want it to happen for me.
52. I guess I just kind of enjoy life in general, and I don't see myself living by any particular viewpoint to life.
53. I don't have any close friends. I just like to hang around with the crowd.
54. I've been experiencing a variety of recreational activities in hopes of finding one or more I can enjoy for some time to come.
55. I've dated different types of people and now know exactly what my own "unwritten rules" for dating are and who I will date.
56. I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way or the other.
57. I just can't decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many that have possibilities.
58. I've never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parents it must be right for me.
59. Opinions on men's and women's roles seem so varied that I don't think much about it.
60. After a lot of self-examination I have established a very definitive view on what my own lifestyle will be.
61. I really don't know what kind of friend is best for me. I'm trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me.
62. All of my recreational preferences I got from my parents and I haven't really tried anything else.
63. I date only people my parents would approve of.

64. My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I've always gone along accepting what they have.