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ABSTRACT

THE TRAITS, CHARACTERISTICS, AND QUALITIES OF
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
TEACHERS VALUED BY THIRD
CULTURE KIDS

by

Dale B. Linton

Co-Chairs: Larry D. Burton
Faith-Ann McGarrell

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

School of Education

Title: THE TRAITS, CHARACTERISTICS, AND QUALITIES OF
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TEACHERS VALUED BY THIRD
CULTURE KIDS

Name of the researcher: Dale B. Linton

Name and degree of faculty co-chairs: Larry D. Burton, Ph.D.; Faith-Ann McGarrell,
Ph.D.

Date completed: March 2013

The Problem

In this qualitative study, 24 participants, ages 18 -30, who had previously attended international Christian schools for at least 2 years at the secondary level, or a combination of 4 years at the primary and middle school levels, were interviewed to determine the traits, characteristics, and qualities they valued in their teachers.

Methodology

Incorporating principles of Grounded Theory, a series of rigorous steps associated with the validity process of Grounded Theory construction was employed. These steps included the simultaneous involvement of the researcher in the data collection and analysis process. Twenty-four participants were interviewed, and written notes were taken during each interview. An initial coding construction was applied to such notes. All

interviews were recorded and transcribed before being uploading to NVivo 9 Software, where 200 categories and subcategories for analysis were created and the development of multiple tree maps was incorporated to explore data connections. Additional coding processes further reduced the number of categories and subcategories for analysis to 51. Combining the practices of continual data comparison, repeated coding processes were employed. From this practice, along with the creation of additional tree maps, graphic representations, and vigorous memo writing, several theoretical categories and a common theme emerged from the data. This resulted in the construction of three primary findings identifying the traits, characteristics, and qualities TCKs valued in international Christian school teachers. These findings were then situated within an extensive literature review.

Results

This study provides insight into the traits, characteristics, and qualities of the “ideal” international Christian school teacher desired and valued by Third Culture Kids (TCKs). For the first time, the voice of the TCK has been codified in respect to their preferences and dislikes of teachers they interact with on a daily basis. The findings of this study point to the multi-dimensional significance an effective teacher has on the lives of TCKs. Such teachers should be qualified and experienced, well versed in the subject matter they teach, and possess a vast array of effective pedagogical practices. They also need to possess a dual-focused desire to not only teach TCKs well, but to interact with them on deeper relational levels than is often experienced or expected by teachers in a mono-cultural setting. TCKs in international Christian schools also desire their teachers to demonstrate levels of care toward them (academically, personally, and spiritually) and model adult Christian living. Finally, TCKs value teachers who value what they hold as

dearly important: culture. They desire teachers who respect and embrace cultural differences and can learn and teach from cultural perspectives.

This study identifies that an international Christian school teacher need not be perfect, but they do need to be adept teachers possessing proven pedagogical knowledge and associated skill sets that enable them to genuinely relate to students and engage them in meaningful learning experiences. TCKs value educational excellence, but just as importantly, they value quality investment in their lives by Christian teachers who respect them, model adult Christian living, and value their cultural experiences and differences.

Conclusion and Recommendations

By nature, TCKs are highly observant and they use their observational skills to evaluate their teachers' commitment to their profession, their students, their faith, and their cultural surroundings. Through observing their teachers, TCKs seek to gain a desired understanding of "normalcy" for adult living. Additional research is most welcomed to advance an understanding of TCKs and their educational experiences.

Keywords: Third Culture Kids, International School, International Schools, International Christian School, International Christian Schools, Teachers, Effective Teaching Practices, Pedagogy, Teacher-Student Relationships, Student Care, Cultural Proficiency, Cultural Respect, Spirituality, Mentoring, Adult Modeling

Andrews University

School of Education

THE TRAITS, CHARACTERISTICS, AND QUALITIES OF
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
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CULTURE KIDS

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Dale B. Linton

March 2013

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APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Co-Chair: Larry D. Burton

Dean, School of Education
James R. Jeffery

Co-Chair: Faith-Ann McGarrell

Member: Cheryl Doss

Member: Raymond Ostrander

External: Glynis Bradfield

Date approved

DEDICATION

To my wonderful wife, Carol; thank you for taking me to Africa with you. And, to TCKs around the world, may your voice be forever heard!

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A successful effort such as this cannot be completed alone. A number of people contributed to this accomplishment. I thank my parents, Kenneth and Sarah Linton, for making the sacrifices that allowed me to attend college. That one act changed my life and has impacted the lives of countless others. From my college days, I say, “Thank You” to Dr. Donald Smith for his exceptional friendship and support for almost 35 years. More people exist than I can recall who deserve thanks for providing financial and prayer support during the years we served as missionary educators. To all of you, your generosity will be eternally rewarded. I am especially grateful to Bill and Esther O’Donovan for planting the seed in our hearts to teach overseas. Your mentoring friendship was exceptional, your advice outstanding. Our lives will never be the same. I say, “Thank you.”

A very special thanks to the missionary organizations we served with: SIM and AIM. I extend heart-felt acknowledgments to Dorothy Haile, former SIM international personnel director and SIM missionary, and to Dr. Richard Edlin, for their support and encouragement of my scholarly pursuits. I credit much of my growth and understandings of TCKs and international Christian schools to the fine faculty and staff at Bingham Academy and Rift Valley Academy. In addition, I greatly value the scholarly support of the Association of Christian Schools International. Of special mention are Drs. Dan Egeler, David Wilcox, and Tim Shuman.

The completion of this degree would not have become a reality without generous financial contributions from my employer, Spring Arbor University. Nor could I have made it to the end without the ongoing support and encouragement from my SAU colleagues, especially my friends in the School of Education.

I also appreciate the generous time several individuals provided: Dr. Kimberly Maier (Michigan State University) for tutoring in statistics, Pamm Linton for her outstanding editing skills, Giny Lonser and Cheryl Logan for their formatting services. Likewise, a very special thanks to my mentors and colleagues at Andrews University: Dr. Paul Brantley for opening the door for me to attend AU, Dr. Shirley Freed for opening my mind to qualitative research methodologies, Dr. James Jeffery, Dean of the School of Education, Dr. Lee Davidson, Chair of the Teaching, Learning, & Curriculum Department, and my dissertation committee members: Dr. Larry Burton (friend, advisor, chair, & methodologist), Dr. Faith-Ann McGarrell (co-chair), Dr. Cheryl Doss (subject expert), Dr. Raymond Ostrander (substitute member), and Dr. Glynis Bradfield (External Examiner). I am grateful for the support, encouragement, guidance, and insight you provided throughout this process.

To my amazing wife, Carol, and our daughters, Jennifer and Rebecca, I reserve my deepest and most heartfelt thanks. I would have no reference for this work had we not shared our African experience together. Thank you for supporting this ten-year journey.

Lastly, to all my former students; you are the best! I am forever grateful that our paths have crossed. You have greatly enriched my life and I am a better person for having known each of you.

All Glory to God.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The founding of schools catering to the needs of missionary children was a direct result of the Protestant Western missionary movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries. As the first missionaries from Continental Europe, Canada, and the United States traveled to remote regions of newly colonized parts of the world, little thought was given to providing formal school-based education for their children. This forced many parents to leave their children under the care of others in their home country while attending school. Over time, more effort was made to provide formal education through the construction of missionary schools or what will be referred to in this study as international Christian schools (J. Bowers, 1998, p. 2). These schools, often boarding schools, became the avenue for providing education to the children of missionaries, diplomats, and business persons operating within close proximity to the school (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 211). Even today, several of the early “missionary schools” continue in operation. The Woodstock School in India can trace its beginnings to 1854 (Woodstock School, 2012). Rift Valley Academy in Kenya has been in continuous operation since 1906 (Africa Inland Mission, 2012).

Within such schools it is common to find a unique and very divergent group of students who are often referred to as Third Culture Kids (TCKs). This group, be they missionary kids (MKs) or expatriate kids whose parents live abroad for diplomatic,

military, humanitarian, or entrepreneurial reasons, shares a common set of traits specific to their experiences, which makes them a unique sociological phenomenon (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Useem & Downie, 1976). Although multiple studies have been conducted on TCKs (Fail, 2002; Klemens, 2008; Lyttle, Barker, & Cornwall, 2011; Moore, 2011; Schaetti, 2000; Schulz, 1985; Sotherden, 1992; Thurston-Gonzalez, 2009; Wrobbel, 2005), Grimshaw and Sears (2008) report that “research has tended to allow little space for the voices of [TCKs]” (p. 272). What is of curious interest to me is that the TCK literature is remarkably silent in respect to their educational experiences and preferences as students of international Christian schools.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to give voice to Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and hear their perceptions of the teacher traits, characteristics, and qualities that are of value to them as students enrolled in international Christian schools.

Of special interest to me is how such distinguished teacher traits, characteristics, and qualities lend themselves to the successful and positive educational experience for both students and teachers. This research is personal. After teaching in public schools for 15 years, I moved my family overseas where, over an 8-year span of time, both my wife and I taught TCKs in two international Christian schools. It was at this time that I became acutely aware of the joyful complexities associated with effectively teaching and relating to TCKs. Over the years, I have traveled to a number of international destinations, working with organizations and international Christian schools regarding the subject of TCK education and TCK teachers. Both my wife and I have counted the sacrifices made a privilege and an investment in not only raising two well-adjusted and proud Adult Third

Culture Kids (ATCKs), but also an honor to have interacted with many great and inspiring TCKs. As a result of these experiences, I have also witnessed the negative effects associated with an improper hire or the recruitment of an ill-matched teacher. Thus, through this research, I seek to determine which traits, qualities, and characteristics should prominently be considered when recruiting and hiring effective teachers for international Christian schools. The goal of this study is to provide validated research to missionary organizations, agencies, and schools responsible for the recruitment and hiring of teachers. It is my hope that the results of this study will be used in the candidate screening process to maximize the effectiveness of selecting the best staff for international Christian schools, enhancing the educational experience for their students.

Taylor (1997) correctly identifies family issues and children's education as the main reason missionaries cite for leaving the country they are working in to return home. Inadequate or unsatisfactory educational options or experiences are often identified as one such family issue. From experience, I have witnessed that often both are one and the same and that it is not unusual that some kind of negative educational experience is at the root of their decision to leave their field of service. As a former missionary and teacher, I know all too well the sacrifices such families make to live overseas and the valuable contributions they provide, which are left void by an unexpected departure. John Powell (1998) writes that such sudden departure "affects the person, the family, the community, the mission" (p. 117). In addition, the transitional chaos that accompanies the TCK returning home to a country that is often less "home" and more "foreign" than the one they left cannot be overstated. Writing in *Raising Resilient MKs: Resources for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers*, noted TCK sociologist, Dave Pollock, states that such

transitions are often accompanied by “a loss of status, sense of grief, emotional instability, and an exaggerated importance of ‘special’ knowledge, accompanied by a sense of isolation, anxiety, and self-centeredness” (Pollock, 1998, p. 106). I believe that by recruiting the best type of teachers for international Christian schools, the missionary agencies and the schools educating their children, as well as all children enrolled in the school, will mutually benefit.

Problem

Although TCKs often look similar to typical students within a mono-culture setting, they possess distinct differences from students most teachers are trained to instruct. Paul Nelson, then-superintendent of Children’s Educational Division for Wycliffe Bible Translators, writes, “TCKs are a unique clientele; therefore education must be unique” (as cited in Pollock, 1989, p. 16).

Over the past 20 years, an array of research has been generated in respect to TCKs as a unique sociological phenomenon specifically in regard to issues of cultural adjustment/re-entry transition to their passport “home” country, self-identity/self-perception, and academic/personal success choices (Fail, 2002; Klemens, 2008; Lyttle et al., 2011; Moore, 2011; Schaetti, 2000; Schulz, 1985; Sotherden, 1992; Thurston-Gonzalez, 2009; Wrobbel, 2005). However, the research is remarkably silent in regard to exploring and understanding the voice of TCKs respective to the bearing that teachers of international schools have on their educational experiences and personal development.

This study is an expansion of an earlier pilot study I conducted early in my doctoral studies (Linton, 2006). It is original in its uniqueness and promises to provide missionary organizations, agencies, and schools responsible for recruiting and retaining

qualified and competent teaching staff a profile of the types of teachers best suited for such schools. In addition, the research can be used to develop existing international Christian school educators to become more responsive to the challenges of effectively teaching and positively influencing TCKs. The method of research for this study is qualitative and is based upon the principles of Grounded Theory.

Research Question

Using a series of specific questions, I sought to determine traits, characteristics, and qualities demonstrated by international Christian school teachers that were identified as important to TCKs as students. This study, therefore, seeks to answer one primary question: What are the traits, characteristics, and qualities TCKs value in their international Christian school teachers?

Definitions of Terms

In this study a number of terms are employed. The working definitions for them are as follows:

Third Culture Kids: Refers to individuals who have lived part, if not all, of their childhood within a foreign culture or cultures outside that of their parents' "home" country or passport country (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, pp. 13, 21-22). Associated terms include Norma McCaig's "Global Nomads" (McCluskey, 1994, p. 25), "Military Brats" (Ender, 2002), and Ruth Van Reken's "Cross Cultural Kids" (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 21) among others.

International schools & International Christian schools: Because TCKs attend international schools which are both Christian based and non-Christian based, the delineation of "international school" and "international Christian school" is important to

understand because both types of schools share a number of commonalities. According to Mary Hayden (2006), the term “international school” is difficult to accurately define due to the ever-widening variations found among them (p. 11). She prefers to define them as schools that “for the most part, [are] a conglomeration of individual institutions which may or may not share an underlying educational philosophy” (Hayden & Thompson, 1998b, p. 551). However, Hayden’s focus is primarily on international schools that are secular or neutral in their emphasis of religiosity. Although there are many shared similarities between “international schools” and “international Christian schools,” there are also definite differences. Both are educational institutions located within a foreign country and founded for the purposes of providing a quality education. The defining difference is that within an “international Christian school” the educational philosophy and moral base of the school is founded upon a core set of beliefs and practices more aligned with evangelical Christianity. For the purposes of this research, the term “international Christian school” is used to define English-speaking schools located in an overseas setting with the purpose of providing a distinct Christian-based education adapted to an American, British, and/or Canadian curriculum or curricula.

Teacher Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities: The actions defining the traits, characteristics, and qualities of teachers are referred to as dispositions, being defined as “summaries of acts, frequencies or trends in behavior” (Katz & Rath, 1985, p. 301).

Delimitations

Within the scope of this research, it would be impractical to seek out and interview the entire TCK population. Therefore, specific TCK eligibility parameters for the selection of participants included they possess American or Canadian citizenship, be

between the ages of 18-30 with equal gender representation, had attended an international Christian school for at least 2 full years at the secondary level or a combination of 4 or more years of enrollment within the grade equivalency of both primary and middle school levels. A total of 24 participants were selected for the study.

Using personal connections within the international Christian school community, missionary organizations, and educational colleagues, I sought participation in the study by posting an announcement to the social network site *facebook*TM. Individuals contacted me with an interest to be considered as a participant in the study and/or were recommended to me by both colleagues and participants in the study. Participation in the study was voluntary, and I sought to create a balanced perspective by monitoring and selecting participants who met the above-stated demographic requirements and who provided representation of having attended international Christian schools in various regions of the world.

Limitations

The research was conducted through a variety of venues including face-to-face conversations, telephone interviews, Skype internet conferences, and follow up email conversations with the participants of the study.

As it would be impossible for the study to include the voice of all TCKs, the data collected and analyzed were specific to 24 TCK participants who had attended at least one international Christian school and who were identified by their passport as American or Canadian.

Researcher Bias and Validity Checks

Given my previous overseas teaching experience and my current university teaching role, care was given when selecting known participants for the study. Of the 24 participants in this study, eight were former international Christian school students I had taught overseas. Of these eight, one participant had also been a student of mine in a course I taught at the university where I am employed. An additional eight participants were enrolled as students at my university. Of these eight participants, I had limited knowledge of, and previous informal interactions, with only three of the eight participants.

To protect the validity of the study and reduce opportunities for bias, I sought to create a transparent descriptive practice. This was accomplished by providing all participants printed information regarding the study and myself prior to their participation in the study. All recorded interviews were transcribed, and each participant was provided a copy of their interview transcription via email with a request to respond back to me verifying that the written transcription accurately portrayed the interview conversation. Twenty-three of the participants responded affirmatively, with one participant not responding to my email.

In addition, I sought to practice “reflexivity,” an act of “critical self-reflection,” which implies that the researcher “engages in critical self-reflection about his or her biases and predispositions” and seeks to “monitor and attempt to control their biases” as defined by Johnson (1997, p. 284). This was accomplished by my sticking closely to the scripted questions asked of each participant as well as recognizing leading questions and making appropriate adjustments to such.

Because the study sought to understand the accounts of the participants using their own words, various measures of interpretative and theoretical validity were employed as a defined practice of qualitative research (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Johnson, 1997; Maxwell, 1992; Richards, 2009).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The number of international schools grew exponentially over the last half of the 20th century. Mary Hayden (Hayden & Thompson, 1995), renowned scholar on the topic of international education, indicates that in 1964 there were perhaps 50 such schools in existence and writes, “It is impossible to give a precise number at any one time . . . but that the number had increased to well over 1000 [international schools] in the late 20th century and . . . is undoubtedly higher than this figure at the time of writing” (p. 332). According to Jonietz and Harris (1991), “In 1990, over 290 primary and secondary schools serving over 60,000 students in more than 70 countries sought to join the ECIS [European Council of International Schools]” (p. 3). Data from the U.S. Department of State (2010) Worldwide Fact Sheet, 2009-2010, indicated that there were 196 schools in 136 countries that received assistance from the Office of Overseas Schools. According to 2009-2010 data from the International School Services (ISS), a non-profit organization providing services to primarily American curriculum international schools, there were 547 schools located in 157 countries with a total student population of 297,904 listed in the *ISS Directory of Overseas Schools* (Rick, 2009, p. ix). Recent data from the U.S. Department of Defense indicates that almost 60,000 students are enrolled in 135 schools located in 12 countries within the European and Pacific regions making up the

Department of Defense Dependent School system (U.S. Department of Defense, 2012).

In addition, 213 international Christian schools claimed membership with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). It is estimated that an additional 50-70 schools fitting the international Christian school description operate throughout the world but are not directly associated with ACSI. Such schools are sponsored by individual missionary organizations and Christian church denominations (D. Wilcox, personal communication, June 1, 2012).

Writing in the *World Yearbook of Education*, Keson (1991) states that “most of the capitals of the world have at least one international school, in addition to a British or American” type school (p. 56). Bagnall (2008) affirms the work of Matthews (1998) who calculated then that the “international school network” consisted of “1000 schools, 50,000 teachers and half a million students distributed around the world” (p. 11). As has already been referenced, the *New York Times* reports that the total number of international schools may be closer to 3,000 and, according to Pete Woodward, Director of the Commission on American and International Schools Abroad, the growth of new schools is “very significant” (Greenlees, 2006). The degree to which such schools are actually “international” is up for debate. According to David Wilcox (personal communication, June 1, 2012) of the Association of Christian Schools International,

more and more schools are calling themselves international when in fact they are only increasing the emphasis on bilingualism. Others are more legitimately able to be considered ‘international’ because rather than following the expected scope and sequence of the national educational system they are using curricula from other nations and on that basis calling themselves international.

Whatever the exact number of international schools happens to be, the fact remains that more and more schools are identifying themselves as “international,” thus pointing to an ever-increasing demand for their services and the need for them to hire or

recruit properly trained educational staff members. It is also within many such schools that one finds a unique group of students enrolled who are often labeled, *Third Culture Kids* or *TCKs*.

This chapter is organized around three critical areas of emphasis directly related to this study. In the first area, *International Schools*, an overview of international schools, their beginnings, and the various definitions and characteristics that set them apart from schools in mono-cultural/national settings is provided. The second area of emphasis is an overview of *Third Culture Kids* (TCKs) and what makes them such a unique phenomenon within international schools and this study. The last part provides an overview of the important roles played by the international school teacher and highlights research regarding the relationship between teachers and student learning, as well as specific research related to teachers in an international school setting.

International Schools

The end of World War II and the ensuing Cold War are often cited as the historical period for the modern rise of international schools. However, as previously stated, many of the first international schools preceded World War II, as missionary and colonial government agencies sought to provide educational opportunities for their children (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 211).

Indeed, the defeat of the Axis forces created a thrust of international activity and interest from governments, businesses, and humanitarian entities resulting in a growing expatriate population around the world. The modern rise of globalization within the business community has provided opportunities for more individuals to work and live abroad, often with their families in tow. As Americans and other nationalities have

expanded their presence throughout the world, the need grew for families to accompany individuals assigned to new duties and posts in faraway places. This expatriate expansion spawned the creation of international schools servicing the educational needs of the children accompanying their parents abroad (Gerner, Perry, Moselle, & Archbold, 1992; Hayden, 2006; Jonietz & Harris, 1991; Simpson & Duke, 2000). It has been estimated that 4 million American citizens and perhaps another 1 million Australians and Japanese citizens live abroad. This number leads Pollock and Van Reken (2009) to state, “We can only imagine the total number of expatriates worldwide” (p. 4).

Determining what exactly an “international school” is or its characteristics has generated discussion among scholars. Pollock and Van Reken (2009) note that “a significant problem arises . . . in trying to identify what the term *international* school actually means” (p. 208). Likewise, Wylie (2008) references Gellar and states, “The term ‘international’ has to date had little or no meaning at all. Schools have called themselves ‘international’ without paying attention to what it really means” (p. 8). Hayden (2006) declares that the term ‘international education’ can be contrived to “have a number of different meanings” (p. 4). Murphy writes,

International schools serve the children of those international organizations and multinational companies whose parents are called upon to work in many different countries and to change their assignments at frequent intervals; the schools also educate the children of the diplomatic corps, and offer educational opportunities to children of host country nations who want their children to learn English or who prefer the greater flexibility which an international school offers over the national system. (as cited in Hayden, 2006, p. 12)

Blakeney (2012) uses the terms “overseas school” and “international school” interchangeably when writing about American-style international schools and defines them as schools “located outside the United States aiming to educate students in English and prepare them for a western style university education” (pp. 20-21).

Cambridge and Thompson identify international schools as:

1. A transplanted national system serving expatriate clients of that country located in another country
2. A transplanted national system serving clients from another country
3. A simulacrum of a transplanted national education system; for example, the programs of the International Baccalaureate Organization, serving expatriate clients and/or host country nationals
4. An ideology of international understanding and peace, citizenship, and service (as cited in Wylie, 2008, pp. 8-9).

Taking the discussion in an entirely different direction, Simpson and Duke (2000) avoid any pretense of defining international schools and instead identify seven different types of American overseas schools in operation around the world. These include:

1. Cooperative community schools, the most common type founded by Americans and “third-country” nationals
2. Corporate-type schools
3. Foundation schools
4. Contract schools, such as schools associated with the International School Service (ISS) which operates numerous schools around the world
5. Christian religious schools, including denominational and missionary schools
6. Proprietary schools
7. Department of Defense schools (DoDDS)
8. Department of State schools, referred to as A/OS units (Simpson & Duke, 2000, pp. 35-48).

Blakeney (2012) differentiates the types of international schools as being “association owned, proprietary, company-schools, and Department of Defense schools . . . governed by a charter or association agreement and bound to certain statutes such as a nine-member school board” (pp. 559-562). According to him, proprietary or for-profit schools are “more common today than even five years ago” and are found in cities around the world with larger populations while company-owned schools “may be located in remote areas where mineral, gas or oil are being extracted.” The Department of Defense schools are of course found around the world where the U.S. military has established military bases (pp. 562-566).

While Hayden and Thompson (1995) differentiate international schools by the cultural and ethnic international makeup of the student body, the schools’ staff, a recognized international curriculum such as the International Bachelorette (IB), and a school “ethos,” which is distinctly international, and not nationally bound. Such schools:

1. May serve a local and varied expatriate community of business people, diplomats, and armed forces personnel
2. May attract resident students from all over the world
3. Are usually either proprietary schools, owned and controlled by one or two individuals, or are private schools governed by a board of directors consisting mainly of parents
4. Are usually fee-paying or scholarship-funded (such as the United World Colleges) or both (Hayden & Thompson, 1995, pp. 337-338).

International schools differ greatly from national schools where the student and staff makeup share a predominate single-country cultural or national

affiliation, and the curriculum is specific to the nation in which the school is located “predominately from one country, where the curriculum and examinations of that country only are offered” (Hayden & Thompson, 1995, p. 337).

Interestingly, Hayden and Thompson classify these “national schools” as fitting this category if they:

1. Serve principally the students of one nationality
2. Are usually located within the one country where they may be government or private fee-paying schools with a parent governing board
3. May be located overseas to serve their own expatriates such as the numerous American, British, and French schools, many of which are funded and staffed by the national government at home and some of which are private (p. 338).

According to Simpson and Duke (2000) and Blakeney (2012), these schools fit the classification as “international schools” because the school is located in a foreign country and offers a curriculum which is country-specific and tailored to the majority “nationality” represented among the students attending the school, be they American, British, French, German, etc.

However, discussion aside as to what defines an “international school,” the definition of what is or what does not constitute an international school is not as vitally important as is their purposes and shared characteristics. According to Pollock and VanReken (2009), international schools “include a broad spectrum of schools under the term *international school* and loosely define it as meaning *any school that has students from various countries, and whose primary curriculum is different from the one used by the national schools of the host country*” (p. 209). To further specify the nature of an

international Christian school one must include the addition of a Christian-based educational philosophy and moral basis evident within the school. Since there are a variety of emerging global *Christian schools* that are non-English speaking and focused on curricula outside of the more traditional American, Canadian, or British type schools, it is necessary within the scope of this study to understand that for this study, the term “international Christian school” is used to designate English-speaking schools, located in an overseas setting, with the purpose of providing a distinct Christian-based education and academic instruction commonly associated with an American, British, and/or Canadian curriculum or curricula.

With these definitions we can now turn to the most common traits shared by international schools.

Probably the most important component that varies within international schools is the curriculum or curricula offered. During my time of teaching in two East African countries, I engaged with educators representing international schools sponsored by American, British, German, French, and Norwegian national interests. Each school sought to provide a quality education that provided an educational program and curriculum tailored to specifically preparing students for their return to the respective country emphases of the school. This can present challenges for students with nationalities different from that of the school’s emphasis as it may limit their future post-secondary educational opportunities only to those that recognize and accept their secondary education diploma or certificate of completion.

However, one needs to recognize that, as McKenzie (as cited in MacKenzie, Hayden, & Thompson, 2003) reminds us, “all education systems have their underpinning

values” (p. 57). One such value is the national interest of the international school student and their ability to return to their home country as an informed citizen. Pollock and VanReken (2009), understanding the difficulties Third Culture Kids face when enrolled in a school quite different from their previous “home” educational experience, write that “schooling should not make it impossible for the child to return to the home country” (p. 199). McCluskey (1994) warns parents that “moving [the] child from one academic system to another (for example, from the British to the French or the U.S. systems) can handicap [the] child academically” (p. 19). Pascoe (2006) writes persuasively to the vital importance of parents researching and deciding on what type of school is best for their children in an international setting.

Hill (as cited in Hayden & Thompson, 1995) references the IB or *International Baccalaureate* as a criteria for setting an international school apart from a national school in an overseas setting. MacKenzie et al. (2003) surveyed parents who enrolled their children in three Swiss-based international schools and found that the parents highly valued the International Baccalaureate curriculum offered by these schools. In recent years, IB programs have grown in popularity among international schools. According to Wylie (2008), schools offering the International Baccalaureate program expanded by 11.85% from 1996-2006 with much of that growth occurring in Asia (p. 6).

Hayden and Thompson (1998b, 2000, 2006) write extensively on the International Baccalaureate program and its merits within international schools. According to the International Baccalaureate’s website (2012), the aim of the IB is to “develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.” Wylie (2008) states that “even

though some believe that an ideologically international education . . . espouses global civil society” it has yet to emerge in an actual practice (Wylie, 2008, p. 5). According to him, this is due to the tension which exists between the ideology and pragmatic purposes of such schools (p. 16).

However, not all international schools are able to offer the IB curriculum. In research conducted by Hayden, Rancic, and Thompson (2000), student questionnaires were received from 43 schools in 28 countries which revealed that “over half were working towards International Baccalaureate Diploma examinations with the European Baccalaureate, GCE A Levels (General Certificate Examination), the American Advance Placement (AP) and the French Baccalauréat” (p. 108). Even then, many of these curricula are exclusively taught in English, except for the French Baccalauréat, and often best suited for the highly academically inclined students.

Blakeney (2012) states that the development of curriculum in international schools must meet the needs of the international students enrolled in the school. Therefore curriculum offerings such as the IB, AP, and courses meeting the host country’s diploma requirements are necessary (pp. 403-407). He further states that having taught in four schools on four continents “the curricula in three of the four schools have been inadequate” (pp. 414-418).

Dorothy Haile (2006) advocated that missionary educators should make use of combining aspects of the British IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) and the American AP (Advance Placement) curriculum offerings to provide students attending international Christian schools the necessary preparation to return to their “home” country for college/university studies. According to Haile, “[This] may

well, we believe, make it possible for students from a greater range of nationalities to qualify for educational institutions in their own country while not disadvantaging students coming from and returning to the U.S. system” (Haile, 2006, p. 31).

Aside from curriculum challenges, international schools also provide education for numerous students of multiple nationalities. Gerner (1990) indicates that the population of international schools may vary from a dozen to hundreds of students (p. 21). Pascoe (1993) informs her readers that most international school students come “primarily from Western countries like Canada, the United States, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand” and attend either American or British-type schools. However, she indicates that “children from as many as 40-50 other countries will also be enrolled” in such schools because parents want their children to be educated in English-speaking schools (p. 136). It is exactly this kind of diversity, a kind of mini-United Nations, that makes international schools exciting places to teach. Blakeney (2012) identifies that international school pupils fall into four categories: “host country national students, short-term expatriate students, long-term expatriate students, and the children of teachers” (pp. 798-800).

From my experience working within the international education community, the students attending international schools can be grouped accordingly:

1. Students who live in or outside of the host country and whose nationality is not of the national country in which the school is located
2. Students seeking an education that is comparable to their “home” or passport country’s educational system

3. Students, either non-host country nationals or host-country nationals, seeking an education which will position them to attend post-secondary school education (college/university) in a country recognizing the curriculum focus and academic achievements associated with the particular international school.

According to Ortloff and Escobar-Ortloff (2001), non-American parents enroll their children in American-sponsored overseas schools because they “recognize the benefits of receiving an ‘American’ education” (p. 4). MacKenzie et al. (2003) found overwhelmingly that the single most important reason parents selected an international school was the use of the English language for instructional purposes. Thus, many expatriates enroll their children in specific international schools based upon the considerations of how the education they provide will benefit their children long-range (p. 311).

Thus, the unique strengths of the international school, its international student composition, and the curriculum or curricula offered can create varying degrees of challenges for students who are not from the national country sponsoring the school. However, as we will see, the research on Third Culture Kids reveals a great satisfaction with their overall overseas life experiences.

Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

The term Third Culture Kid (TCK) or Third Culture Kids (TCKs) originated with the work of Michigan State University sociologists Ruth Useem and John Useem. The Useems, while studying Americans in India, observed a phenomenon they coined ‘third culture’ to describe the experience the American expatriates shared together (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 14; Useem & Downie, 1976, p. 103). According to Pollock and Van

Reken (2009), the Useems realized that “the expatriates had formed a lifestyle that was different from either their home [first culture] or their host culture [second culture]” thus forming a third or “interstitial culture,” a “culture between cultures” lifestyle. The term *third culture kids* originated from the concept of the children growing up in the “interstitial culture” (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 14). This term is repeatedly found in the recent literature referencing these types of children (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Langford, 1988; Useem & Cottrell, 1993; Zilber, 2005). According to Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) standard definition:

A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside of the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership of any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCKs life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. (p. 13)

Over the years, other titles have been developed and defended as more definitively correct descriptions for this type of child. McCaig (as cited in McCluskey, 1994; see Langford, 1988; Schaetti, 2000) developed the concept and accompanying term, *Global Nomad*, to describe the mobility and characteristics of children with shared features of Pollock and Van Reken’s definition. Hayden (2006) refers to these children as “globally mobile children” (p. 42) as does Grimshaw and Sears (2008). A. Lee (2008, pp. 56-57) believes the term *third culture kid* is outdated for the 21st century and adopts the term *cross cultural kids*, a term that Paulette Bethel and Ruth Van Reeken developed to include a broader spectrum of children from bicultural, immigrant, refugees, minorities, and international adoptions along with the more traditional TCK (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 31). Frederick (1996) refers to TCKs as internationally mobile children who are greatly affected by multiple transitional and cultural experiences thus referencing them as

“transcultural children” (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 36), a term used in conjunction with “transnationals” by Willis, Enloe, and Minoura (1994, p. 32). Similarly, Pascoe (1993) uses this term when she states,

A Third Culture Kid—or a ‘trans-cultural kid’ . . . is a child who spends a significant part of his life in a country or countries which are not the same as the one stamped on his passport. The child is not, as the term might lead you to believe, the product of parents of mixed cultures. (p. 13)

Hayden (2006) analyzed the various terminologies associated with these “globally mobile children” (p. 41) and declares that they “may be described as ‘Global Nomads,’ ‘Third Culture Kids’ (TCKs), ‘Military Brats’, ‘Preacher’s Kids’ (PKs), ‘Missionary Kids’ (MKs) and no doubt other terms in particular context” (p. 42). Pascoe (1993) adds to this list and includes the term “ex-pat kids” to describe TCKs (p. 28).

For the purposes of this study, Pollock and Van Reken’s (2009) definition is used to define a Third Culture Kid (TCK) or Third Culture Kids (TCKs) Global Nomad, Cross Cultural Kids, internationally mobile children, transculturals/transnationals, etc., as “a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture” (p. 13).

The TCK becomes internationally mobile the moment they, as a child, are uprooted and move, or are born, into an international setting different from their parents’ passport country. Pascoe (2006) recognizes that most often, this is the result of their parents’ career choice to live outside of their home or passport country, becoming what is referred to as an “expatriate” (p. 28). According to Olson (1986) expatriates are “those voluntary temporary migrants, mostly from affluent countries, who reside abroad” for one or several of the following purposes: business, mission, teaching, and leisure (p. 48). As such moves are often necessitated and decided upon by the parent, not the TCK, the

location into a foreign environment is nearly never “voluntary” for the TCK. Depending on the parents’ occupation, a move overseas can extend from 1 year to multiple years. Gleeson’s study (1973) found that missionary kids lived at least a decade overseas in one to three countries during the elementary and secondary school years (p. 485). Robin Pascoe (1993), drawing from her experience as the wife of a Canadian diplomat, indicates that expatriate families typically move overseas for anywhere from 1 to 3 years before returning home or being transferred to their next post (p. 38). Gillies (1998) identifies that some overseas families see “multiple tours, some lasting two to six years, before they return to their home assignments” (p. 38).

Whether the international relocation is an initial move for an adolescent, or one of multiple moves they have experienced, each has a defining impact and shapes the identity of the TCK for good or for bad. McCluskey (1994) identifies one of the more negative characteristics of TCKs: their decision to avoid choosing long-term friendships. According to Connie Buford, TCKs are hesitant to make lasting friendships “because they know they’ll be leaving.” They also tend to demonstrate feelings of “resentment toward parents” when another move is required (pp. 10-11). According to Pollock and Van Reken (2009), TCKs struggle with unresolved grief (pp. 74-83). In *Raising Resilient MKs: Resources for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers*, Pollock (1998) states that such transitions are often accompanied by “a loss of status, sense of grief, emotional instability, and an exaggerated importance of ‘special’ knowledge, accompanied by a sense of isolation, anxiety, and self-centeredness” (p. 106). Supporting Pollock, McCluskey (1994) writes,

The many separations resulting from the nomadic lifestyle leave a residue of unresolved grief, anger, and depression. Multiple parties may also contribute to

stresses in interpersonal relationships. Some global nomads decide never to allow others to get too close to them emotionally; in this way they defend themselves against the pain of separation. Many unconsciously and prematurely released themselves from relationships at the slightest hint of distancing or rejection by the other party. . . . The global nomad's independence is not altogether unhealthy, but it produces loneliness when it stands in the way of legitimate and healthy intimate relationships. (McCluskey, 1994, p. 73)

Grimshaw and Sears (2008) emphasize that “globally mobile young people live in a state of ‘liminality’. That is to say, they occupy space ‘in-between’ the ending of one set of attachments and the beginning of the next” (p. 262). McCluskey (1994) draws upon the work of Global Nomad expert, Norma McCaig, who described TCKs as practicing a phenomenon of “set up camp, break camp,” a terminology reflecting the TCKs mental and emotional response to arriving in a new country or location fully knowing it is most probably temporary (p. 11). It is no wonder then that a life of such mobility for an adolescent creates a “confused sense of identity” as identified by Schaetti (2000), Walters (2006), Grimshaw and Sears (2008), and Pollock and Van Reken (2009). This confused sense of identity also creates difficulty for the TCK in defining their sense of “home.” According to Grappo (2008), “many TCKs wonder where they belong, and don’t understand why they feel so different from their peers when they return to the country of their passport. Defining ‘home’ is a challenge; it may be at once everywhere and nowhere, because the emotional and physical state of ‘home’ may not be the same” (p. 76). The questions Where am I from? and Where do I belong? form the basis for an individual’s identity (Grimshaw & Sears, 2008, p. 259). It is no wonder then why TCKs are confused when faced with questions of “home.” Consider what Pascoe (1993) writes:

A TCK will shrink when someone unfamiliar with the overseas life asks him, “Where are you from?” That one simple question, which doesn’t have a simple answer, raises a profoundly confusing issue that haunts the TCK: his feelings of rootlessness. It leaves him tongue tied along with that other contradictory question put to TCKS upon re-entry, “Are you glad to be home?” (p. 167)

Similarly, Amy Hervey (2009) states that

TCKs find it difficult to answer questions such as “Where are you from?” with multiple variables including their parents’ origin, where they were born, the places they have lived, anywhere relatives live, their parents’ current location, and possibly additional factors playing a role in where they feel at home. (p. 37)

If the determination of ‘home’ is the cause of confusion for TCKs, sometimes their outward behaviors directly related to their identity and rootlessness are confusing to those on the outside of their lives. According to Gillies (1998), “TCKs tend to avoid solving interpersonal problems, side-stepping potential conflicts because they know the problem will ‘go away.’ After all, they will be moving soon” (p. 5). Jonietz and Harris (1991) state that TCKs often have difficulty transitioning back to their “home” or “passport” country after lengthy stays abroad and experience “certain social awkwardness” being out of touch with the mainstream pop culture and terminology of their peers (p. 58).

TCKs have also been mischaracterized and described as “misfits” by Echerd and Arathoon (1989, p. 113). Collier (2008) claims that the repatriation process for MKs (missionary kids) is difficult because they are “longing for their host country(ies) and discover cultural differences/taboos between their host culture and home culture. These experiences are often accompanied by sadness/depression or mixed feelings” (p. 147). Furthermore, they struggle with “identity development tasks” associated with adult development and “acculturating to the United States” and viewing their country positively (p. 149).

This difficulty of transition is compounded because they “share a sense of membership in multiple cultures, yet lack ownership of any one culture” (Gillies, 1998, p. 36). TCK expert, Norma McCaig (as cited in McCluskey, 1994) stated that “early on

there needs to be a recognition of the fact that the children are going to be of a different culture than the parents” (p. 25). This is because the parents’ values are associated with their home country whereas their children “have an international overlay” of experiences and values. This means that as parents return “home” to their culture “the children are leaving [their home]” (McCaig, as cited in McCluskey, 1994, p. 25).

Pollock and Van Reeken (2009) list additional negative TCK characteristics such as delayed adolescent rebellion and the pressure they feel to act in a manner that positively represents their parents’ role(s) in the overseas setting (pp. 150-153).

However, it would be remiss to dwell only upon the negatives associated with TCKs. Although what has been described is accurate, overall TCKs represent a very positive and powerful testimony of resiliency and adaptation much needed in an ever-globalizing society. Noted sociologist Ted Ward (1984) writes that “children raised overseas are often strong on resourcefulness and creativity,” are “more self-reliant,” and “have learned early in life that unknowns are not to be feared and have developed remarkable coping skills” (p. 250). In addition he states that

the greatest benefit is the world view developed by most TCKs. It is three-dimensional, with not only knowledge but understanding and empathy. The sense of security in getting around in the world and acting appropriately in it is significant preparation. The person can become a cultural bridge and an active, positive influence in an increasingly intercultural world. (as cited in Pollock, 1998, p. 48)

According to McCluskey (1994), “Global nomads take great pride in being ‘a citizen of the world’ and feeling a connection to responsibility for the people of more than one country” (p. 25). Hayden (2006) includes an impressive list of TCK characteristics such as: linguistic awareness and adaptability to new environments, relationships, international perspective and preparedness to travel, cross-cultural skills,

increased maturity, strong family bonds and positive contributions to society” (p. 52).

Pascoe (2006) provides her readers with a detailed positive list of TCK characteristics (pp. 17-21). Willis et al.’s (1994) research reveals that transculturals’/transnationals’ characteristics include:

1. Adaptable, open, tolerant
2. Identity-multiple (from a multicultural view)
3. Accepting, sensitive, confident
4. Insightful, little or no culture shock when making transitions
5. Skilled at listening, making choices, self-reliance
6. Make friends easily
7. Objectivity, empathy, broad-mindedness
8. Personal growth, role-playing skills
9. Cognitive flexibility, tuning-in-skills
10. Awareness (Willis et al., 1994, p. 35).

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) likewise provide a favorable overview of TCKs’ accomplishments. Citing a survey of 608 missionary kids, the researchers determined that

1. 30% of the respondents graduated from high school with honors
2. 73% graduated from university
3. 25% graduated from university with honors
4. 11% were listed in *Who’s Who in American Colleges and Universities*

(Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, pp. 214-215).

Wroble (2005) conducted a study with TCKs who had attended national schools overseas and found that they possessed “significantly higher SAT scores and college

grade point averages ($p < .001$)” compared to their peers (Wrobbles, 2005, p. 74). This led her to believe that there was no evidence to suggest any academic disadvantage for TCKs when compared to their national peers and the general college student population (p. 154).

Schaetti (2000) conducted a qualitative study among 16 adult global nomads (TCKs) regarding the processes associated with identity development. Her research conclusions affirm that their identity development is complex (pp. 253-258). Moore (2011) found that TCKs possessed the “ability to shift identities depending on cultural settings, the ability to blend cultures to form a cultural identity, a lack of sense of belonging, the benefits and detriments of the TCK experience, and . . . the competency to communicate interculturally” (p. 47). Her research conclusions, based upon grounded theory, led her to conclude that TCKs have increased sophistication in multiple areas. Moore (2011) declared that her study indicated “that there may be more benefits to growing up interculturally than the TCI [Third Culture Individual] literature has indicated (p. 560). Brenneman (2001) explored the “sojourners’ perception” of TCKs and focused on their adolescent experience. In her research, the American TCKs living in Korea had “perceived their self-being positively” and were “satisfied with the quality and quantity of their friendships” and time spent with their family (pp. 68-69).

A statistical analysis of 140 TCK questionnaires revealed that TCKs have “significantly higher social sensitivity than mono-cultured individuals ($p < .001$)” (Lytle et al., 2011, p. 691). However, Klemens’s (2008) study of 64 college-age MKs (missionary kids) found that they did exhibit significantly “lower psychological well-being and greater difficulties with sociocultural adaptation ($p < .001$)” (p. 65). This is

partially supported through Hervey's (2009) analysis of 109 missionary kids in which she found a significant positive correlation ($p < .01$) in respect to the challenges presented in transitioning to the United States or Canada. She also found that the highest significance occurred in challenges regarding "adjusting to a new culture" ($p < .01$), "saying goodbye" ($p < .01$), and "moving" ($p < .05$) (pp. 6-7). This research led her to conclude that missionary kids with past negative transitional experiences experienced similar difficulties adjusting to college (p. 10). Thurston-Gonzalez's (2009) research concluded that TCKs expected the adjustment to U.S. culture to be challenging (p. 157). Bounds's (2008) research among 102 missionary children found significant correlations between their religious orientation and "positive affect" ($p < .05$), "overall life satisfaction" ($p < .001$), "psychological well-being" ($p < .05$), and "adjustment to college" ($p < .01$) (pp. 106-109).

Willis et al. (1994) conducted a long-term study of students attending an international school in Japan. Their analysis revealed that "over half of the transcultural/transnationals follow their parents into international jobs" and that "tolerance of others is widespread" with 83% responding that they would "allow their daughter to marry a person of another race, religion, or culture." They also held a "powerful" self-image, had "great pride in themselves," and even though 69% identified that they had "felt alienated," they believed that this is "a price to pay and would not trade their experience for any other" (p. 35). In addition, 80% of those surveyed identified themselves as "high achievers," which was specified by 91% of their survey group receiving an undergraduate college degree and 52% of them going on to attend

graduate school (Willis et al., 1994, pp. 35-36). Similarly, Useem (1993) found that TCKs are four times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree.

Pascoe (1993), writing about the positive qualities of TCKs, states that they often share the same cultural background and are now mobile professionals such as diplomats, military types, businessmen, teachers, or missionaries among others, who moved in and out of other cultures for several years at a time. . . . Generally speaking, they are adaptable, global oriented, multicultural in outlook, and in many cases multilingual. They're also good observers, less judgmental and less prejudicial than their non-mobile counterparts. (p. 93)

She further states that “these people [TCKs] are, on the whole, unique, highly-integrated individuals who display characteristics essentially constant with Maslow’s ‘self-realized’ individual and the positive aspects of Erickson’s last two developmental stages (generativity and integrity)” (p. 93). Gillies (1998, as cited in Useem & Downie, 1976) states that “TCKs gain a wealth of insight. They are tolerant of diversity, become skilled observers, and can serve as a model of multicultural education principles because of their expanded world view and exposure to cultural differences” (p. 36). This idea is supported by Gleeson (1973), who found that college undergraduate missionary kids demonstrated the highest levels of “worldmindedness”—“an expression or manifestation of open-mindedness toward differing concepts of national identity and cross-cultural values”—compared to other groups of American TCKs (pp. 487-488). Pascoe (1993) agrees and declares that the TCKs’ “way of thinking, their emotional lives, and especially their methods of meditation, hold great significance for the future when you consider that more and more people will be mobile in the next century” (p. 162). According to Kevin Gaw (as cited in Simpson & Duke, 2000), it is the international school that “is in a key position to promote intercultural development” and “has the opportunity to assist in developing the future leaders for our globalizing intercultural world” (pp. 88-89).

International School Teachers

The international scope and makeup of the student body within international schools are only two of several dynamic elements found within them. Attracting students from middle and upper classes of the host country or national residents of that country, expatriate businesspersons, governmental, missionary and humanitarian agencies, and the diplomatic corps creates a school environment that is quite different from the mono-cultural experiences of most teachers. Malcom McKenzie (as cited in Van Oord, 2008) writes, “It is possible to identify more cultural groups in international schools than the common ones that are concerned with race, ethnicity, nationality and the like” (p. 134).

International schools also attract a globally integrated staff from multiple nationalities. According to Blakeney (2012), teachers in American international schools are “as diverse as the student body they teach” and that although teachers come from multiple backgrounds or nationalities, they typically are “from English-speaking western countries” along with the national country of the school’s location (pp. 595-599).

According to the 2009-2010 *ISS Directory of International Schools*, almost 40,000 staff persons worked in ISS-supported schools. Of this 40,000, about 13,000 were U.S. citizens (Rick, 2009, p. ix). Teachers of international schools are often attracted to teach in such settings because of the benefits associated with them. According to Ferns and McWethy (1969),

overseas teaching offers many benefits, in addition to satisfying the desire to render significant professional service in foreign lands. Principle among these benefits is the opportunity to understand other people—their cultures, values, governments and economics—through first-hand experience. Travel and study in host countries provide fascinating contacts and insights which are irreplaceable. Financial rewards may be modest, but foreign assignments can be exceptionally rewarding in terms of personal satisfaction and new concepts acquired. (p. 41)

James Keson (1991) points to the benefits of smaller class sizes in international schools as a perk along with the fact that teachers in international schools are often afforded teaching freedoms not always found in the standardized educational environments of their home countries. Furthermore, they identify that teachers are not only dedicated to assisting and meeting the needs of students, but excited to do so and quote one teacher as saying, “International students are fun. They don’t feel enormous pressures of a single-culture school pressing down on them, they relate well to adults and they can also contribute a unique point of view to discussions” (p. 57).

Garton (2000) believes that the recruitment of qualified international school teachers is paramount to ensure a high-quality education and care for the children attending the school (p. 86). G. Walker (1998) agrees and states,

The most challenging task for the international school is the same as for any school: to support and encourage young people in search for their own identity, their own self-knowledge and, ultimately, their own self-fulfillment; and that is the fundamental responsibility of every single member of staff. (p. 13)

But who are international teachers and what qualities are required of them to instruct TCKs effectively? Likewise, what challenges do international teachers face that may inhibit their effectiveness to teach TCKs? Hobson’s (2000) research highlights four “motivating factors” for teachers to travel to and teach in an international setting. These included:

1. “Need to explore one’s cultural heritage, reconnect to the ‘homeland,’ and to solidify one’s cultural identity”
2. To fulfill the rootlessness of being a TCK themselves and being “comfortable in an environment populated by internationalists”

3. As a means to “affect a life change or to further demarcate a change that had already occurred, such as a divorce or career switch”

4. To fulfill the “novelty of an overseas experience and the lure of adventure” (Hobson, 2000, p. 88).

Russell and Larsson (2000) state that some of the reasons individuals desire to teach overseas include the desire to travel, to experience new things, and to take advantage of financial benefits of living and teaching abroad (pp. 124-125). They go on to advise prospective international teachers that

while overseas teaching also can offer opportunities for escape and rejuvenation, personal as well as professional, overseas teaching should be approached with care and great thought. Teaching in a new and foreign environment provides significant challenges, including immersion in a new culture, and often, in a new language. These challenges can put the very nature of teaching in a new perspective. (p. 124)

Other benefits, especially for American teachers, include certain economic advantages. Not only are costs of living less expensive in many countries, the American government allows for a significant tax exemption for those working overseas and a number of schools provide housing, medical insurance, and retirement benefits to their teachers (Blakeney, 2012). According to Hobson (2000), international teachers “live in an elevated class structure” or an “elite status” in most countries (p. 167).

One interesting aspect of many international teachers is the levels of transiency among them. It is not uncommon for international school teachers to move repeatedly during their career. Blakeney (2012) believes that the “relatively short contracts” offer international school teachers freedom to teach in many different schools, which is why teachers often stay in a school for only a few years (pp. 275-277). Hayden and Thompson

(1998a) found that of the 226 teacher questionnaires returned, “over 40 percent of respondents had taught in five or more schools” (Hayden & Thompson, 1998a, p. 552). This transient nature of teachers was reinforced in Hayden et al.’s (2000) subsequent research that included 226 teachers of whom two-thirds had taught for over 16 years, with two-thirds having taught “in at least three schools” (p. 108).

Although there may be benefits to this transient nature of international teachers, Ortloff and Escobar-Ortloff (2001) indicate that separation from their home countries and cultures for lengthy periods of time can hinder the professional development opportunities of many international teachers (p. 2). This is supported by Pascoe (1993) who states that a complaint of international school parents is that “some international teachers have been overseas so long that they have forgotten many issues which come out when someone [a student] is new [to the school]” (p. 139). This would suggest that international teachers must be up-to-date with pedagogical knowledge and education trends, as well as knowledge about TCKs and how to teach them. Zilber (2005), supporting this, states that “many educators are becoming more aware of the characteristics and needs of the internationally mobile students who populate our schools” and that “perhaps educators need to receive training earlier in their international career in order to have a positive impact on their children and/or their students” (p. 10). Pollock (1989) furthering the discussion writes that “teaching and caring for TCKs is not the same as performing in a monocultural setting” (p. 16). Paul Nelson (as cited in Pollock, 1989), the former superintendent of Children’s Educational Division for Wycliffe Bible Translators, writes,

The educator/caregiver must be aware of this uniqueness and be prepared for the task of addressing the issues of the TCK within the contextual demands of the

international/cross-cultural community. The perspective of education must be expanded beyond the limits of a single culture to embrace broader, interculturalized education. (Nelson, as cited in Pollock, 1989, p. 16)

Given the unique cultural diversity found in international schools, Pollock and Van Reken (2009) encourage parents to “examine the total approach to education in any system of schooling, not merely the academics” as educational/cultural expectations and differences exist (p. 197). Pascoe (2006) concurs with this as well.

To assist international teachers in their understanding of the purposes of and differences that exist within international schools, the European Council of International Schools and University of Cambridge International Examinations jointly created the International Teacher Certification (ITC) which includes five standards:

1. International Education in Context
2. Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms
3. Multiculturalism
4. Student Characteristics and Learning
5. Transition, Internationalizing Curricula
6. The Reflective International Teacher (Snowball, 2007, pp. 248-253).

Such a certification would certainly assist new educators in international schools to develop the appropriate attitudes and pedagogical skills to reflect necessary levels of cultural sensitivity. For international school teachers, the lack of multicultural understanding of one’s students can be more than problematic. Bennett (1979) states that “different world views or cultural orientations often lead to mutual misperceptions, hostility, or conflict” (p. 264). She further states that

the greater the differences between the world view of the teacher and students, the more likely it is that students’ and teachers’ preferred ways of communicating and participating are different. Those teachers who are unaware of their pupils’ needs

and preferences force the learner to do most of the adjusting. Those pupils who can't make the adjustment can't learn much in the classroom. (Bennett, 1979, p. 265)

Sadly, such instances do occur in international schools. Renicks (1992) states, "At times, even in the international school community, there is a lack of responsiveness to the individual and culturally based educational patterns of many expatriate students" (p. 2). Wallis's (2006) study of a first-year teacher at an American overseas school revealed that although the teacher participating in her study possessed competent teaching skills, she did not possess the training or experience necessary for her to achieve immediate success with her students.

The need to frame instruction in a culturally sensitive manner is vitally important for the international school teacher. Joslin (2002) reminds teachers that differences between teaching in a monocultural and international setting do indeed exist.

The teacher can present to a national group of students a topic from a national perspective and the students will probably accept that interpretation without question. In the international school, the international teacher must present the topic to a multinational group of students and consider many interpretations of the topic content. . . . Therefore the unique population of the international school necessitates that the teacher is able to accommodate a range of cultural interpretations leading to a broader understanding of phenomena from different cultural perspectives. *Any teacher who is unable to accommodate a range of cultural interpretations in the teaching and learning environment could be viewed as an obstacle to the international school students' realization of a meaningful experience* [italics added]. (Joslin, 2002, p. 43)

Edlin (1998), identifying the results of teachers lacking cultural proficiency, states,

When teachers enter culturally diverse environments without this perspective consciousness, they isolate themselves from the learning experiences of their students whose world views have been molded in situations different from their own. This increases dissatisfaction on the part of the alienated students and their families, as well as on the part of the multi-culturally moribund teachers. Premature, costly and unnecessary attrition is often the result. (p. 103)

Hartt (1995) supports Edlin and writes, “The more prepared the teachers are, the longer they tend to stay in overseas assignments.” He also found that not only were “teachers not knowledgeable of the needs of third culture students” but that “many teachers are not prepared culturally for the tasks of teaching overseas” (p. 107). Thus, he encourages anyone interested in teaching in overseas American schools to first “acquire experience teaching in schools where the student population is multicultural, multiethnic, and multiracial in order to gain experience teaching a diverse classroom of students” (p. 102).

The lack of such cultural awareness and proficiency is probably more the norm than the exception among teachers trained in America. Gay (2003) indicates that the culturally equipped teachers are generally few in number. She states, “In our work in K-12 and college classrooms, we repeatedly encounter prospective and in-service teachers who are doubtful, even intimidated and fearful, about the prospect of teaching students from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds” (p. 1). This perspective is supported by McAllister and Irvine (2000) who state that “existing teacher training and professional development models do not adequately develop the type of cross-cultural competence . . . deemed essential for teachers of diverse students” (p. 4). Dee and Henkin (2002), after reviewing the literature on preparation of teachers for multicultural audiences, found that “empirical evidence and related research on teacher education for diversity provide no foundation for optimism that teachers are acquiring the preparation needed to meet the challenges of teaching in culturally diverse classrooms” (p. 23). Cannella and Reiff (1994) concur and identify teacher “concern about not being prepared to work in multicultural settings” (p. 38). What perhaps is most discouraging is Hobson’s

(2000) declaration regarding international teachers in which he states that they “may be internationalists, they are not necessarily multiculturalists” (Hobson, 2000, p. 167).

Certainly the apparent lack of preparedness of teachers for culturally diverse educational settings is disconcerting. Yet, evidence exists that indicates that teachers can and do successfully adapt culturally overseas. Hartt (1995) found that American overseas teachers who demonstrated greater levels of flexibility and adaptability had a “longer and more enjoyable” teaching experience (p. 107). D. Lee (2005) highlighted that international teachers were more “cross culturally adaptive” than non-international teachers and were “highly engaged” in school and cultural activities, and taught using various culturally responsive approaches. These same teachers also possessed great passion and commitment. But such levels of cross-cultural proficiency do not come naturally for teachers educated in mono-cultured settings such as the United States. Bustamante (2005) sought to create a cultural proficiency model for American-sponsored Latin American schools. Her research revealed six major barriers to cultural proficiency development of which “elitist attitudes,” “ethnocentric values,” and “resistance to change” were shared by school personnel and predominant groups of students/parents (pp. 113-115).

McAllister and Irvine (2000), borrowing from Gudykunst and Kim (1984), define a cross-culturally competent person as someone

who has achieved an advanced level in the process of becoming intercultural and whose cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics are not limited but are open to growth beyond the psychological parameters of only one culture. . . . The intercultural person possesses an intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans and, at the same time, accepts and appreciates the differences that lie between people of different cultures. (p. 4)

According to James Banks (2006), teachers typically fall within four levels of “cross-cultural functions.” These include:

1. Superficial, brief, and individualistic cross-cultural interactions/experiences
2. Assimilation of symbols and characteristics of an outside group into their lives
3. Advancement toward biculturalism
4. Complete assimilation into a new culture (pp. 57-58).

Although Banks conceptualizes his model within an American-centric learning environment, it can be expanded and applied to levels of cross-cultural function for TCK teachers as well. Depending upon the length of the TCK teacher’s stay, achievement of levels three and four is entirely possible.

Writing from a multicultural perspective, Brown and Kysilka (2002) state that “good teaching implies solid learning by all students, and such learning does not happen when the heritages, experiences, interests, and needs of the individual student are not taken into account” and that “effective teachers try to learn as much as possible about their students” (p. 23). This supports Wardle and Cruz-Janzen’s (2004) belief that “teachers must be prepared to work in affirming ways with all students” (p. 184).

The literature also reveals references regarding the positive aspects that international teachers bring to their classrooms. According to Edlin (1999), educators who attend some type of structured pre-field orientation before leaving to teach and work in an international school results in bringing about significant changes in their attitudes in respect to cultural sensitivity (p. 222). Mahon and Cushner (2002) state that study abroad and overseas student teaching opportunities enhance students’ “intercultural sensitivity” and “openness to cultural diversity” (p. 59). Bradley (1998) found high levels of

satisfaction among American international teachers in Saudi Arabia who identified their teaching as a “primary satisfier,” which indicates that teaching in an international school setting is both a professionally and personally rewarding and meaningful experience. It would seem then that effective international school teachers can possess multiple levels of cultural understanding and resiliency as well as numerous qualities and traits associated with effective teachers, especially multicultural teachers.

Equally important to an international school are the qualities of effective teachers and the effect they have on ensuring sound pedagogical practices. For the international teacher this involves a blend of relationship skills linked directly to pedagogical skills. Irvine and Armento (2001) state that culturally responsive teachers understand that teaching is a “social interaction that involves the development and maintenance of relationships as well as more widely accepted activities such as planning, delivery and evaluation of instruction” (p. 4). The culturally relevant international teacher then finds ways to learn about students’ lives and makes connections to learning from such relationships. Such an approach is supported by Bowers and Flinders (1991), Smith (1998), and Villegas and Lucas (2002).

Furthermore, research on effective teacher characteristics provides an insight into those qualities, traits, and practices associated with good teachers. According to Stronge and Hindman (2006), “student learning is increased when students are taught by well-prepared professionals who integrate their knowledge of instruction with a deep sense of caring about the individual students they teach” (p. 13). R. Walker (2008) identified 12 characteristics of effective teachers. Stronge (2007, 2010a) identifies specific traits of effective teachers nestled within general categories including the teacher as a person,

classroom management, instructional organization and implementation, and assessment (monitoring) practices. Marzano (2003) declares that “effective teachers have a profound influence on student achievement and ineffective teachers do not.” He further states that, according to research, ineffective teachers “might actually impede the learning of their students” (p. 75).

Of particular interest to this research is the voice of TCK students in regard to the traits, characteristics, and qualities of teachers that they, as students, found to be of value. Although the research related to this topic is extremely limited in regard to international teachers, academic literature does exist in respect to student voices and their perspectives of teachers. Brown’s 2004 survey of high school students revealed the most frequently identified teacher strengths as: “knowledgeable, having clarity or being able to explain the subject matter well, having a sense of humor and making class fun, teaching for understanding, being helpful, caring, nice,, organized, and patient” (p. 37).

Young, Whitley, and Helton (1998) found that high-school students identified the use of classroom discussions, enthusiasm, knowledge, inspiration to think, friendliness, and humor as effective teacher qualities (p. 4). Similarly, Delaney’s (2009) survey of 451 Canadian high-school students listed 74 teacher characteristics with the top five being: knowledgeable, humorous, respectful, patient, and organized. Ruddock and Flutter’s (2004) interviews with British secondary-school students revealed that students perceived “good teachers” as those who demonstrated the following characteristics:

1. Human, accessible, and reliable/consistent
2. Respectful of students and sensitive to their difficulties in learning
3. Enthusiastic and positive

4. Professionally skilled and expert in their field (Ruddock & Flutter, 2004, p. 76).

They also emphasize that relationships were of vital importance to students and highlighted the most noteworthy as:

1. Teachers being available to talk with pupils about learning and school work, not just about behavior
2. Teachers recognizing pupils' desire to take more responsibility as they grow older
3. Teachers' readiness to engage with pupils in adult ways
4. Teachers being sensitive to the tone and manner of their discourse with pupils, as individuals and in groups, so that they do not criticize the students in ways that make them feel small (especially in front of their peers)
5. Teachers being seen to be fair in all their dealings with all pupils
6. Teachers' acceptance, demonstrated in action, that an important aspect of fairness is not prejudging pupils on the basis of past incidents
7. Teachers ensuring that they make all pupils feel confident that they can do well and can achieve something worthwhile (Ruddock & Flutter, 2004, p. 137).

McCabe's (1995) interview of 12 high-school students identified the following characteristics of effective teachers:

1. They not only care about their subject matter but about students as well.
2. They integrate the cognitive and affective domains of teaching and learning.
3. They are interested in their students as persons.
4. They respect and are respected by their students.

5. They relate well and have high expectations yet are flexible.
6. They engage students in a variety of learning activities.
7. They make students feel a connection with them (McCabe, 1995, p. 127).

She also found that “in a holistic way, the best teachers would also be a friend and create a sense of community and bonding within the class” (McCabe, 1995, p. 126). This supports Cattanach’s (2007) findings among international school students and their desire for teachers to fill “the role of friend, not a buddy-buddy relationship, but a friendship between an adult and a child” (p. 3). G. Walker (1998) also recognizes this and states his opinion that one of the most important lessons for those caring for TCKs in an international school is

the recognition that underneath the much travelled, multilingual, sophisticated exterior presented by many of our students lie some rather vulnerable young people at a crucial stage of their development. Their parents, by definition, are professional people, frequently absent and often too busy to integrate into a temporary new culture. Their grandparents and extended family will probably be inaccessible in terms of distance and sometimes of language. (p. 13)

The concept of teacher care and relationships is vitally important across cultures. According to Harslett, Harrison, Godfrey, Partington, and Richer (2000), Aboriginal students clearly indicate that working to build relationships and incorporating cultural understanding are recognized traits of effective Aboriginal teachers. McDougal (2005) describes effective teachers of African American and Latino students as having a set of commonly shared beliefs and practices. These include: “a positive, caring learning environment,” “teaching concepts, skills, and values outside of the required curriculum,” possessing “excellent classroom management skills keeping students on task and engaged in the learning process,” using “a variety of instructional strategies,” “monitoring student

progress,” and providing “timely and meaningful feedback” to their students (McDougal, 2005, pp. 119-120).

But what about the TCKs? How do they view their teachers and what are the qualities, traits, and characteristics they deem as effective among international teachers? As has been stated previously, research involving the voices of international school students (TCKs) reflecting on their teachers is entirely absent—except for a previously unpublished research study I piloted in the summer of 2006 in preparation for this larger study. In that limited study, individuals who had previously been students at an international school were asked to reflect upon their international school experience and favorite teachers. Each participant was interviewed using a series of questions, and from their answers a number of highly desired TCK teacher qualities and characteristics was determined. They included:

1. Relational/personally involved with students
2. Qualified teacher/knowledgeable of subject matter
3. Caring/respectful/values students
4. Passionate about teaching kids (Linton, 2006, p. 20).

In addition, six additional reference areas are worthy of identification:

1. Varied instructional methodologies/engaged students in learning
2. Prepares students for college/university and life in home country
3. Values cultural diversity among students and their opinions
4. Makes learning fun
5. Has a sense of humor
6. Acts out a parental role, listens

7. Understands TCKs, show patience and grace (Linton, 2006, p. 20).

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

This qualitative study explores the traits, characteristics, and qualities of teachers that are valued by Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and incorporates principles of Grounded Theory developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). According to Creswell (2007), the purpose of Grounded Theory is to “generate or discover a theory” (p. 56). Supporting this goal, Richards (2009) states that “almost all qualitative researchers share a goal of accessible, understandable theory that is derived from, and justified by, their data” (p. 137). Charmaz (2006) describes the approach of Grounded Theory as “systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data” (p. 2). Marshall and Rossman (2009) describe the process as a “messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process” in which the “data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships among categories of data . . . to identify content for ethnographies and for participants’ ‘truths’” (p. 210). Drawing from the work of Glaser and Strauss, Charmaz (2006) states that the “defining components of grounded theory practice” include:

1. Simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis
2. Constructing analytic codes and categories from data, not from preconceived logically deduced hypotheses

3. Using the constant comparative method, which involves making comparisons during each state of the analysis
 4. Advancing theory development during each step of data collection and analysis
 5. Memo-writing to elaborate categories, specifying their properties, defining relationships between categories, and identifying gaps
 6. Sampling aimed toward theory construction, not for population representativeness
 7. Conducting literature review after developing an independent analysis
- (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 5-6).

According to Wertz (2011), “Grounded Theory enables researchers to unravel the complexities of doing qualitative analysis and to understand mysteries and moments of human life” (p. 165).

Research Design

Employing grounded theory within a qualitative research structure, this study involved interviewing participants with a set of questions guiding them to reflect upon and recall those teachers who positively and negatively impacted their lives as students within international Christian schools. The definition of the study included a pre-determined population, data collection instrumentation and process, as well as accepted qualitative data analysis pertaining to the grounded theory approach.

Population

Participants for the study were between the ages of 18 to 30, holding either an American or Canadian passport, and were enrolled for a minimum of 2 years in at least

one international Christian school at the secondary level or a minimum of 4 years in a combination of primary- and middle-grade years in at least one international school.

I relied upon my previous experience and connections within missionary organizations, educational colleagues, and the social network site, *facebook TM*, to draw interest in the study. Individuals interested in participating in the study contacted me and/or were recommended to me by participants in the study and individuals who were non-participants but interested in the study. Therefore, the data collected should be recognized as coming from a voluntary source who self-selected to be a participant in the study. Furthermore, although each participant is considered a TCK, the perspectives they shared, by virtue of their passport nationality, represent an American and Canadian TCK perspective. I also had final consideration when selecting willing participants to fulfill the demographic requirements of the study. Thus, I sought to include a broad participant base representing various levels of international Christian school experience and geographical location of their educational experience.

Instrumentation

Two data-gathering methods were employed in this study. The first included gathering general information about each participant on a specialized form (GIF) (Appendix B). This form was used for gathering demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, educational history, employment status, and information regarding the exact grade levels the TCK attended at an international Christian school, and the names of the school(s).

The second data-gathering method included face-to-face interviews, telephone conversations, Skype internet conversations, and email correspondence between me and

each of the participants. I took handwritten notes during each interview, and all interview conversations were digitally recorded for later transcription. The interview process followed a protocol which included asking each participant to reflect upon their international school experience(s) and favorite teacher(s) prior to initiating the formal interview. Each interview included the posing of seven questions to each participant. These include:

1. How would you assess your overall educational experience at the international Christian school(s) you attended?
2. Tell me about your favorite international school teachers. What made them your favorite(s)?
3. What were some of the things your teacher(s) did that you liked or that helped you the most?
4. Why do you think they acted this way?
5. What have been your greatest disappointments with international school teachers?
6. If you knew someone who was going to be a teacher of TCKs, what advice would you give them about working with TCKs?
7. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about effective teachers of TCKs or what you feel is important about them?

Throughout the interview process, additional probing and clarifying questions were asked.

The final activity included providing each participant with a graphic representation model (Appendix C), which asked them to identify the ideal TCK teacher qualities: academically, socially, spiritually, and physically (see Appendix D).

Data Analysis

Data gathered in the study were analyzed using a constant comparative method of analysis advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1990), Charmaz (2006), Richards (2009), and Saldaña (2009). According to Strauss and Corbin (1990),

The grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon. The research findings constitute a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation, rather than consisting of a set of numbers, or a group of loosely related themes. Through this methodology, the concepts and relationships among them are not only generated but they are also provisionally tested. (p. 24)

The analysis process of the data gathered involved numerous methodical steps associated with recognized qualitative research analyses. To ensure accuracy and transparency, recorded interviews were transcribed and emailed to each participant for review. This step was deemed necessary to ensure that the transcription accurately represented the conversation between the participant and me, the researcher. In addition to relying upon handwritten notes taken during each interview, all transcribed interviews were uploaded to NVivo 9.0© software for the analysis process. I then created 200 specific nodes or categories/subcategories through an initial/primary coding process which related participant comments to specific teacher traits, characteristics, and qualities. Incorporating the use of tree maps, major categories and subcategory themes were visually discerned, and replicated categories and subcategories were identified and either merged within existing categories/subcategories or removed. In addition, I

employed the practice of continual memo writing and the development of tree maps, which preceded an initial axial coding effort. These actions reduced the number of categories/subcategories to 51 (see Table 1). A second, more intense level of axial coding and memo writing was incorporated to further refine and develop the most salient research findings.

Applying these qualitative analysis principles to the collected data, I sought to discover categories of phenomenon, create theoretical explanations for such phenomenon, and propose correlations between categories of phenomena that were grounded in the data collected.

Emerging Themes and Findings

Overall, the participants in the study spoke very highly of the teachers they encountered as students enrolled in international Christian schools. Almost every interview participant complimented aspects of their international Christian school experiences and teachers. They also provided specific insight into the exact type of teachers and the practices they employed that made their educational experiences valuable.

Using a Grounded Theory, qualitative analysis approach, I identified emerging themes that resulted in revealing three primary findings related to the most valued traits, characteristics, and qualities of international Christian school teachers through the eyes of the Third Culture Kid (TCK). Within this study, the name of each participant was altered to a pseudonym, and the names of teachers, schools, and locations the participants reference have been removed from the transcriptions.

Table 1

Coding Categories, Subcategories, Pedagogical Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities

No.	Sec.	Teacher Qualifications and Practices	Sources	References
<i>Teacher Qualifications</i>				
1.		Trained and Experienced	7	10
<i>Pedagogical Practices</i>				
2.		Knew the material they taught and held students to high expectations for learning	16	31
3.		Took a direct interest in making sure students were successful learners	18	34
4.		Used a variety of effective instructional practices	3	3
	a.	Created a meaningful learning environment through their personalities and passion for teaching	11	14
	b.	Fun, excitement, passion, inspirational	12	24
	c.	Organized, flexible, innovative	5	8
5.		Created engaging experiences and activities that allowed students to construct meaningful learning	19	35
6.		Creative, hands-on, practical, and/or cross-disciplinary learning activities	11	13
7.		Enthusiasm for subject taught	5	6
8.		Fun	2	3
9.		Integrated culture into studies	2	2
10.		Knowledge of subject area(s)	2	4
11.		Learning expectations	5	9
12.		Prior overseas experience	2	2
13.		Culturally responsive	7	10
<i>Teacher Disappointments</i>				
14.		Lack of respect for students	4	6
15.		Length of stay	8	9
	a.	Short term	12	15
16.		Questionable dedication to students, reason at school	9	16
17.		Not qualified, poor teaching style	8	9
18.		Did not understand TCKs	3	3
19.		Poor classroom management	3	3
20.		Poor relationships with students	3	4
	a.	Friend, not teacher	3	4
	b.	Strict, harsh, regimented, judgmental	9	10
21.		Ethnocentric teacher	5	5
22.		Think they understand TCKs	5	9
<i>Relational Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities</i>				
<i>Teachers Invested in TCKs</i>				

23.	Deliberately spent time with students	20	49
24.	Related well to students, gave respect, and were respected	18	40
25.	Was a “friend” or “mentor”	19	48
26.	Caring/compassionate	18	37
a.	Adopted teacher into student’s family	2	3
b.	Was parent, aunt, uncle type	5	8
27.	Loved students	5	6
28.	Committed to kids/ wanted to be at the school/felt called	29	40
29.	Fun, joked, and laughed	10	12
30.	Invested time with students	7	11
a.	Corrected respectfully	3	4
b.	Treated students fairly	2	2
c.	Encouraged students	3	4
d.	Gave students responsibility	2	2
e.	Listened to students	4	6
f.	Provided one-on-one time with students	6	6
g.	Built relationships outside of class with students	13	18
h.	Knew students personally	8	11
i.	Ate meals with students	8	12
j.	Available after school	6	6
k.	Participated in extra-curricular activities	8	9
l.	Invited to teacher’s house	12	16
31.	Advocated for students	2	2
<i>Spiritual Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities</i>			
32.	Teacher-student spiritual connection	13	16
33.	Mentor	17	27
34.	Spiritual mentor	7	8
35.	Participated in Bible studies, spiritual retreats	6	8
<i>Advice to New TCK Teachers</i>			
36.	Be a learner	8	13
37.	Be available; invest in TCKs	4	5
a.	Engage with students	10	15
b.	Get to know students	12	13
c.	Be a mentor	5	7
38.	Be aware		
a.	Local and school culture	10	12
b.	TCKs are different	11	14
c.	TCKs are discriminatory/observant	7	9
d.	TCKs have valuable experiences/abilities	10	14

Table 1—*Continued.*

No.	Sec.	Teacher Qualifications and Practices	Sources	References
39.		Be caring	3	3
40.		Be confident of calling to teach overseas	3	3
41.		Be experienced/settled in life	3	4
42.		Be flexible but have expectations of students	4	4
43.		Be involved in life of TCKs	11	18
44.		Be open with students	3	4
45.		Be qualified and trained	3	5
46.		Be real	5	7
47.		Have strong Christian faith/practice	7	9
48.		Teach with a purpose	4	5
<i>Teacher Demographics</i>				
49.		Age	12	15
50.		Gender	5	8
51.		Marital status	12	25

CHAPTER 4

TEACHERS WHO ARE PEDAGOGICALLY QUALIFIED, TRAINED, AND PROFICIENTLY SKILLED

This chapter will outline the process followed in this study. The first section of this chapter will report on the demographic information collected via the General Information Form (GIF) (Appendix B) completed by each participant in the study. Second, a description of the interview process will be described followed by a description of the qualitative analysis process used in the study. The final section of this chapter introduces the validity of the research, emerging themes, and the primary findings of the study.

Description of the Study Population

Twenty-four American Third Culture Kids (TCKs), ages 18-30, were selected in the study. Participants were identified as individuals who had attended at least 2 years as secondary students or a combination of 4 or more years as primary- and/or middle-school-age students in international Christian schools. The initial advertisement of the study and call for study participants were made via my personal *facebook* page. In addition, individuals identified as TCKs attending the higher education institution where I am employed also agreed to participate in the study. I provided interested participants a written overview of the study, my GIF (Appendix A), a General Information Form (GIF)

(Appendix B), and Participation Consent Form (Appendix C). The completed GIF and Consent Forms were returned to me prior to each interview.

Demographics

From the GIF forms, 10 demographic features were established for the participants in the study: citizenship, age, gender, marital status, the types of school the participants had attended, the grade levels attended at an international Christian school, how many years the participants attended an international Christian school, the location of the international Christian school(s) they attended, the work of their parents at the time they were enrolled in an international Christian school, their post-international Christian school career accomplishments, and/or current status.

Twenty-two of the study participants were identified as Americans with two participants holding dual citizenship: one American/Brazilian and one American/Canadian. The participant pool was broken into three age categories (18-20; 21-24; 25-30) with equal gender representation in each age group. Twenty-one of the study participants were single and three were married. All three married participants were male.

The participants revealed that as a group they had attended or been educated in six different schools or education settings. All 24 participants had attended at least one international Christian school, with 11 participants attending two or more such schools. In addition to their enrollment in an international Christian school, two participants had been enrolled in non-religious international schools, 13 had been enrolled in American public schools, four had educational experiences in an American Christian school, and five participants had been home schooled with one participant having been enrolled for 1

year in an online school. The minimum number of years any participant was enrolled in an international Christian school was two (Grades 11 and 12) with the maximum number of years for one participant being 12 years (Grades 1-12). The vast majority of the study participants were enrolled in an international Christian school during Grade 6 through Grade 12.

The location of the international Christian schools attended by the study participants varied across the globe. Eight schools were located in Asia and four schools were located in the eastern region of Africa. Three European schools were identified along with three schools in South America and one in Central America.

Twenty-three of the study participants' parents were classified as Protestant missionaries during the time they were enrolled in an international Christian school. The remaining one participant's parent, a former missionary kid (MK), had returned to work in the country where the school she attended was located. The missionary organizations represented among the participants included the Adventist Church, African Inland Mission, Assemblies of God World Missions, Free Methodist World Missions, International Mission Board, New Tribes Mission, Network of International Christian Schools, the Presbyterian Church (USA), SIM—Serving in Mission, and SIL—Summer Institute of Linguistics.

The participants' post-international Christian school career accomplishments and/or current status varied according to their age group. Eleven of the participants were enrolled as full-time undergraduate students, 10 were college graduates (undergraduate), and two participants were current graduate students. Of the 10 college graduates, nine were employed. Four of the college graduates had been trained in a teacher education

program and one was an educational specialist employed in an American public school setting. Of the participants trained as teachers, one was currently teaching in an international Christian school, one was teaching in an American pre-school, another was teaching fourth grade in an American public school but was soon to depart to teach overseas at an international school. Another was substitute teaching and discussing details with an organization to teach in an international Christian school. In addition, two of the undergraduate participants in the study were currently enrolled in college teacher training programs.

Having taught 8 years in East Africa, I was mindful to limit the number of participants I personally had taught or knew as students during my time overseas. Eight participants were former students of the schools where I had taught and another nine participants were enrolled at the university where I was employed. Of these nine, I had previously taught one participant both overseas and in a college course. I had informal interactions with three other participants but had been unaware that the other five participants were attending my institution. Table 1 summarizes these demographic data.

Primary Findings

From the data collected and analyzed, three primary findings resulted from this study:

1. TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who are pedagogically qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled.
2. TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who are highly engaged and build meaningful relationships.

Table 2

Study Participants' Demographic Features

Demographic	Number
Citizenship	
American	22
American & Brazilian	1
American & Canadian	1
Age	
Range 18-30 years	
18-20 = 8 (4 male/4 female)	
21-24 = 8 (4 male/4 female)	
25-30 = 8 (4 male/4 female)	
Gender	
Female	12
Male	12
Marital Status	
Single	21
Married	3
Female Single	12
Male Single	9
Married Male	3
Types of Schools Attended (K-12)	
International Christian School	24 participants
International Non-Religious School	2 participants
American Public School	13 participants
American Christian School	4 participants
Home School	1 participant
Online School	1 participant
Grade Levels Participants Attended at International Christian School(s) (K-12)	
Kindergarten	1 participant
Grade 1	3 participants
Grade 2	6 participants
Grade 3	5 participants
Grade 4	5 participants
Grade 5	7 participants
Grade 6	12 participants
Grade 7	11 participants
Grade 8	15 participants
Grade 9	15 participants
Grade 10	19 participants
Grade 11	20 participants
Grade 12	21 participants

Table 2—*Continued.*

Demographic	Number
Location of International Christian Schools Attended	
Africa	4 schools
Asia	8 schools
Central America	1 school
Europe	3 schools
South America	3 schools
Work of Participants' Parents When Enrolled in an International Christian School	
Missionary	23 participants
Non-missionary (NGO)	1 participant
Post International Christian School Career Accomplishments and/or Current Status	
Current Undergraduate Student	11 participants
Current Graduate Student	2 participants
College (Undergraduate) Graduate	10 participants
Unemployed	2 participants
Employed	9 participants

3. TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who possess spiritual qualities and model Christian adult living

TCKs Desire International Christian School Teachers Who Are Pedagogically Qualified, Trained, and Proficiently Skilled

The first finding of this study identifies that TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who are pedagogically qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled (see Figure 1).

Teachers they value demonstrate these qualities in four different, but integrated ways. First, this type of teacher is qualified and trained through teacher preparation programs and arrive at the international Christian school as an experienced teacher, not

- A. Qualified, Trained, and Experienced
- B. Effectively Manage the Learning Environment
 - a. Hold Students to High Expectations
 - b. Personally Invested in Student Achievement
 - 1. Know academic abilities
 - 2. Demonstrate “caring” about student learning
 - 3. Provided meaningful feedback
 - 4. Provide help to students
 - c. Manage the Classroom; Are Organized
- C. Create a Meaningful Learning Environment
 - a. Inspire Learning
 - 1. Subject area knowledge
 - 2. Make learning fun and enjoyable
 - b. Demonstrate Effective Teaching Skills
 - 1. Reflective/Flexible teaching
 - 2. Communication skills
 - i. Explained concepts/conveyed information well
 - ii. Sought student input/demonstrate empathy
 - c. Employ Various Instructional Strategies
 - 1. Hands-on/life application
 - 2. Projects/Interactive-based learning
 - 3. Field-based experienced learning
 - 4. Learning review games
 - 5. Discussions/Simulations
- D. Demonstrate Cultural Responsiveness

Figure 1. Teachers who are pedagogically qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled.

someone right out of college. Second, they effectively manage the classroom for academic success and demonstrate organizational abilities. This type of teacher holds students to high academic expectations and is personally invested in each student’s academic success. Such teachers are aware of the individual academic abilities of their

students, demonstrate levels of care about their academic performance, provide meaningful feedback and academic help both in and outside of the classroom. Third, they create a meaningful learning environment which inspires student learning. This is achieved by their command of, and passion for, the subject matter they teach, as well as their ability to make learning fun and enjoyable. This type of teacher also demonstrates effective teaching skills by being thoughtful, reflective, and flexible. They possess good communication skills and are able to explain concepts and/or convey information well. They seek out student input and appropriately demonstrate empathy to their students. They further create a meaningful learning environment through the use of various instructional strategies students enjoy. These include strategies which are hands-on and/or life applicable, project or interactive based, field based, cast as some kind of participator game for review of learned material, and discussion or simulation based. Fourth, TCKs greatly value teachers who can teach from an attitude of cultural responsiveness.

Teachers Who Are Qualified, Trained, and Experienced

According to the participants in this study, the use of or direct hiring/recruiting of unqualified or less than proficiently skilled or experienced teachers was problematic to their learning experience.

Donald spoke directly to a common practice of filling teaching positions with individuals who were not specifically trained as teachers or in the subject areas they were assigned to teach. His story is presented below:

We had one teacher who taught biology and she had just graduated from a pre-med program and I didn't judge by credentials. I just judged by the quality of teaching. Because credentials mean quite a bit but if they are a bad teacher,

they're a bad teacher. There's no two ways about it. And sometimes learning how to teach well doesn't mean that you can teach well. . . . It'd be smarter to be certified and to know things that you wouldn't necessarily know without going through that process because you have to learn who you are as a teacher a lot more than you would otherwise.

In the interview he also advised individuals wanting to teach TCKs to be trained and certified teachers.

One thing I've heard because I've got a friend who is saying the same thing and one thing that I would really love to just tell her is that, because she's leaning towards I'm going to teach overseas so I don't need to be a certified teacher. But that is ridiculous because my mom's got a master's in early childhood education and still learning, always learning. And so it puts perspective on how much more you always need to learn and just learn as much as you can.

Likewise, Caleb identified the need for schools to recruit qualified/trained teachers who possessed knowledge in the areas they were teaching. In completing the graphic representation he verbalized the following as desired academic traits of TCK teachers. *"Knowledgeable of the subject they will teach. Sometimes if there was a hole, they grabbed a random teacher and it was a disappointment. They're learning just as much as the students are learning."* Bill, one of the few participants who openly discussed a number of disappointments he encountered in his education at an international Christian school, also identified the problems encountered when teachers were given a subject to teach that was outside of their areas of expertise. Below is a portion of his transcript. "I" indicates the interviewer and "P" indicates the participant in the interview:

I: Okay. Did you sense they had a love for the subjects that they taught as well?

P: Maybe a few did. Teachers would get thrown into teaching different subjects, different years so sometimes it'd be a subject that they would be learning along with us but teaching us at the same time. So that would happen but there were particular teachers that maybe got a master's in history and they always taught that. (inaudible) So there were set subjects where teachers didn't know a lot but some of the times, they were learning right with us.

I: How'd you feel about that?

P: Obviously, the quality went down and the classes weren't quite as good as they could've been. But I felt like they still did an okay job, doing what they [could] to deal with the situation.

Raymond advised individuals wanting to teach TCKs to be trained, experienced, and mature before becoming a TCK.

So I'd recommend if you were going into that field to get experience before going into it. Like get your college paid off. Teach in a public school somewhere. Get all that out of the way. Get enough experience under your belt to where you can deal with kids because you're going to be meeting some strange kids in those countries. Some kids have different backgrounds, different cultures, and they're not going to be anything like you for the most part. . . . But I think the best thing to do would be to get some teaching experience. . . . I don't know if this is really helpful or even relevant but most of the teachers that stay in those countries are usually married before they go. A lot of the time, when single people come, they don't stay very long because they go to get married or something and their wife doesn't want to go back to [Country] so they just stay in the States. . . . So it's good to have your life settled down a little bit. Don't just jump in right after college. Wait. I would tell them to wait. I would tell them to get their lives on track . . . get more education under their belts, try to learn a little bit about how real life works and not assume it's going to be just a happy thing to be wherever. There's a lot of stuff that goes on there that's really tough to deal with. And you have to be mature enough to be able to handle that. And that's the biggest fear is getting someone not so mature and that goes down there, tries to teach and ends up just being counterproductive because they're not mature enough to deal with certain situations. So it takes a lot of integrity, a lot of maturity to teach down there.

Betty described her frustration with a math teacher who, although she possessed an educational and professional background that included mathematics, was not trained as a teacher.

Well, there was one teacher who was trained as an engineer and she was teaching math. The problem was she was not very skilled in relating to people. And so she didn't handle it well if we would point out that she'd made an error in working out a problem. And she didn't know how to respond to questions. When we didn't understand something specific, she would just go over the whole problem again, and didn't know how to explain something in a different way. And so we could all tell that she was getting frustrated because she didn't know how to relate to us. And we didn't know how to communicate to her that we were asking something different than she was answering.

Grace spoke of the frustration of being taught by young, inexperienced teachers when she described two situations in her interview.

Some of them were younger and that was probably what made the difference. They weren't married. They were in their 20s and this one teacher I had, I felt he didn't teach. This was like a computer class and it was Photoshop. A lot of it was kind of teaching yourself either through a book or online. But he still would not say anything. He would walk into the class. He'd be like, Okay, let's get started. And he would never explain how to do it. There was no teaching involved at all. He would sit in the back. He would even just come everywhere we were sitting and literally just sort of hang out. And if something was due, he wouldn't really tell us and we'd be over there, talking even with him, just hanging out. There'd be something due that day and he hadn't even mentioned it.

The teachers that were in their 20s that tried to be friends, those were the ones that I was frustrated with. The ones that were older, I feel they had the respect and they definitely had control over the class and would teach and were, I thought, great teachers but they still could be involved with us.

Jennifer, now working within the education profession, reflected upon her education overseas and the practice of teaching and stated,

I recognize there [are] some teachers that are not cut out for teaching. They can do a serviceable job but they're not cut out for teaching. If you're going to provide challenge, you can't be developing or trying to figure out how to be a teacher and be challenging to your students at the same time. You cannot give them what they need, where they need it.

Kimberly added to this type of teacher when she recalled a student teacher who later returned to teach at her school. She said,

There was a teacher who had gone to [Country] for her student teaching and . . . then she moved back to the States for some reason and she came back to [Country] when I was in 8th grade and she was my 8th grade algebra I teacher. But she was a really nice lady but she wasn't really good at algebra I. So it was difficult for her to teach it. But there was a really smart Korean in my class whose name was John so he helped her and helped us to be able to learn the material a little bit better.

Raymond recognized that not every teacher was qualified to teach the subjects they were assigned to teach but that in a remote jungle school setting, students were appreciative of their teachers and their efforts.

It took a lot of guts to teach a subject that you didn't love or that you didn't know how to teach. A lot of teachers had to step up to the plate and decide, Okay, well, no one wants to teach trigonometry so I'll teach it. That took a lot of guts for some teachers that weren't necessarily good at math even, having to take that initiative and volunteer to teach something that difficult. And a lot of teachers showed a lot of courage and a lot of integrity to try to instruct students in something that they weren't themselves very good at. Even though it's tough learning from them, it felt like they were trying to hard that you felt bad for them because you know that that's not what they went to college for. You have a writing teacher teaching a history class or . . . a high school math teacher teaching almost a college-level calculus class. And I just felt these people could be making more money somewhere else teaching what they love but instead they sacrificed that to help people like me living in the middle of the jungle or whatever and just come to [Country] to help kids. That's like a quality that can't really deny one of the biggest things that, for me, just blew my mind that someone would do that. It's easier. Most of them were certified teachers. They could be teaching at universities or high schools but they chose to give that up for less pay to come to [Country] where they're not going to be in the American lifestyle where they have a lot of the advantages. They're living in dumpy little houses, making less than minimum wage. But they don't care. They love what they do and they love students and those are good qualities in a teacher. I applaud them for it.

Teachers Who Effectively Manage the Learning Environment

TCKs interviewed in this research study identified a number of pedagogical practices they valued as learners. These included teachers who had high expectations for learning and then made learning possible for their students, knew the subject matter they taught, managed the learning environment in a positive manner, were passionate and creative, and incorporated meaningful teaching/learning strategies/activities within their classrooms.

High expectations

A number of participants identified teachers who held students to high expectations as a valued trait, characteristic, or quality of a TCK teacher. According to Kaiden, a good teacher holds “*students to high expectations but not unrealistic. So I*

guess I'd rephrase that to say high standards but not impossible standards." Lee speaking of her high-school math teacher, said, *"I mean he brought you his A-game every class and he expected you to do the same. He expected you to take the AP exam and do well enough, so you didn't have to take college credit or college classes. He expected you to get at least a three on the AP."* She also referenced teachers who demonstrated their caring for students as *"the ones that expected more out of you and didn't let you get away with the excuse of . . . I'm a missionary kid. . . . The ones that expected you to exceed, expected you to do well. I mean, they weren't there to be another friend to you."*

Donald referenced the importance of his teachers' learning expectations by describing one of his favorite teachers: *He expected a high level of work and a high level of participation in the class."* Rebecca described this teacher quality as *"challenging students, knowing where students are at and not allowing them to settle."* When asked to clarify what she meant by this, she told the following story:

Well, with me personally, day one, senior year I walk in and sit down in AP calculus where all my friends were. I didn't want to take the higher level calc; I just wanted to do what was easy because I had done it already with the British system and it was going to be a walk in the park. I sit down and he says, "What are you doing in this class?" I said, "I'm here to learn calculus." And he said, "I won't teach you the AB calc. If you are not in the BC, I won't; that's the only place I will teach you in calc." He wouldn't let me do the lower class because he knew what I was capable of. He wouldn't let me skate by for the year and he wouldn't allow me to do it. That was eight college credits that saved me from a year of classes in another place. So, that was great that he knew us. I mean he never had me in a class. I wasn't in his dorm growing up. He had no connection other than talking about five minutes the year before and he wouldn't allow me to let myself skate by. He knew the potential there. And he was also the teacher who would give us these take-home exams and every weekend we were at his house for at least four hours on a Saturday night studying for them, doing the work. He would walk us through them. He was always accessible to work through the things. Yeah, he was just a very present teacher and always set aside a lot of time to make sure we would succeed because he wouldn't let us learn the easy bits. He really drove us further and better than anyone I have ever been driven by before.

Grace referenced a teacher she greatly respected this way, *“He treated us like an adult and I think that the people rose up to his expectations.”*

Four individuals referenced teachers as “hard” or “tough.” Raymond, reminiscing about one of his teachers, stated,

He didn’t mess around so you just felt like he was a good blend of a hard teacher who had a lot of integrity, expected a lot out of you but at the same time, he was a forgiving teacher. If you messed up or did something wrong, he could correct it and help you fix it. So he was one of those teachers that’s a really good blend of that tough, stern school-master type and that friendly, I’m here to help type. And he was really one of the best mixes I’ve seen of that.

Donald spoke of a “hard teacher” this way in his interview:

P: Even if they were a hard teacher, like they gave a lot of homework, they knew what they wanted, you lived up to their expectations because you knew that they’d been there, came back. They knew what was going on.

I: What do you mean, they’d been there, came back?

P: They’d learned the information already and they were trying to help you learn as well.

Pamm, speaking about one of her teachers, said, *“Mr. ____ was a great teacher. He was an incredible teacher. He was very hard. He held us to really high standards with our minds.”* Bennett identified one of his grade-school teachers as *“strict enough, there was no goofing around, we were dedicated to the school during school time and play during play time and I appreciated that about her.”* He also recalled how a high-school teacher with this same kind of reputation awakened him to academic strengths he did not realize he possessed.

All the students agreed that she was a tough teacher, that when you took a class from her it was not going to be the easy class. But I connected with her on a more personal level and really enjoyed [her]. I was never much of an academic student all through middle school and all through high school. I sort of did school so I could be there, so I could play at recess and play soccer. It was a necessary evil . . . I think in her class, because I connected with her personally, I started to see myself more of an academic student, and I am not exactly sure if it hadn’t been her it would have been another teacher. Some of the comments that were written

on papers or the comments that she would give me outside of class [helped me] to see myself as more of an academic person and I think that that really meant a lot to me as a student.

Personally invested in student achievement

TCKs also commented on how a number of their teachers invested themselves in the learning successes of their students. Caleb spoke very highly of one of his math teachers and her ability to teach: *“She was probably the best teacher that I had as far as education goes. I feel like I excel in math partly due to her instruction and her patience in teaching her students.”* Betty recalled how her teachers were good at *“seeing where our comfort was as far as . . . how we like to learn and responding to that and saying, Okay, you want to be challenged? Great. I will challenge you.”* Dorothy said,

They knew how to and when to challenge students. And that probably goes with having a smaller class size and being able to know your students well and get to know them outside of class. But they were always willing to say, This is the minimum and I’m willing to help you get there. If you want to go beyond this, Here are some ideas of how you can.

She also responded to a probing question about teachers caring about their students and their learning.

I: In my interviews people tell me. ‘We want to know if you really care about us so that we can care about you.’

P: Uh huh.

I: Would you say that’s true?

P: Yeah. And in addition to that, we want to know that you care about the subject. Because if you don’t care about the subject, then why should we?

Grace recalled one of her favorite teachers this way,

I just remember I grew so much that year, just my knowledge of everything academically. And I remember she was very challenging but at the same time very helpful. And we did a lot of things in class. . . . If you get homework, you take it home and you get help on it or a teacher wouldn’t know if you were struggling with it because you’re doing it at home. So she made us do a lot of class work so she would realize if you’re sitting there and couldn’t figure out how to do

something, that the kids were struggling with something. So I remember that helped a lot.

Kimberly remembered how much she enjoyed the fact that her teachers provided individualized instruction.

I also liked it when the teachers challenged the different kids in the class, depending on where they were at. Because we had smaller class sizes at [School]—there were only like 50 kids in a class—it was hard to teach one subject and challenge everyone because there would be so many different people at so many different levels. And so I really liked it when they would have extra things that you could do and then they would work with you if you were struggling. So I really liked it when they challenged everyone regardless of where they were at in their education. So that was pretty cool.

She later stated in her interview that she also “*liked it when the teachers challenged the different kids in the class, depending on where they were at.*”

Connor also described a teacher who took an individualized approach; even though he did not need the extra instruction, he valued that the teacher provided it for the other students.

So the main thing for him was he was really great at visualizing things. Drawing diagrams on the board, drawing graphs on the board. So that was helpful for me to visualize it and to understand it in that aspect. And also, for me, I wish we had gone faster in the class but there were some people who needed more time to understand the concepts. But I did appreciate that he would do that, and it was a small class. There were only eight people in the class. But he really taught it individually as well as a part of the class.

Joshua recognized the benefit of attending a small school and how it affected his learning success. He stated,

You could actually talk to them, take your time, asking questions and they can have one-on-one time with you more. And you would see them all day. It's not 1,000 kids in one school and only see them once maybe for your subject and go somewhere else.

Bill attributed the small size of his school as a characteristic that helped teachers to be *“more personable and they’re able to make the classes a little more exciting and more unique maybe.”*

Donald spoke of one of his teacher’s ability to see his performance and then challenge him to improve.

He could see past how I was performing to how I could perform. And that was generally the case with almost all the teachers, is that they can see past where you are and look into your potential and then they’re going to sit down and talk to you and push you even farther to take up the slack. And especially if your grades are low and they know your grades can be high, they’re going to push you because they can see more.

He also revealed that he struggled with a British math system at the school he attended but that his teachers took interest in his learning success. *“They would try to give opportunities for further study and further extra credit and things like that.”* When asked if his teachers provided extra help he replied, *“Yeah, and they were always very approachable about if you need help just come talk.”*

Bill identified the personal encouragement he received from one of his teachers.

One of the big things that he did for me was encourage me. He would notice a few characteristics that I had that would stand out and he would let me know about those and just tell me how he wanted to see those developed more.

Kimberly said that she also *“liked it when the teachers challenged the different kids in the class, depending on where they were at.”*

Kaiden, who stated that his teachers had *“high standards but not impossible standards,”* went on to explain,

They are supportive, very proactively, like, Hey, I’m here to answer any questions that you have. We’re not moving on until you understand the concept. Stuff like that, have this high expectation but they’re like, I’m here to help you meet this requirement.

He also said this about two of his favorite teachers,

The two qualities that I really appreciated were that many times they hesitated to move on or didn't move on until I understood or everybody understood the concept in hand. And then the other one was just explaining the concept in multiple different ways.

Caleb spoke highly of the positive learning environment and the helpfulness of his teachers to assist his learning.

I never felt intimidated to ask questions of the teacher, either in the class or out of the class. ___would have to help me individually because I was having tough times with the subjects or if I didn't understand what was happening in the classroom. I felt comfortable raising my hand and asking for clarification of the subject. And I really liked that they were available and seems like all the teachers were there to not just teach the class but to really invest in their students, that they'd understand and get the subject they were talking about.

Betty described the levels of assessment her dance teacher placed on making sure all students could excel in their performance. She recalled,

And the teacher really knew what she was doing and she cared about the end product and the process of constructive criticism and, Let's do the absolute best we can and step back and look at it, okay? I really liked that move in theory but it's not coming out well in practice. So how can we adjust it to make it better suited for the group of people that we have.

She also recalled how available her French teacher was when she needed assistance.

My French teacher was definitely one of my favorite teachers but she was always open to you coming by whenever and asking questions. . . . If you were struggling, she would sit down with you one-on-one and say, Okay, let's go over it again. I'm going to try and explain it in a different way so that you can understand it.

Grace spoke highly of her teachers who provided extra study sessions.

Frequently teachers offered outside of class extra help or tutoring or study sessions before a test, or even if there wasn't a test coming up they would open up their classrooms for an hour a week and anybody was welcome to come if you needed extra help. And at times only two or three kids would show up. And from a teacher standpoint, that's a lot of preparation and extra time that you are putting in for only for one to three students, and they were so willing and that was a huge extra help from the students' perspective.

Bill likewise identified this trait and said,

If a teacher noticed that I had been struggling, to meet with me or make an appointment with me outside of the classroom just to see if they could help me or clarify some issues I was having such as a math class or a science class because a couple teachers were able to do that.

Kimberly spoke highly of one of her teachers and described the interest he took to help his students learn.

You could tell that he really liked interacting with the students because on every major test grade, he would write notes back to you, like tell you what he thinks you need to study a little bit more on or what you're doing really well at. And so he would personalize those comments and try and help you to grow. If you were like a straight A student who all of a sudden got a C on a test, he would talk to you after class and say, How can I be helping you? Is there something you don't understand? And he would always volunteer to stay in during lunches if we needed extra help. So he made himself really available to us if we ever needed anything.

Esther had quite a bit to say about her teachers and the extent to which they went to challenge their students and their learning while individualizing instruction and providing support to them.

When I was in 9th grade, we had to do book reports and it was a very simple layout for a book report and I did one of them and it took me hardly any time at all and my teacher came up to me and she said that from now on, I would be doing a more advanced book report because she could tell it was too easy. And so it was nice to have teachers that noticed areas where I was more talented. Whereas in a math class, teachers knew I wasn't going to be an advanced math student so they would help me and make sure that I was understanding things but they wouldn't necessarily give me anything harder as they would with more honors math student type things. But in English, I always appreciated being given a chance to strengthen my writing or my skills so that it didn't just stay stagnant.

And so I think for me, it was always a big deal if . . . I had teachers that if there was something going on . . . they knew that you were struggling with a certain subject, that they were a little more sympathetic and I appreciated that but especially in areas where I really enjoyed the subject and I liked the class. It was always nice to be made to feel like I was doing a good job and I was improving.

She also told a story about a math teacher she had in the States who would construct problems on the board for everyone to see the steps and processes to solving the problem and then give students time to practice solving similar problems. According to

her, *“I learned really well that way, seeing it done a couple times and really watching the steps and learning.”* However, when she returned to her international Christian school, her math teacher did not use this technique in his teaching and the class was *“learning the new math concepts, especially trying to catch up a little bit, I really struggled.”* She continued her story this way:

I don't know when class was but one day at the beginning of class, he asked if we had any questions about the homework. I raised my hand and said, I spent an hour on this homework and I'm not even halfway done. I don't really understand it. Could you do a couple samples on the board so I can maybe understand it when the test comes around? And he was like, Absolutely, and so he was more than willing to kind of cater to students' needs when we needed something explained and so he would do one of the problems on the board and it always helped me a lot to see it worked out for me instead of just reading the book and seeing how they did it because I couldn't see it step-by-step specifically. So I really liked it when teachers were willing to work with [slower students]. . . . Obviously students in the class that already knew exactly how to do it were having no problems. But he was still willing to show those of us that didn't understand it how to do it. It was nice to be made to feel like it wasn't all about the ones that understood. It was about us that didn't as well.

Good classroom management skills

Classroom management skills were repeatedly identified as a preferred teacher quality, trait, or characteristic by the study participants. Raymond, who earlier identified one of his favorite teachers as a *“good blend of that tough, stern school master type,”* continued by stating,

He made time for students but he didn't mess around. If you were goofing around in class, he would just get up and send you right out of the room. He didn't take nonsense but he was a great guy, loved teaching, loved the students.

Esther shared the story of her 8th-grade homeroom teacher who was also the music teacher but had a calming effect on her class.

She was very soft spoken and very nice and I think with my class, especially through middle school, we were known as the obnoxious class because we tended to get off track a lot. But she was just so calm and collected every time that we got

up. Everybody'd just quiet down on their own because they didn't want to be rude to her.

Betty spoke of one of her teachers this way:

She was a very small person. But you would never realize that until you actually stood next to her. Because in class, she had so much passive authority. . . . She just knew exactly what was needed to keep some of the more disruptive students in line with almost just a glance.

She described her biology teacher as someone who was “*funny and that kept all of our attention. But he also was very calm and just knew how to handle situations. He liked to play games but he would never get them out of hand.*” She also commented that the teachers knew that they had the support of the students’ parents when it came to certain academic and behavior expectations in the classroom.

Because the parents of the great majority of the students in our school had a degree of some kind, most had at least one parent with a master's degree or higher. So they knew that parents valued education. So then the teachers could put a lot more pressure on the students to behave well because they knew their parents would back it up.

Kaiden told about his foreign language teacher and the corrective, yet positive comments she wrote on his report card.

I remember Mrs. ____ put one, she put two comments. One of them was, Disturbs class frequently and then the one directly after that was, A joy to have in class. I remember seeing her after grades came out and she came up and she was like, So did you see my comments on your report card? And I was like, Yeah, I saw them. And she had a discussion with me. Like, Yeah, you would disturb class but at the same time you did, it was enjoyable having you in class.

Esther stated how much she appreciated teachers who could create a positive learning environment through practicing good classroom management.

I always appreciated teachers that were able to keep the class under control because there were definitely some students in my class, especially boys, who liked to goof around and make jokes and be the center of attention and cause some disruptions. Some teachers couldn't handle it and they would just snap and get really mad and you didn't like their class because they were so easily irritated. Then there were the teachers that knew how to handle the class and they

could teach and we'd learn well. When the class got a little out of control, they knew how to calm us back down without yelling or getting stressed out. So it was just a way to be calm and collected and make learning fun and enjoyable while still letting us goof around for a few minutes before they would be, Okay, that's enough. We need to get back on topic, instead of making us feel like we were the worst class they'd ever had.

Good organizational skills

The organizational skills of a teacher were also identified as desired teacher traits, characteristics, and qualities. Rebecca described her calculus teacher and the benefits that came her way by having a teacher who was organized and knew what was important for the students to learn.

He also told us on the first day of class, Take good notes. I've had so many students write and say that in college calculus the teacher didn't teach me nearly as well as you did. And in college, I didn't study off the notes I took in college. I studied off my high school notes. And when I was taking my subject area test in math actually two weeks ago, they had calculus on it and I studied my calculus notes from high school and felt super-prepared.

Connor identified how his calculus teacher was able to be “very organized” and when he taught, “you could tell he believed what he was teaching. . . . He believed it was important for the students to learn.” Donald also identified having an organized teacher as a desired trait. Below is a portion of his interview to this effect.

I: That's true. So at age 18, you're telling me that back then when you were in these grade levels, from 8 to 10 at [School], that an organized teacher was something that you fondly remember?

P: Uh huh.

I: Why is that? Why is organized important?

P: I am fairly organized person and it's always kind of nice for the teacher not to be getting ready for class in class. I really enjoy learning and so when it's time for class, it's time to learn. And that's always been the way I viewed it. And it's nice to know what's coming. And that, the idea of knowing what's coming is nice because you don't necessarily get that outside of school.

Teachers Who Create a Meaningful Learning Environment

Participants in the study identified a number of teacher qualities, characteristics, and traits that involved the teacher creating a meaningful learning environment. They expressed that their teachers inspired their learning through their passion and excitement for teaching, knowledge of the subject areas they taught, and their ability to make learning fun and enjoyable. In addition, they identified various personal or effective teaching skills and the use of various instructional strategies that enhanced their learning.

Inspire learning

TCKs interviewed in the study referenced their teacher's passion for teaching well and the inspiration it provided for them as learners. Kaiden, when asked to describe some of the qualities or characteristics he most fondly remembered about his teachers, answered this way:

P: That's a great question. Actually, yeah, I have a list here. The top quality would probably be a passion for the subject matter. That was clearly evident and was thus inspirational.

I: Build on that for me. I've heard other people mention that before. Why is that important?

P: Why is that important? That's a good question. The why. Because I think about Mr. _____ and taking him for earth science or some sort of science in 8th grade and I just remember his passion and excitement for the material. And it was just contagious. It was almost like he showed us . . . by example, it was okay to be interested and really excited about the material.

Dorothy identified her French teacher as one of her favorite teachers because

She was always enthusiastic. Even if she was having a bad day, she was still passionate about what she was teaching. And that made French class exciting. Even when it was like I don't understand anything of what we just read. I have no clue what the homework was about. I would get to French class maybe stressed about it and in class, she would just be happy about doing it and happy to help us understand. And she always had something new up her sleeve.

Grace likewise spoke of the passion and excitement she saw in her teachers.

Well, some of them, the ones that I really enjoy, they are just so passionate about what they do. They want to tell more and more people. They want to be with kids. They want to influence kids. They love their job. They want to share what they're doing with us, the reason why they're there, the purpose of what they're doing. And it's kind of contagious, I would say, if that's where their heart really is.

She further identified a teacher who took his students to a refugee camp to run sports clinics several times her senior year and his “*passion for these refugees and just serving. Like that rubbed off on us.*” She went on to describe the lasting impact of this teacher and his focus on serving the refugees this way:

A lot of these kids have all graduated now and we're all in different colleges and in [Country], we did this run for relief for Burma and that was something that he was heavily suggesting for us to do and he was just saying, Do as much as you can for this. Don't forget these kids that you were loving and serving and don't go back to the States and just forget about them. So now all these kids in different colleges were planning on organizing a big run for relief at different colleges on the same day and to keep doing what we were doing before.

Betty spoke highly of her teachers' abilities to inspire learning this way, “*I think a lot of the time, it really was just their infectious love of the subject they were teaching that kept us all motivated to learn more.*”

Subject area knowledge

TCKs interviewed in this study revealed how impressed they were by the knowledge their teachers possessed in regard to the subject area(s) they taught.

Lee was greatly impressed by her calculus teacher who “*would make up our tests in five minutes and say, You should be able to do that in an hour and a half.*” She went on to say they she learned so much in his class that she did not have to take math in college. Betty shared an interesting insight from her experience regarding teachers' quality and teacher knowledge. She said of her teachers that “*the great majority of them*

had a lot of knowledge. Even if they weren't so good necessarily at teaching, they knew a lot about their subject." However, she credited several of her teachers with very positive comments. Regarding a math teacher, she spoke of her amazement at the teacher's ability to make math calculations in her head while they were using calculators. *"She would be doing an equation and ask us to do a problem on our calculators and come up with the answer in her head before we could get it through our calculators."* With regard to her biology teacher, she said, *"He just knew so much that we all wished we could just sit there and absorb everything that he knew because it was just amazing."*

Make learning fun and enjoyable

Throughout the interviews the words *Fun* and *Funny* were used multiple times as descriptions of the participants' favorite teachers. Connor described his math teacher as "super fun" and "very funny" but also as a teacher who believed what he was teaching. When asked what made this teacher so funny, he told a story of how the teacher used a DVD series as a supplement to the math class he was teaching. One day, he showed up in class dressed exactly as the person in the DVD.

He came in and he was wearing this goofy shirt with this red polka dotted tie and these really big glasses which is what the guy from the DVDs wears. And he just stood up at the beginning of class and started talking like the guy does and it was just hilarious and really funny.

When he was asked to explain how humor helped engage learners, he replied,

Well, for someone to bring humor into the classroom, . . . it's not like it takes pressure off but it makes it more of a human situation and less . . . like computers and we're not just gathering information and storing it in our heads. It's learning and it's a real human thing and it's . . . organic and it's not just data input and data output.

Betty referenced her biology teacher this way, *"He was funny and that kept all of our attention."* She also said this about her teachers, *"I think a lot of it really was just*

their personality. That they liked to have fun and they loved their subject and so they wanted us to love it, too."

Raymond described his Bible teacher this way, *"He was just a really fun loving guy"* and that *"the entire senior class just kind of liked this guy a lot because we invited him to come on our senior trip and different things."* This was the same teacher he described as *"a really good blend of that tough, stern schoolmaster type and that friendly, I'm here to help type."* He also referenced his history teacher and said, *"He was really a funny guy,"* someone who had the ability of *"keeping school fun and interesting"* and *"his history classes were the funnest ones."*

Caleb identified the physical education teacher he had in Grades 4 through 6 as someone who created an enjoyable learning experience and shaped his future career goals. He said, *"He did just love the kids and made the games interesting and we had a ton of fun. He was maybe my biggest influence as far as pursuing physical education."*

Esther described the qualities or characteristics she most fondly remembered about her teachers this way, *"I would say it's probably just making things fun, making it something that we'd want to actually do when we learned."* She pointed out that she enjoyed teachers who could *"make learning fun and enjoyable"* and allowed the students to *"goof around for a few minutes before they would be, 'Okay, that's enough.'"*

Jennifer said, *"I remember just them having fun with the class"* and specifically referenced teachers who co-taught a class using creative teaching activities. To her, *"that was really a lot of fun in that class."*

Larry referenced some teachers this way, *"They're funny. And the humor brought about, it kind of leveled the field a little bit."* Kimberly recalled how her sixth-grade math

teacher created fun learning activities and said that there “*was really a lot of fun in that class.*” When asked to list the adjectives describing the qualities or characteristics of teachers he most fondly remembered, Donald replied, “*creative, fun, organized.*”

Demonstrate affective teaching skills

Participants in the study identified a variety of teacher behaviors that demonstrated the human side of pedagogy. Eight participants identified skills associated with the reflective and flexible nature of teaching as a quality, characteristic, or trait they liked in a teacher. In this category, teachers were identified as those who looked for ways to improve their teaching, showed flexibility in their teaching style, and made changes that benefited student learning. Superb communication skills were also identified as a preferred quality, characteristic, or trait they liked in a teacher. Participants identified teachers who could explain concepts or new knowledge well, used stories to convey information, and sought student input by listening and demonstrating empathy.

Reflective/flexible teaching

A number of study participants identified teachers who sought ways to connect learning to their students by changing how or what they were teaching. Dorothy recognized that sometimes her teachers had to alter their lessons for different groups of students.

Well, no class is the same. There are always different class dynamics and the same project between two different classes might be a huge success in one and an epic failure in the other . . . but they wouldn't let them get that down and if something did happen to epically fail, they would give other opportunities so that they could be even, so the learning could be even. And if a particular teaching style wasn't necessarily working between even two individuals, they were willing to address the same issue in different ways.

She also spoke highly of her French teacher who was always looking for ways to improve her instruction by asking former students how she could develop her teaching differently. *“She’s always changing her curriculum and trying to make it better and asking her old students, What did you think of that project? How can I make it better?”* According to Pamm, she had *“teachers who really thought out of the box”* and appreciated *“teachers who were flexible.”* When asked how they demonstrated flexibility she said, *“They were willing to change things in a classroom if they needed to, if something wasn’t working.”* Paul discussed how one of his teachers was very creative and *“explored different ways to teach and to actually have a voice, where they would try to create an environment where the students were also teaching each other instead of just them teaching us.”*

Communication skills

Incorporating meaningful communication was a trait or quality TCKs value in their teachers. Dorothy, referencing her biology teacher, said, *“He was really good about presenting the facts.”* Bennett referenced one of his favorite middle school teachers who told stories and remembered one about a student who stopped writing her paper without finishing it. He said, *“We all thought that was pretty funny and obviously it was a memorable lesson . . . about how we ought to finish the paper even if it means going farther than the required amount of words.”* Dorothy described how her biology teacher used stories to make points of learning for the students.

He would tell us stories from his life to make points applicable to us and he had been a youth pastor so he had lots of great stories about kids our age. Like learning about fungus, he told a great story about youth camp and the kids who were supposed to be making breakfast. The bread was moldy so they decided to use it anyways and just not tell one of the kids’ sister and they’re serving it and he’s chuckling and standing there singing — moldy and his sister freaks out and

we all thought it was hysterical because we can all totally imagine any middle school, high-school guy doing exactly that.

Esther liked that her English teacher “*noticed*” her writing talents and provided feedback. “*In English, I always appreciated being given a chance to strengthen my writing or my skills so that it didn’t just stay stagnant.*” Raymond confessed that he was a struggling academic student but that a teacher encouraged him with feedback on something he had written. “*He thought that I wasn’t going to be much of an academic success but then he wanted to read some of my writing one day, and I showed him a poem or something I wrote and he was really positive about it. He gave me a positive criticism.*” Kimberly identified a teacher who “*personalized*” his feedback to students. “*On major test grade, he would write notes back to you, like tell you what he thinks you need to study a little bit more on or what you’re doing really well at. And so he would personalize those comments and try and help you to grow.*” Bennett identified one of his teachers who awakened his academic abilities through the use of written comments on his papers: “*Some of the comments that were written on papers or the comments that she would give me outside of class to see myself as more of an academic person and I think that that really meant a lot to me as a student.*”

Kaiden and Larry specifically identified teachers listening to their students and demonstrating empathy toward their workload as an important communication trait. Kaiden explained how he felt comfortable approaching teachers about the heavy workloads they placed on their students. “*I know several times I felt some certain assignments were impossible and actually went to the teacher and was like, There’s no way I can get this done and then ended up getting it done eventually.*” Larry expressed

how he would get overwhelmed and related a story about being able to approach his teacher and explain what he was facing.

I think there were times when I struggled with amounts of homework and I think I was able to approach him and say, Hey, this is where I'm at, feeling pretty bogged down right now. I was a spiritual leader at my high school. As a senior I was the student chapel leader so that put a lot of responsibilities on me that, on top of school work so . . . and I'm not the biggest brain so it was tough at times. It was a juggling act. But I remember on several occasions, just coming to him and being like, Hey, Mr. ____, I know this paper's due and I'm working on it but I'm behind and I don't think it's going to be done by the time you're asking. And I remember him being very fair. He didn't just let me off the hook. Instead, he would say things like, All right, for each day that you take longer, I'm just going to grade, the best you can get is a B instead of an A. But you can still get a B. He was just . . . really fair, challenged me but I felt there was respect even in that.

Employ various instructional strategies

TCKs interviewed in this study also identified teachers who incorporated various teaching/learning strategies as a favorable teacher quality, characteristic, or trait. They expressed preferences for teaching which included “hands on” activities, or were perceived to hold life applications, project-based, interactive-based learning, or field-based learning. They also expressed their satisfaction with teachers who employed review games, discussions, and simulations to help them learn the material.

Hands-on/life application

Betty spoke highly of her biology teacher and the way he allowed students to determine the position they would take on scientific issues. She said,

He was really good about presenting the facts and then letting us decide. Like he had to teach evolution because it was part of the curriculum but he would teach the whole continuum of different paradigms, from like extreme evolutionism to six-day creationism. Occasionally he would throw in the crazy ones. . . . And he would say, This is where each of them stands, so it's up to you to decide where you want to be on this. And he would say, Yes, I am somewhere in here but you don't have to be there just because I'm there.

Carol gave a lengthy response regarding the importance of challenging the thinking of TCKs, especially missionary kids (MKs) attending an international Christian school.

I always liked the teachers who thought outside of the box and didn't just stay with the traditional ideas or theology. . . . I would have bad experiences with Bible teachers there, I found, and . . . I was having a lot of questions and doubts about my faith and Christianity and stuff. So I had a lot of questions. And the teacher seemed like he was just speaking from a script. When I would ask questions, he didn't always know how to answer them. . . . Sometimes you just have to have faith that God knows what He's doing type of answer. And which I know sometimes maybe is correct but it seemed to come up way too often and yeah, it just seemed way too much like he was just saying what he was supposed to say as opposed to some other teachers that I had for worldviews or economics class. They weren't afraid to say things that maybe were controversial or that got us . . . looking into things and thinking we might still side on the traditional side of it but seeing there's differing opinions . . . because . . . most of the time, missionary kids, we're brought up in a Christian home and so we're taught Jesus, we're taught Christianity and lots of times where people say how we come across having our parents' faith and not our own. And so . . . it's really good when teachers . . . don't just teach you but they get you thinking critically and I think that's really important for missionary kids to have some controversy thrown at them.

Rebecca, following along the same line, described how much she enjoyed a teacher from Australia who, in her words, was “awesome” because

if we asked him what something meant, he wouldn't just give us a pat answer. He would give us a thorough, complete [response], whether it was something that should be shared or maybe wasn't quite ready for us but he wanted us to know facts about things rather than just the kind of fluffy answers people had given us up to that point.

Jennifer appreciated how her teachers allowed students to explore and think deeply.

We were allowed to explore things and ideas on our own without being just, sit there, read the book, answer these questions. . . . It wasn't a whole lot of busy-work assignments. There was a lot of sink into it, figure things out for yourself-type assignments. . . . We weren't spoon-fed via our assignments. We weren't spoon-fed a lot of the information. And of course, there were teachers that did do that but the best teachers that I remember were the ones who let us go off on our own and think about things on our own. And discover on our own.

Project/interactive-based learning

Projects were a common assignment identified as something the TCKs enjoyed as students. Rebecca liked how her English teacher had each student create an *End Times Journal*, which revealed who they were and captured their experiences as TCKs. She found this type of project beneficial not only at the time, but also into the future and even reached back to it as she wrapped up her college experience.

And our projects, our end-of-times journal summary of our life until high school, so we could go into college, and if a roommate wanted to know about us, that was something they could look at and really see the people we enjoyed, the kind of things we did, the places we went, just all of that and it was really cool the way he engaged us in really knowing ourselves and how to express that in our writing and our work.

And, I took that project . . . a step further in Core 400 in college. We had to do a project of ‘what have you learned in your four years’ and I did an end-times journal which was cool for me because then I could compare the end of, not the end of my TCK experience, but the end of my time in Africa, who I was then and how four years of the States had shifted it and how my values changed. And it was a cool way to see where I continued to grow as a TCK in a different location.

Paul identified how his Geography teacher made learning real and relevant. He said, “Mr. ____ taught our geography class so obviously he would be teaching us . . . about Africa where he’d never been and some people were from there so he’d make food [and] play games from the country that was popular in the country.” Pamm revealed that one of her teachers declared,

You know what, guys? We’re pretty much done with this book. Let’s make a yearbook. And so we made a yearbook just because he thought it would be something that would be good for us and a good way for us to learn as the students that we were.

Kaiden talked about how he enjoyed a “cross-curricular” project in his geometry class.

In Mr. ____’s geometry class, we had these art projects, or he would call them art projects but . . . you would create this piece of artwork, using coloring and then geometrical concepts. And that was a project that we did. So we’re in a math

class but we're doing art. That something that I think is very important from an educational standpoint. . . . The hands-on, practical application is definitely a positive but also just tying it from a . . . cross-discipline perspective is also important.

Dorothy described her dance teacher who expected students to create and perform dances as a final project for her class.

My dance teacher, I also had her for PE and she was really encouraging in that even when you were just starting, she encouraged creativity. Like your main project was in a group, create a dance. That's your final. So it wasn't like I'm going to teach you the theory of dance and then we're going to have a paper test. It was, I'll teach you some of the theory so that the practice makes sense and then you're going to actually put it into practice. And she always had older students who were taking it choreograph a dance to teach the younger students and then we would perform those dances.

She continued by describing the creative project ideas her French and Biology teachers incorporated in their classrooms. Below is an excerpt of her interview:

P: I had some really good teachers who weren't just all about write an essay, tell me what you think about this, do a presentation.

I: Okay, so what did they do instead?

P: Like my French teacher, we did projects where we created a map of the city to learn vocabulary. And to learn conjugations of, and just grammar rules, she made up songs and led us on parades around the classroom. We drew monsters to learn body parts and put on plays and watched movies. And my AP biology teacher, when we were learning chi-squared tests, we did the chi-squared test with M&Ms which was cool and then we got to eat our subject.

P: For her second year, they all create a character and make a Facebook profile for them and they all live in an apartment building in Paris and they have jobs, families and they plan a vacation for one of them.

I: All in French?

P: All in French.

Sarah described a time when two teachers creatively brought learning to life through a project.

I had two teachers, it was a co-teacher year and the one teacher came up with this brilliant idea to try and bring a book to life to the class. And so over a four-to six-week period, she would keep bringing little elements into the classroom and then the very last day, because I was in town for that day, I was able to help her

set up for it. It was set up like this huge bazaar, like a Middle Eastern bazaar in the classroom. So that ended up bringing the story to life and making the kids think about it a lot more than just, These are words on a page, I have to do a book report, I have to do this. She actually got the kids involved.

Esther recalled how she was given responsibility as the school's newspaper editor.

When I was in 8th grade, my class was in charge of the school newspaper and to this day, I'm not sure why they put a middle-school class in charge of it, but they did. And I was made editor-in-chief of the paper so I did layout and I edited the paper so I learned how to edit. My teacher was also very encouraging. She would tell me that I was a very good editor and she liked it when she got papers that I had already edited because then she didn't have as much work to do.

Jennifer described two of her teachers and student-involved learning activities.

I remember Ms. ____ in 10th grade English class. At the end of the year, she had us do a reader's theatre and we had to pick five or six different books or essays that we had read and find a common theme and then develop a reader's theatre around it. . . . We made costumes. We practiced. We were allowed to go outside the class and some groups even held them outside. . . . I remember my English class in the States. We read a lot of the same things but it was just sitting there and reading it and then writing an essay and going on to the next one. And that was really a lot of fun in that class. I remember Mr. ____ did a lot of experiments and . . . we would go outside the class and not just sit there and read our books and draw diagrams on the board. I remember doing a lot of things like that.

Connor recalled how his religion teacher showed students how to create a song.

"He took a psalm and he turned it into a song. Just real simple and it was really neat and it was just cool to see that . . . you could do something like that." Bennett recalled how teachers in the two international Christian schools he attended incorporated an interactive type of teaching. In his first school he said,

We . . . decorated our classroom like a medieval castle and we had different roles. I was a knight. And we also did a Pakistan/Indian border and divided the class and did a whole lot of research about the two countries . . . I really liked that, sort of interactive curriculum we did with her.

In the second international Christian school he attended he identified the interactive learning activities he most enjoyed in two of his classes.

I must have really enjoyed or really connected with the interactive style of teaching. The teachers I enjoyed the most were . . . I had a Lit teacher or English teacher. [When] we were studying a play, we would have to act out a scene or interact with it somehow. When we were doing a poem, we would have to do different activities. At the time we thought these were goofy and wondered why we had to do this. But it definitely helped us to remember the play or remember the poem or the story a lot better. We were reading about a fisherman who was stuck on boat. We would be in groups and we would have to sit on our desks and read the poems to each other and have to rotate around the seats without touching the floor as if we were in water. And it felt a little goofy to me as an 11th or 12th grader doing these games but it helped us remember. Those are the things I still remember at this point.

In Social Studies we were studying WWI and we went out and played a game where it sort of highlighted the military technology that . . . was new: the gas attacks and the machine guns and that sort of thing. We did this activity outside for a day and ever since then I've remembered all the things we learned from that class. So I really liked the interactive stuff.

Larry appreciated teachers who allowed students to demonstrate their learning through authentic means and projects other than traditional types of paper/pencil tests or written papers.

There were a lot of creative opportunities for students. I think she gave options for projects. Really measuring the content of what we were reading. I mean, some of us are more gifted artistically. Some are more gifted at writing per se. And so she would give different options for projects. So someone who feels more confident in their drawing abilities could do an intricate sketch and I think her system was like number of hours that you spent on this. So if it took me three hours to type a really solid two- or three-page paper, just really good and if someone could spend the same amount of time in a piece of art that they develop and then give a 15-minute presentation about it and why it's so significant to the story or just to expand on the content so just to show that you know what you read or you know what we've been talking about in class. I appreciated that. That openness to the students to use the areas that we're most strong in instead of forcing us to struggle or sometimes . . . just fake our way through a paper.

Likewise, Betty shared that

a lot of the teachers really cared about the students and they were willing to . . . work with different situations and think outside the box. If you had an idea for a project that wasn't quite strict on the guidelines, they were willing to compromise with that and say, Yeah, that sounds cool or Well, yes, that sounds like a great idea. Let's try and do it this way instead.

Field-based learning

Seven individuals discussed field-based educational events as meaningful learning experiences. Bill enjoyed how his teacher incorporated real-life science through field trips: *“We didn’t call them field trips but we’d go outside of the school in the complex and see how science was happening in real life.”* Both Grace and Larry identified a sports leadership class they took at their school and the field trips they participated in.

Describing this aspect, Grace said,

And we would do a lot of ministry trips, too. We did two maybe three my senior year to a Burmese refugee camp. And we organized entire camps there and my class went and spent three nights there and we ran a camp for them.

Larry said that the course trained students to

be equipped to go out into sports ministry to the local community and lead things. We did rugby, flag rugby world cup for ____ kids in the community and it just turned out really well. It was a blast.

Connor described how in his eighth-grade year his class took a field trip as part of their Bible class to a region in Greece and subsequently created a slideshow of a *“portion of the Book of Acts”* from St. Paul’s travels in that area. Rebecca discussed *“service trips as part of our, in 9th grade”* where they traveled to a remote section of the African country her school was located in. Caleb fondly remembered a field trip he took as a fifth-grader to an African village near the school he attended.

So one time in my 5th grade class, again with Mr. ____, he had us go down and visit a Massai tribe in the valley and see where they live and how they lived and I . . . can’t remember exactly the subject but it seemed like a cultural study in history. And so we got to see a Massai mud hut and it was a special occasion that the 5th grade class went down and visited this tribe so they slaughtered a goat for us. And I’ve seen many goats being killed before but a lot of the other students hadn’t and so it was quite the experience for many kids in the class and it was a ton of fun to see how they did that. It was definitely a different experience than most American-educated students would have in 5th grade.

Bennett and Kimberly both made reference to their school-sponsored cultural field study trips as important learning activities. Bennett described these excursions.

One week every year we would break into groups. The whole high school would break into different groups and take trips around the country. We would do service projects or home stays and interact with the culture and the people where we were staying. I really enjoyed those times.

Kimberly described her senior-year cultural field study in the northern part of the African country where she attended school.

I: So but my understanding of [School] program is you were out doing home stays. You're just out there in the culture.

P: Yeah, the home stays were by far my favorite part. On some CFSs [Cross-cultural Field Studies], we were able to do those and on others, we weren't. But my favorite CFS was my senior year where we went to Turkana.

I: Oh, wow.

P: And the people there didn't even speak Swahili so there was absolutely no way to communicate with them. Because even though people in our class could speak Swahili, <they> still couldn't speak with them. So we went and stayed with them for two nights, and so that was a really amazing experience to get to do that.

Learning/review games

A number of the study's participants identified teachers who used games as a means of extending learning. Betty referenced her biology teacher as someone who "liked to play games but he would never let them get out of hand." Later in the interview she explained the types of games he incorporated in his classroom.

Every time we were going to have a test, we would play, I guess it was like Jeopardy. We'd be in teams of four and we'd go around answering different questions that he would ask that were similar to ones that were going to be on the test. And he'd give points and then every once in a while, for a tiebreaker, we would have to have a race to get the privilege of answering the last question. And so we would play a lot of games that would help us remember and help us learn.

Donald recalled how his teacher used games to advance learning. He told how one of his teachers played a

Trivial Pursuit review for exams, split the class into different teams and each team that got questions right would move their piece and the first team to win got either extra credit or a prize or something along those lines.

Esther recalled that during her third grade year her teacher used a game and competition to encourage students to learn their multiplication facts.

We got a belt in karate in multiplication karate so to speak and so . . . if she said, What's 1×2 ? and we could answer, then we got like a white belt. And then we'd go up to the 2s. And if you got all the way to the 12s, you got a black belt. And it was so motivating. I remember I made flashcards and had my mom quiz me and to this day . . . multiplication is one of my favorite aspects of math. I can do it pretty much in my head because it just got engrained in my brain so well.

Raymond recalled how one of his teachers used a board game “to learn geography.” He stated, “He took two class periods to play it. So he cancelled a science class that he was teaching so that we could play the game with him.” Kimberly explained how her sixth-grade math teacher used games to challenge students’ learning.

She had these challenge questions. Once a week she would have a different math question and it was something that you had to figure out and play around with a little bit. . . . She put those up on Monday. We'd be able to turn in our papers Tuesday and then if we got it wrong, she would correct it and help us to get the right answer. And after you got the right answer, if you got it by Friday, she would put a little sticker by your name and at the end of the year, whoever had the most right answers, the most stickers, would get a prize. And so I really liked that because it went beyond what we were learning in class and it was a fun activity.

Discussions/simulations

TCKs seemed to really enjoy teachers who incorporated meaningful discussion-type assignments within their classrooms. Donald identified one of his favorite teachers as someone who demanded a “high level of work and a high level of participation in the class” and as a non-stereotypical teacher who incorporated class discussions over the material he taught. According to him,

I know the teacher before him read the book, straightforward history class. Stereotypical, him, all right, read the book one day, short chapters, take a quiz the

next day, we're going to have class discussion the next three days, every week. And it was brilliant because you didn't necessarily know what was going to happen in those discussions but you know it was going to be valuable and there was going to be really valuable insight. And that one class was a one-semester class and it really shaped how I learn about my Christian faith, how I explore it. And so it was a really valuable experience.

Bill thought that because his school was small his teachers could make it “*more personable*” and “*a little more exciting and unique.*” When asked how his teachers did this, he replied, “*maybe more like participation and more up in front of the classroom, being able to speak your opinion and everyone has a voice.*” He also described how the students were required to read some books.

We really dove into the book and saw a lot of different aspects of the book and really explored those and just to see where we all stood on that and just to see how God was working within the community in that book.

Betty recalled how her English teacher incorporated a “*Socratic seminar*” during which the students

would basically pull all the information that we could out of a novel to discuss it, talk about themes. So we would be teaching each other. We wrote. Everyone had a turn to write a vocab quiz from the novel that we were reading and give it as a quiz to the rest of the students.

Kimberly enjoyed the way her English teacher used discussion to make real-life applications.

He would kind of lecture for maybe 10, 15 minutes in a class period and then he would have a lot of discussion. And the discussion is really what I liked because he would get us talking about different books that we are reading in class and outside of class and different plays that we're studying, the time periods and then he would connect those to our lives and say, Can you see a modern-day example of . . . this play that we're studying. And so through discussions, he would connect our lives to what we were learning in class.

Jennifer recalled how much she enjoyed her English class and the way they prepared for discussions.

I just loved English class. And I remember, Okay, go read this book and then you come up with your ideas on what this author was saying in this passage before we talk about it in class. I'm not going to tell you what I think until we get all your ideas. . . . There weren't wrong answers in English class besides grammatical errors. It was more of a, Okay, I remember especially Ms. ____ and especially Ms. ____ as well. Those two really allowed us to think outside the box and come up with our own ideas about things. And then come back and talk about it in class.

Teachers who developed simulation-type learning activities were also identified by participants in the study. Tyler described how a teacher piqued his interest in government.

We studied government and basically we imitated the U.S. Congress in class and I remember finding that to be really interesting. I'm not sure that is one of the most unique things. But I found that an interesting way of connecting to the students because sometimes that kind of class is . . . boring.

Grace shared how one of her teachers created a number of simulations with life-application principles.

He taught me economics, government, and comparative government. And I remember the class was very interactive. We would always be having either debates or getting into long discussions about things. And he wouldn't be too worried, like if we went off subject and we were talking about something, like a current event going on, he would want us to learn about that and he wouldn't be so worried about what happened in 1994 rather than what's going on right now. And his projects, one of them I remember, we ran our own presidential election so we had to make propaganda, commercials. We had an all-school polling session and they had to vote for us. And I mean, that was just one of them. There were other ones where he made us participate in the UN model congress. So we each had to represent our own country and go there and he would give us points on how much we spoke up at the congress. And in economics, he gave us like \$100 and he gave us two weeks so we had to make a profit. So we had to learn how to manage a business and come up with our own and how much money we should spend in order to get money back. And then the money that we got back, he gave to a charity. So he was just teaching us how to give but also how to manage money.

Demonstrate cultural responsiveness

A number of participants identified the learning value associated with teachers who could teach from various cultural experiences and perspectives.

Donald appreciated a teacher who provided “*various kinds of extra credit quizzes of current events*” by using newspapers and websites to “*make sure that we were keeping up with what was actually happening, not just with school or what was going on in our country that we were in.*” Both Larry and Faith spoke about a teacher who inspired them with his involvement in providing sports camps to the local community and refugees living in the country. Caleb, Rebecca, Jennifer, Kimberly, and Bennett all spoke about different field-based cultural learning experiences they participated in with their schools or particular teachers.

Jennifer noticed that teachers who served longer terms of service at her school were more involved in the local community and demonstrated respect for the culture of the country where the school was located. This was supported by Betty who commented,

The teachers that we most respected had been in [Country] a long time, associated with [Country] culture about as much as we did. They were in tune to the cultural values of how student/teacher relationships should be in [Country] whereas some of the other teachers that we didn't respect at all didn't have that idea.

Tyler expressed how much he appreciated that most of his teachers had previous experience and had lived overseas, which provided different perspectives in the discussions they held.

I think most of the teachers there had lived overseas before and had experience or were not even from the United States. A lot of them exhibited a broader view when having discussions in class, that kind of thing. They had a more open-minded view than what we might find in some schools in the US. I think I appreciated that about them.

Likewise, Betty explained why she liked having teachers with a variety of background experiences.

P: I think the variety of teachers that I had was very important to my development because there were some older teachers, some very young teachers

and also teachers from lots of different cultures . . . and I think that influenced me a lot.

P: I had some British teachers and some Australian teachers and a Burmese teacher and some Thai teachers and American teachers and I think that influenced me a lot. So this isn't necessarily like about each individual teacher but about the whole group of them. That was very powerful, to be able to just take the experience from such a broad part of the world, to implement into my life that I didn't have to have gone to that country to know something about it.

I: Why is that important to TCKs or you personally?

P: Because the world is a fascinating place and the more I know about the world, the more wonderful it is. And then also because I have that knowledge that's broader than what I could've experienced by this point in my life, having been in one place or even trying to go to all those different places. I can have so much more experience behind what I'm looking at in my future. What decisions I'm making. What I'm learning. I've got so much more experience than I could've had by myself to put into that.

Bill also referred to having teachers from a variety of cultural backgrounds and experiences as beneficial.

I had a Canadian teacher. I had Puerto Rican. I had African American, Caucasian. I had them all. And not that like one is better than the other, but it was interesting to get a different variety. So that was good.

Donald also identified why he preferred teachers with previous life and cultural experiences.

P: They brought, because a lot of them had taught or lived in different areas of the world before they came to [City], they brought those different cultures. My Spanish teacher had lived in Puerto Rico for seven years previous and he brought, and she brought various elements of that culture and the different areas she traveled in South America and Spain into that class. And incorporated that and not, so it wasn't just education of the languages; education of the culture as well. And one of my religious professors, teachers was, he had spent, I think, eight or so years in China before he came to [Country] to teach and he brought elements of that culture and he, in like diagrams he used for class, he would incorporate Chinese symbols into the diagrams. And it was nice to know, like it's not just a picture. It's got meaning.

I: As a third culture kid, why does that learning of other cultures resonate with you? Here you are, you're living in [Country]. Why is learning about Latin American culture or Chinese culture, what is it about that that tweaks you?

P: It's because I recognize that all cultures have their upsides and their downsides and I really like to learn about other cultures so I can see their upsides

and incorporate that into how I see the world. Because I recognize that I'm a third-culture kid and my culture is what I make of it. And so the more I learn, the more I can have a better culture of my own.

Graphic Representation: Preferred Pedagogical Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities of TCK Teachers

In addition to the interview comments, 20 of the 24 participants completed a graphic representation which identified the following pedagogical traits, characteristics and qualities of the “ideal TCK teacher”:

1. Is qualified and trained; pedagogical proficient and skilled (6 comments)
2. Possesses good classroom management/organization skills (6 comments)
3. Has a passion for connecting with kids respectfully and engages them in learning (6 comments)
4. Is creative in their teaching; sets high standards, goals, and learning expectations (5 comments)
5. Sets high standards, goals, and learning expectations (4 comments)
6. Challenges students and cares about their learning success (4 comments)
7. Is flexible and adaptive (4 comments)

These data further substantiate the primary findings that TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who are pedagogically qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled. See Figure 2.

Ideal TCK Teacher: Pedagogical Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities

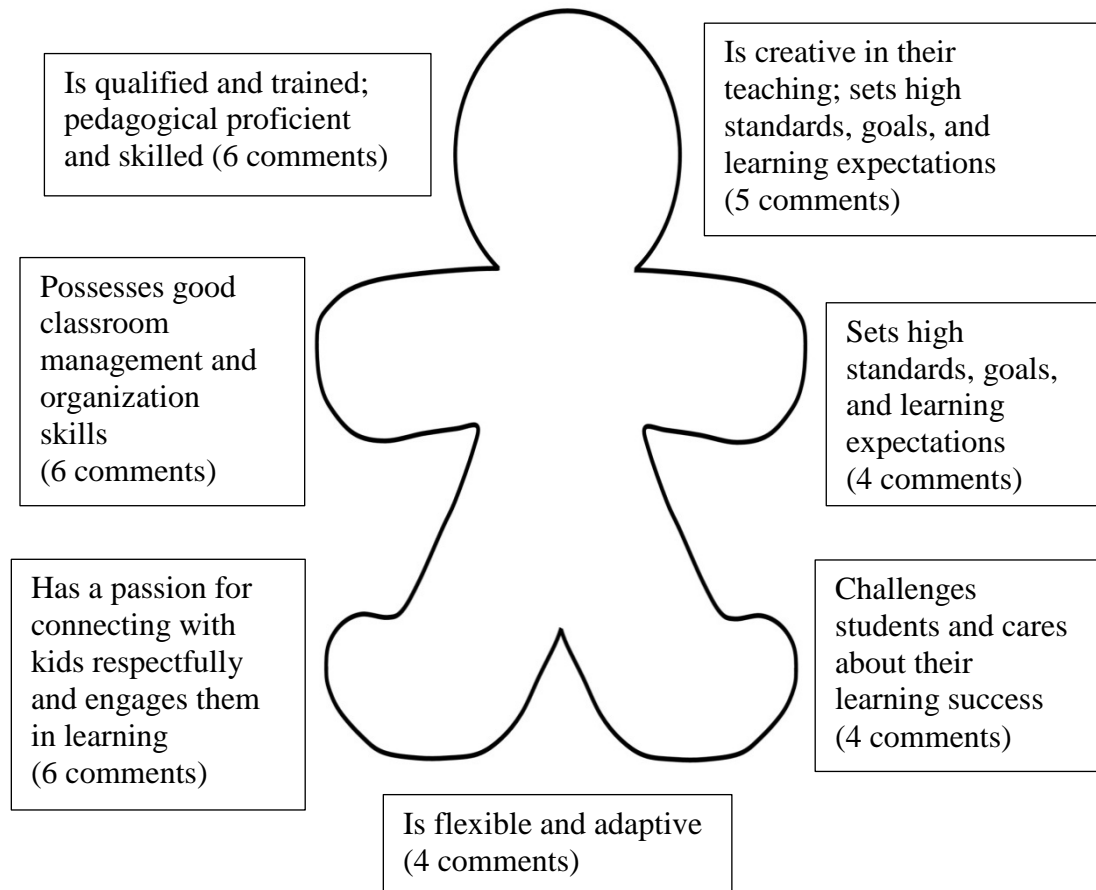


Figure 2. Preferred pedagogical traits, characteristics, and qualities of TCK teachers.

CHAPTER 5

TEACHERS WHO ARE HIGHLY ENGAGED AND BUILD MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR STUDENTS

The second primary finding of the study indicates that TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who are highly engaged and build meaningful relationships with them. See Figure 3.

- A. Possess Strong Relational Skills
- B. Make Students Their Priority
- C. Know Their Students and Make Meaningful Connections With Them Through:
 - a. Listening and advising students
 - b. Demonstrating qualities of caring, friendship, and mentoring
 - c. Sharing food, fun, and life with students
 - d. Being accessible and available
 - e. Involvement in extracurricular activities

Figure 3. Teachers who are highly engaged and build meaningful relationships with their students.

The desire for teacher/student-teacher relationships was strongly emphasized throughout the data collected. The participants in the study referenced various relational aspects of their teachers over 380 times. Kenneth, a current TCK teacher, reflected on the importance of teachers engaging with students and being available to them by stating:

I mean, you don't, you can't get into everyone's lives but to me, it's just being available to do so. I'm not talking about having office hours where kids can ask you questions related to your subject. You know, these kids, I mean, they want to talk to you. They want to get to know you. They're lonely. I mean, we're a lonely world over here, you know, and we talk to anybody. We're not shy . . . But just the availability is important.

Within this finding, TCKs identified that they value teachers who possess strong relational skills, make students their priority for being at the school, take time to get to know their students and make meaningful connections with them. According to the participants interviewed, teachers accomplished this by listening and advising students; demonstrating qualities of caring, friendship, and mentoring; shared food, fun, and life with their students; were accessible and available to discuss non-academic-related issues; and were involved in extracurricular activities with their students.

Possess Strong Relational Skills

The study's participants preferred the importance of a teacher's relationships skills, as a valued teacher trait, characteristic, or quality over their academic/pedagogical abilities. Speaking to this, Kaiden identified the importance of international Christian school (ICS) teachers possessing relationship building skills.

If I was an administrator at in [Name of school] today with my experience, if some teacher was supported, had full support, had an awesome resumé and I did an interview, they had all the credentials but I didn't sense this like personability, relational friendliness. If I didn't sense that, I would not hire them. . . . If I had a choice between a better qualified, educationally speaking, and a more relational teacher with less educational qualifications, I would choose the less educational [qualified]/relational teacher.

His sentiments were echoed by Bennett, who was asked, "So, what's more important to a TCK? Is it to have the great teacher or to have the great relationship with the teacher or is the best of both worlds would be to have both?" He replied,

The best of both worlds would be to have both but if I had to choose between having an excellent teacher and having a teacher I connected with and the teacher I connected with was least an OK teacher, I would choose the teacher I connected with . . . If they were terrible and I still connected with them as a student, in high school, I would have recognized, This person is not a very good teacher. I really like them as a person but I don't necessarily need to be in their class. But if they were an OK teacher, even a good teacher, but not excellent, I would really want to be in their class over a teacher who was really, really good but I had no connection with.

Larry was asked:

Would you rather have a teacher who is relational, highly relational—building relationships with you and your peers, approachable kind of person—or would you rather have someone who is not so much that but an excellent teacher of their academic subject? Or do you want both as a TCK?

His reply was, “*I don't think you can be one without the other.*”

Caleb was also asked about the importance of having a relational teacher. Below is a portion of his interview and his perspective.

I: But if you had your choice between a really excellent teacher but that person didn't build relationships with his/her students or a good teacher or even a marginal teacher who built relationships with students, as a TCK who had a choice of which teacher to take a subject, which class would you wind up in?

P: I think the vast majority of classes I would take would be with teachers that I had a relationship with and that would invest knowing me and the subject but in relationship to me and their time and I think the maybe the only exception I would take would be in a very difficult subject for me, say chemistry or something, I would want an excellent teacher to help me understand the complexities of the subject more than having a relationship with them inside and outside of the classroom.

Later in the interview he spoke about the life benefits that came from students having positive relationships with their ICS teachers.

I think part of it has to do with respect, I think the more we know someone on a personal level the more we can either respect them or not respect them depending on how they live their life outside the classroom. Whereas if we don't know them at all outside the classroom and the only opinion we have is how well they teach. Sometimes a teacher may not be the best teacher in the world. Your opinion of them is great because you know them outside the classroom and respect who they

are. Maybe that has to do something with why having a personal relationship with teachers made a deeper impact in my life because I knew them. Because if you asked me, I can't name one teacher I had in 10th grade in public school. I can't. Maybe the subjects they taught but they didn't have an impact in shaping me as a person.

Grace gave the following advice to anyone wanting to teach TCKs:

P: I'd just say, Get involved on a person level with the kids. Like you get to know them, encourage them. These kids have gone through a lot. They've gone through so much change. They need people to pour into them, I think.

I: Why is that?

P: Just be there. Just because their life is just so unstable. And they're constantly moving and they might be even frustrated. It's not their choice to move ever and sometimes they're even sent away to boarding school. These kids, some of them are not the happiest. They're not. This isn't something that they would've chosen to do but it just comes along with what their parents do.

Make Students Their Priority

TCKs frequently identified specific relational characteristics or skills they valued in their ICS teachers. All 24 of the participants identified some aspect of positive teacher-student relationships as desired.

Joshua spoke highly of a teacher he had for science in Grades 9-12. This teacher and his wife were class sponsors and, thus, had the students over to their home frequently and helped with the fundraising for their senior trip to a neighboring country. According to him, “*We spent a lot of time with him. . . . He really knew us.*” Pamm talked about one of her favorite teachers who took time to connect with his students prior to the beginning of each class session. She said,

He taught us well but he was never so intent on the lesson that he couldn't take time for emotional needs or just to get to know us. I mean, it took us ten minutes to get the class started every single day because we would just come in and talk to him. . . . I loved that he started off the day with talking to us and seeing how we were and joking around about with us.

She also spoke about a class sponsor who was actually an elementary-grade teacher but wanted to help with senior-high students. Here is how she described this person and how she connected with her.

One of our class sponsors was a 3rd grade teacher. So she didn't get paid to be our class sponsor but she took the time out to do that. I still write her on facebook and if I saw her, I would love to sit down and talk with her and just hang out with her and stuff. But she took the time to go on trips with us. . . . She took so much time to plan different events that we were doing and she didn't have to do that. And she was a very humble learner. She wanted to learn. She wanted to be excited about the things we were excited about.

Sarah spoke of the teachers at her school this way:

They made us feel at home. It felt like a school but it didn't feel like a school. . . . The teachers were very one-on-one. They wanted to spend quality time with each one of their students. So when a teacher wants one-on-one time with you, it makes you feel a little bit better and I think . . . it helps you perform better not only in school but outside of school.

Pamm referenced two of her teachers and the priorities they placed on the students. One of the teachers, Uncle ____, was single and “*he was an amazing teacher and he really connected with the kids.*” She went on to say,

He didn't have a family. His reason for being there was the school and it's not like he was involved in the local community but the school was his reason for being there and he was very unselfish with his time and I think he wanted to give as much of it as possible.

She referenced another teacher as follows:

It's not like he's the most personable, approachable person. Like it's not that he's not but he, I don't even know how to explain it. You could tell he was there and we all knew he loved it there and even though he didn't have the biggest sense of humor or any of that other stuff, we knew he was dedicated to us. And so we could overlook the other things.

Raymond recognized that his teachers enjoyed spending time with their students and equated a correlation between the teachers who built relationships with their students and the learning that took place in the classroom.

They didn't care that we were just a bunch of high school students. They cared about us, friendly enough, spent time with us. . . . They liked high schoolers and we would come up to them and they would talk to us and . . . basically, they're so relatable. I think they related to us just as well as we related to them . . . and make a rich experience while teaching us.

When asked if having a teacher with whom he had a good relationship enhanced learning for him, Kaiden replied, “Yes, definitely.”

Joshua described one of his favorite teachers as a

very student-oriented teacher . . . someone that's just all about the students. He doesn't care about the faculty or . . . he does but his biggest emphasis seemed to be being with the students. Being one of the students and interacting and playing with us and keeping school fun and interesting.

Bill spoke of a short-term teacher who previously had attended his school as a student and the different ways he built relationships with the students.

He got involved in our lives a lot, with the students he was teaching. He interacted with them. He participated on our soccer team in the league. He would have us over to his house to hang out and watch movies. And he was very intentional with his students. Very relational, he wanted to get to know them.

Paul spoke highly of one of his teachers who intentionally positioned himself into the lives of his students and said of him, “He’s an interesting person, actually.

Sometimes it's difficult to like him at first but he kind of forces his way into your life.”

Jennifer, reflecting on why her teachers acted the way they did, provided this answer:

I think they were invested. They were very much invested in it. It wasn't here in the States, like I said, oftentimes it's just a job. I mean I see teachers every day whose kids are just a job to them. Whereas generally, you don't give up a salary, raise support, go far away from your family to work with kids that you don't, and to do something that you don't want to do and you don't want to have an impact on people's lives. I saw that in most of the people at [School]. It wasn't just a job to them. It was an investment in lives.

Carol identified her favorite teachers as “the ones who were more interactive . . . showing genuine interest.” She went on to say:

It doesn't have to be outside of class . . . but even during class, wanting to hear from the students and having more like conversational type things as opposed to coming over and standing up front of the class and just talking.

According to Lee, it was easy for students to recognize teachers who made students their priority. She described the kind of teachers “*who really wanted to be there*” as individuals who “*felt like for that period of time in their life it was God's calling for them and they truly embraced it.*” To her, the distinguishing factors of highly relational teachers were found in “*the ones who did the extra things they didn't have to do.*” From her experience, this included spending quality time with students and doing special things for them. She also felt that this type of teacher was different from other teachers she observed. According to her, “*you have some teachers who were in a sense putting in their two years and then getting on with their life and there were others who felt it was really their mission in life to help these MKs. To support them.*”

Jennifer, speaking about the important role teachers in a boarding school play, said,

Because it's a boarding school, you have to recognize that these kids are your priority. When you're there, these kids are your priority. You're not their parent. You're in some ways surrogate parents for them during this time. You are the adult in their lives. During breaks, you can do whatever you want. Go ahead and hang out with your friends, whatever. But I think it's crucial for us to not have the teachers just be there for us in the classroom and nowhere else.

Tyler, who also attended a boarding school, spoke of his teachers and said, “*I think the teachers were more interested in the students as a whole. Given as it was a boarding school, it was part of their job to be more interested in the students.*” Later in his interview he said,

I think that the teachers realized that the students need more guidance and they need to have adult role models, with someone they can talk, someone they can share the things they're going through because these are difficult years for everybody. That is probably why teachers tried to develop those relationships.

And it's true that some of the teachers were more interested in developing those relationships than others. It's just that is the motivation they had. They realized that these students needed more of a role model and more than just academic instruction.

Know Their Students and Make Meaningful Connections With Them

Ten separate references were made by participants relating to teachers who “*knew their students*” or made some kind of special “*connection*” with them. Participants identified five different ways teachers got to know their students and made special connections with them. These included:

1. Listening and advising students
2. Demonstrating qualities of caring, friendship, and mentoring
3. Sponsoring events/invite students to home, eat, play games, into their personal celebrations
4. Being accessible and available
5. Involvement in extracurricular activities.

Listening and Advising Students

Carol spoke about how she appreciated teachers who “*in any given situation, showed genuine interest in getting to know us.*” She went on to explain that she liked teachers who were “*nonjudgmental or . . . not quick to fix problems that they might see*” and preferred teachers that “*just listened as opposed to . . . trying to come up with an answer, a way to fix the problem.*” Rebecca spoke of her like for teachers who “*challenged us to do more and just get to know us on a deeper level.*” She went on to say, “*My teachers in both of those schools weren't just teachers, they were friends and families really. That was important.*”

Several participants referenced teachers with whom they built positive relationships at a level that allowed them to confide in them and seek personal advice.

Larry spoke about how he talked to a female teacher about his relationship with a girl. He said,

It was kind of nice to get an outside perspective instead of mom and dad who just thought I was in love with love even though I may have been. I don't know. It was refreshing to feel like I had these relationships with my teachers to the point where they were approachable people.

Betty recalled that her family adopted the French teacher and how her teacher became somewhat of an adopted "older sister."

She's a few years older than me, but she came to our house at Christmas and just taught me a lot about being a single woman and . . . I still talk to her and talked to her through college about how do you deal with college? And so there was a lot of that kind of mentoring relationship with her that she taught me a lot but not just about French.

Esther told about a particular teacher who regularly took time out of her schedule to meet with and listen to her.

I felt there was some connection I had with her. I really enjoyed talking with her and whenever I was going through something that was really hard, especially . . . girls in middle school always need someone to talk to that's older and sometimes mom and dad just won't do. But I would go to her and say, Hey, would you mind talking to me about such and such that's happening, and she'd say, Yeah, sure. Why don't you come by during lunch today and we can eat together? . . . Even on a Sunday, I would see her at church and I'd say, I'm really having a hard weekend. Can we go out for lunch and talk? And she was like, Sure. And I remember specifically, we went to a restaurant and we sat and got some lunch and we probably sat and talked, or I sat and talked for probably three hours or more and just poured out and she just listened and really helped me make sense of all the things that were going on. It was just really neat to have a teacher that it wasn't just about teaching and then kicking you out of class. They really cared about your life outside of school and just what was really going on with you and being involved and it was just really neat for me. When she left, I was really sad that she had to move back to the States.

Jennifer spoke of one of her favorite teachers this way,

We definitely had a close relationship. She actually developed a very close relationship with my whole family. I remember she wasn't necessarily my favorite teacher in the classroom but as far as overall, we're still in touch today. I still call her Aunt _____. . . . Her encouragement and her care for me as a person was just wonderful.

Connor spoke of his relationship with a teacher with whom he “occasionally” would “hang out after school.” According to him, they were “pretty close friends” and would have “good conversations.” Dorothy related how she built a close relationship with two of her teachers.

Well, my French teacher . . . helped a lot with our youth group and no matter what I was going through, I knew I could go and talk to her and she would listen and give me advice. And whether it was school work, relationships, spiritual, whatever, she was willing to listen and give me whatever feedback she could. And then one of my performing arts teachers, I took ballet with her for six months and that was a neat thing to have that experience outside of school with her and get to know her family a little bit because then we had a little bit more mutual understanding in class. If I was going through something, I could talk to her, too.

Kaiden recounted how he valued teachers who took time to listen to him. “Another one [ideal teacher trait], I noticed on several teachers that I was remembering was just the active listening to students in such a way that you felt genuinely heard.”

Demonstrating Qualities of Caring, Friendship, and Mentoring

Intertwined throughout the comments pertaining to the teacher/student-student/teacher relationship aspects preferred by TCKs was a blending of important qualities that encompassed caring, friendship, and mentoring. Twenty-two references were made specifically relating to the concept of teachers caring or their exhibiting caring behaviors. Eleven references were made regarding teachers as “friends” and 18 references were made regarding teachers as “mentors.” In addition, the TCKs interviewed expressed how such relationships involved levels of interaction, which sometimes fulfilled a family-oriented role or a spiritual need and were often fun-natured and enjoyable.

Joshua described the caring that developed between teachers and students as they lived as a close-knit community in proximity to each other year after year. He stated,

So you're with the same group of people. . . . Most of the people I graduated with were the same ones I started going to school with in 2nd grade so . . . we knew a lot of the teachers for our whole lives pretty much and so we're all like family so they cared about you a lot. And that's what you did. You were able to be friendly with them and joke around and . . . because you're there so long.

Tyler recalled how the teachers at his boarding school created a family atmosphere.

One of the things I really liked about the atmosphere of the school and the way the teachers worked was that, because it was a boarding school and because we were all a long way from families; it was a situation where we were not able to visit them very often, some of the teachers tried to make it more of a family environment. They'd open up their houses to the students and that kind of thing I really appreciated. I think that made a big difference in the atmosphere in helping students feel more comfortable and happier despite being so far away from their families.

Caleb spoke highly of one of the teachers he best remembered for a number of qualities including his ability to care for his students.

I just remember his relationship with his students and the way that he cared for kids at [School], was awesome. He was a good teacher as well but that wasn't necessarily the part that stood out to me. It was just more of the relationship part.

Later he discussed the important role his teachers at the boarding school he attended played in the lives of students.

I had a feeling at [School] that the teachers loved their students. Love was not an inappropriate love but a love that came from a relationship with Jesus and how they treated us was with respect and not looking down on us for not knowing as much as they did, or not being as old as they are, but just a respect, almost a parenting role in a lot of kids' lives as it was a boarding school because most of the kids' parents were not living there but out in the boonies of [Country]. I think a lot of the teachers would try to be somewhat of mentors to us, father figures, mother figures. I think especially boarding students would seek those kinds of relationships out; especially if they didn't feel that their dorm parents were that kind of role for them. I think a lot of time the teachers become that to the students.

When asked why it was important for TCKs to have close relationships with their teachers, almost-teacher/friend, Betty responded this way:

P: I think . . . because it gives me a reason to care.

I: Talk to me about that.

P: One of the hard things about especially coming home for home assignments was not having a reason to care about making friends because I knew I was going to have to say goodbye in a year. So back home, and even when I was in the U.S., I wanted to have a reason to care about my teachers because then I had a reason to care about my work and it wasn't just a, Well, we're here together. We might as well learn something. But it was a, I want to do well because I care about you and I know you care about me.

Connor explained the need to have teacher interaction with TCKs this way:

I guess the idea is that we're still just kids and we're still figuring out how the world works and we're looking for guidance. We may put up walls or be rebellious or whatever but we really are looking for guidance no matter what it looks like on the outside. And I guess [how], this kind of plays into [the] friendship part by being a friend and being able to be an adult and someone to look up to, that builds the trust between the student and the teacher. And you don't want to rebel or be shelled in.

Bennett identified the personal benefits he gained from having close relationships with his teachers.

When I think back to some of the teachers that I felt the most connected to, they were teachers that helped me develop either my own sense of self or my own point of view on an issue or sort of helped me grow and was that mentor sort of position and I think that is extremely important and something, for whatever reason, TCKs want.

A number of participants recalled specific teachers who cared for them and played significant roles in their lives as a mentor. Kenneth spoke about his anger as a lonely 14-year-old who had attended eight different schools in the U.S. before being uprooted to live in an Asian country. He recounted how a single teacher's efforts and care positively impacted his life.

There was probably one teacher early on that really took me under his wing and I guess you could say that he kind of mentored me for at least the first year or two.

He was a young married teacher. He was my basketball coach and the PE teacher there. Basketball was my thing so if there was anything that provided any kind of outlet, it was basketball. So, he just took me in and spent a lot of time with me and insisted that we do Bible studies together and do different things like that. And that meant for someone who had no friends or what not, that was a given, I said, OK, I'll take that. And it was pretty lonely that first year. There were some other missionary kids but none of us lived near each other and it was great when we were at school but once school ended we didn't see each other until . . . whenever.

Now a history teacher in an ICS in the same Asian country, Kenneth recounts,

The only thing that really sticks out in my memory now, it's getting all blurred but just the love they had because to me that's the one thing that changed my life. I was a very angry kid coming in and to have your teachers care about you in the way they did. I don't know if they cared about every student that way but at least a lot of them showed it to me and that is one of the things I took away the most from it and that's probably the one thing I probably try to give my students the most too. I tell my kids I don't care if you learn another thing about history for the rest of your life but if you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior then there's the only history you really need to know.

Pamm recalled a teacher who impacted her life.

What I remember is her taking the time to get some of us girls in for discipleship. And bringing us in and going through, I think we went through In His Steps. We read it all together and talked about it and that's what I remember the most from junior high and from my teachers.

Sarah recounted a third-grade teacher this way: *She was the one who developed me a little more spiritually and I actually dedicated my life in her class.*" She went on to say,

Being that [School], is not only a school on a compound but you also have the teachers that live there, it is much more of a family. We had that loving family environment as well.

Paul talked about one of his teachers who became a mentor to his entire dorm.

One other teacher, his name is ____, he took it upon himself to sort of be a mentor. Like no one asked him, I don't think, but he just took it upon himself to make himself the mentor to my class in my dorm. So he would just be over a lot at our dorm and just visit us in our rooms and like talk for a while. He would buy us gifts on our birthdays and yeah, always be somebody who whenever he would see us would stop and talk to us and not just for "Hi" but for an actual conversation.

Raymond told about one of his teachers who was an “understanding guy” and the important role he played in his life.

He seriously would go out of his way to help students who didn't quite fit in but sort of blended into the environment, sort of helped them adapt. He took the time to be with individual students on a one-on-one and just talk to them face-to-face about their lives and stuff. And it was really interesting to have that from a teacher. Here you don't have that so much because teachers are all busy and they're all about work and they don't necessarily have the time for one or two individual students. Me and my friend Nate were troublemakers and he had to deal with us a lot but . . . by the time school was closing, he was very kind to us even though we gave him a lot of trouble and he just took us aside and told us good things and was very helpful. And he was fairly positive about me because towards the beginning, he thought that I wasn't going to be much of an academic success but then he wanted to read some of my writing one day and I showed him a poem or something I wrote and he was really positive about it. He gave me a positive criticism.

Jennifer described in detail how one of her teachers demonstrated care for her throughout her time at the school.

It was the beginning of my 6th grade year when I was just very lonely. I never transitioned well. I was always taking a while to find friends and things like that. So six years later when I left ____ with wonderful friends, [that] wasn't the way it began and she was my teacher right off the bat. And I remember her just sort of not in an overt way but sort of taking extra care to make sure that I was okay. Listening to me. And the year that I was in the States, my junior year, she was one of our class sponsors and she actually emailed me several times during the year, telling me about what was going on with her class. She even sent a birthday card to me in November and on the inside she wrote in a little corner what the theme for banquet was that year, that kind of thing, keeping me in touch and involved even though I was so far away. . . . Plus she also encouraged me with my writing because she saw that I had a gift there and so she always encouraged me academically as well as just as a person and even spiritually, encouraging me to trust the Lord and things like that.

Bill identified two additional teachers who were influential in his life. He described one of his teachers this way:

One of the big things that he did for me was encourage me. He would notice that a few characteristics that I had that would stand out and he would let me know about those and just tell me how he wanted to see those developed more.

He described the other teacher by stating:

He was the teacher that everyone knew that . . . he cared about the students, the most of all the teachers. He valued each student for who they were. And he wanted to make sure that everyone was just doing well with their academics and outside of their academics. He would do what he could.

Betty referred to her French teacher as having a “mentoring relationship” with her. Donald used the word “mentor” twice in his interview regarding his sports leadership and videography teachers. He explained his relationship by stating:

We got beyond teacher/student to where I feel like I was definitely learning a lot more than just like how to run a camera, how to set up a shot, how to coach a rugby match, or things like that, to This is how you should be living your life. . . . These are the areas in your life and this is how they should look. And it was really valuable because when you’re moving from different cultures . . . even within cultures, I had multiple cultures influencing me at the same time. From Thai to British to American and so it can be hard to find your way unless you have those kind of mentoring relationships.

Larry referenced one of his teachers as a “spiritual mentor.”

He was a spiritual mentor and he was also a father of a young family and I guess on all those levels, I looked up to him. And I saw him in so many other walks of life than just in a classroom. And that really broadened my respect for him. I saw him at church, I saw him on the soccer fields. I saw him in the classroom. And on occasion we’d go over to his house and watch a rugby game. I saw him with his family and each of those things helped me to identify with him and his family and even though he’s from the U.K., I . . . really connected with him on a level that I probably couldn’t have if my only interactions with him were in a classroom.

Caleb, who attended a boarding school, said,

A lot of the teachers would try to be somewhat of mentors to us, father figures, mother figures. I think especially boarding students would seek those kinds of relationships out, especially if they didn’t feel that their dorm parents were that kind of role for them. I think a lot of time the teachers become that to the students.

Donald said of one of his teachers:

He was a really big influence in my life because he invested in me as a person, not just teaching as a student. He could see beyond the classroom to other areas in my life and just help me find more who I am and help me become a better leader.

Grace provided an insightful dialog regarding teachers as mentors.

I think the adult mentor is one thing but just being a friend and trying to hang out with you is kind of different. Because a number of these teachers I looked up to and had almost that adult mentor relationship. I talked to them and I felt like I was definitely on a level where I could just talk to them freely and be their friend in a way. But there was still the authority, the respect there.

When asked what advice she would give to someone wanting to teach

TCKs she continued to expand on the teacher's role as a mentor.

P: I'd just say, Get involved on a personal level with the kids. . . . Get to know them, encourage them. These kids have gone through a lot. They've gone through so much change. They need people to pour into them, I think.

I: Why is that?

P: Just be there. Just because their life is just so unstable. And they're constantly moving and they might be even frustrated. It's not their choice to move ever and sometimes they're even just sent away to boarding school. These kids, some of them are not the happiest. They're not. This isn't something that they would've chosen to do but it just comes along with what their parents do.

I: And so how does the teacher by getting involved with them help the TCK?

P: I think that getting involved and encouraging them and just being an example and a mentor is something teachers should take advantage of because who else is better to? Like the teacher is spending almost more time with the kids than even their own parents are. They're having the biggest say in the kids' lives really. And what their example is showing is mainly what the kid is seeing. And I just feel like if they're pouring into these kids, they have such a chance to change the hearts of these kids and to motivate them and maybe be just like a stable friend. Or not a friend but more like a mentor, I guess. Just while they do go through all these changes and things.

Kaiden described a time when a teacher confronted him about his inappropriate behavior between himself and a girlfriend on a car ride back from an outing. He recounted the story as follows:

So he called me out . . . Look, I don't know what you guys are doing but I don't want you to do that in front of my kids because I don't want them getting ideas as far as what's okay and what's not okay as far as physical affection. And I'll just let you know as a warning, I've seen this before. You just really need to be careful with how much physical affection you do in public because it's really dangerous. So I remember him and it was no big deal to him. I don't know if it was no big deal. But the way he presented it to me, the way he talked to me was very calmly and I remember even right as he was telling me something that I was guilty of. I remember feeling just such a tremendous amount of respect for him and

appreciation for him, going directly to me and telling me about his concerns. I'll never forget that. So I guess that is a quality of a teacher's willingness to confront in a loving way.

Carol did have a word of warning for teachers who thought TCKs automatically desired a mentor teacher, and pointed out that new teachers often arrive with misconceptions about TCKs, or seem to be on a personal mission.

They have a mission and with missionaries, they go to a different country and they're like, We're going to convert all these people. Sometimes you get a little bit of that where they'd come and they'd be like, We're going to build into these people's lives. And they just come on really strong, trying to be a mentor. And . . . I prefer people coming alongside and just, yeah, getting to know you personally first and just kind of naturally flowing out of friendship whether or not they become a mentor person in your life as opposed to them just wanting to take that position automatically without having built any sort of trust to begin with.

During their interviews, Paul and Carol stated that TCKs prefer to control their environment when it comes to inviting individuals into their lives.

Sharing Food, Fun, and Life With Students

Some participants recalled stories of how teachers demonstrated their desire to get to know them through different actions. One of the more frequently referenced things teachers did was to invite students to join them in different activities that often included fun and food, sometimes in their own homes.

Pamm recalled one of her teachers who taught Shakespeare “*and would have like movie nights at his house so we would go watch movies and he would have popcorn.*”

Esther spoke about a time when as a junior-high-age student this happened to her:

One of my other teachers, they were roommates and out of the blue one day, they came and asked me and . . . two of the other girls in my class if we wanted to come to their house and eat dinner with them on Friday night. . . . I was probably 13 at the time and I felt real special that these teachers wanted to spend time with me and didn't find me annoying or obnoxious. So we went over to their house and we whipped up a random meal out of what they had in their pantry-type thing and it was a completely random meal but it was fun. And we told stories and just

laughed and it was really nice of them to be willing to give up a Friday night to eat with us when they could've gone out with the other teachers or other people. So yeah, there were multiple times when I felt the teachers were very caring.

Joshua, when asked if there were a specific qualities or characteristics he most fondly remembered about his teachers, said:

Oh, they were . . . friendly I would say. One of my math teachers was a captain in the Army. And he would be friends with you, invite us over to his house with his wife and kids, watch movies. And another teacher who was also the youth group leader and we'd always go to his house Monday nights for youth group and if you got there early, he'd make dinner for you.

Rebecca, who attended a boarding school, spoke fondly of her teachers who opened their homes to students for both planned and informal events.

Mr. ____ invited everyone over to his home for a Christmas party, senior English Christmas party with eggnog and braided yummy bread that I don't remember the name of. . . . At [School] you have class sponsors and you go to their homes and you have Caring Communities every month where you go with a group of 6 students that's been designed, listed, and you play board games and eat and laugh and have a good time. And the staff members are an absolute presence in that. People had groups of kids over for dinner and had different groups over every week. People who opened their homes during study hall to work on projects and, this wasn't supposed to happen, but if you're all done with your homework just to come over and watch a movie and relax. So many different things that teachers have done, whether it was the drama teacher who always was around and you could have a conversation by the flagpole or the math teacher who you had to hunt down but was willing to stop everything if you needed them.

Paul and Carol recalled one of their teachers who regularly took students out to eat. This teacher greatly influenced Paul who stated,

I was thinking of the different characteristics that he portrayed and the one that stood out the most for me was that he showed that he cared about us beyond the classroom. One of the ways he did this was he invited a student every week to go to dinner with him. He took him out to dinner, just talked, and you could invite one friend to go with you if you weren't comfortable going alone. And that was the biggest thing. Also . . . he showed that he believed in the students. . . . To clarify what I mean by that, first of all, he treated us as if we were adults now with responsibility because that's how we were. He wouldn't let us get away with not working hard in his class. He actually made us learn. . . . I'm trying to think how he was different from the other teachers because I remember I did feel a very strong sense that he did believe in me a lot more than the other teachers. I'm not

sure if every student felt like that. It might have simply been a personal connection that I had with him.

When asked if better relationships developed when teachers invited students to their homes or out to dinner, Carol replied:

P: Yeah, it did. There was one of my history teachers. The first year he made a point of taking all of his students out for meals when we first got there. He'd take us out in groups of two or three. We went out to a Chinese restaurant and just took the time to get to know us. And I really appreciated that.

I: That was a welcoming, is that why he was doing this?

P: I think you're way more likely to get respect from students, too, and a better learning environment . . . if the students respect and feel they know the teacher and [it] isn't that that's the only environment they see them in. If . . . the student has a problem in the class, whatever it is, they're much more likely to approach the teacher about it if they've already had a previous relationship with them.

Connor spoke about a teacher with whom he formed “solid qualities of friendships” outside of school. He also identified his guitar teacher and youth group leader as a teacher he regularly had dinner.

TCKs also discussed various “fun” relationships they had with their teachers. Sixteen times participants referenced teachers as individuals they “*joked with,*” had “*fun with,*” “*teased,*” or were “*teased by,*” and “*laughed with.*”

Raymond reflected on the close relationships he had with his teachers this way:

So they were able to have fun and play games and do a lot of fun stuff while being authority figures at the same time. So it was an interesting reflection now that I look back at it. I remember one teacher. He actually played video games with us. We'd have video game parties and we would invite him.

Later in his interview he recounted how much his class enjoyed the company of one of their teachers. “*He was just a really fun loving guy and I think that the entire senior class liked this guy a lot because we invited him to come on our senior trip and different things.*”

Joshua described how he was part of the school's worship band. On the nights they practiced, they would meet at a teacher's home and with most of his teachers, he enjoyed a good-natured relationship.

You could really joke around with him. They were pretty patient, not hard on you. . . . They wanted you to get your work done but you could joke around with them and stuff. . . . We were always respectful. We always laughed together which is what I liked most.

Throughout his interview he talked about his relationship with his teachers and how they joked, and teased and had fun.

We had a teacher, she left when I was in 10th grade. Her name was Ms. _____. She was never married. We'd always bug her with our youth group guy because he wasn't married either so we'd always bug them. And of course, they never were together. We'd always bug them about that. That's the kind of thing you could bug people about at that school. But she was fun because she was like an aunt almost to all of us. But she taught social studies and she taught it pretty lively and her personality was like that.

Pamm recalled one of her teachers with whom the students regularly had fun.

I think my favorite thing about him as a teacher was that we would go in and try and trip him up in his teaching and he would never blink. . . . We had a different thing we did every day and sometimes it was a small thing, sometimes it was a big thing. One time my entire class went in. We all sat on top of our desks instead of in our chairs. And he just taught the whole lesson. He never said anything to us about it. Another time we all came in and put apples on his desk and one time we came in and sat under our desks. And he never said anything. He just kept teaching. And it was pretty great. I learned a lot in that class actually.

A few participants spoke about how their teachers allowed them to share different life events with them. Pamm told the story about one of her teachers who invited the class to the hospital after his wife gave birth.

We actually took a field trip, our math class did, to the hospital to see the baby and I mean, he made it math-related. I don't even remember how but I remember we had to do this thing when we got back. I think it was somehow with the number of patients in the hospital and we had to look at some of the machines and guess what some of them were for and how it might use numbers and data. But that was neat to be involved in his life and for him to invite us to that.

Joshua spoke about one of his teachers who celebrated with the students. “*I remember when she finally finished paying her student loans off, she brought in cupcakes for everyone. That was pretty funny.*”

Being Accessible and Available

Another way students felt that their teachers built relationships was by being accessible to them during and outside of normal school hours or seeing them involved in various school or community activities. According to the study’s participants, one of the most valued aspects of a relational teacher is that of the teacher being “*available*” to, or “*approachable*” by students. Sixteen references were made in regard to this aspect that included teachers being found in their classrooms, offices, school lunch rooms, and at their homes located on the school’s compound.

Esther explained that her school drew the community together and students, parents, and teachers interacted fluidly.

Most of the people that go to the school go to the church and you see everyone around town a lot. Everyone lived close to the school for the most part. So . . . everyone was in the neighborhood kind of thing and I think they could just tell from realizing how much time they would see the students. It wasn’t just seeing them in school but seeing them around town, at the mall, at church, at restaurants. You would run into them constantly, that they wanted to be more involved than just, Here’s your lesson for the day and then I’ll see you tomorrow. And that’s it. And so I think that the teachers that came over, the ones that actually enjoyed it and really made the most of it, and some that even extended their time past two years really enjoyed the community that came with it. And they realized that their role was more than just an English teacher, a math teacher, or a music teacher. That it was to be really kind of a mentor and a friend in a way to students. That’s very different, I think, from here in the States.

Betty recalled that

there were many of my teachers that led after-school activities so that we got to know them more personally there, got to know more about some of their other hobbies. Most of the teachers went to the same church as I did.

Lee described how much she appreciated teachers who took time to support student activities.

I was involved in sports and band and in stuff like that and they [teachers] cared to go to the games, stupid band concerts, and stuff like that. And some took great pride in knowing those types of things and showing their support. . . . They would be like, Hey, I saw part of your game. That was really cool. Or, Congratulations on winning the game. Even knowing that we won. I mean, for my senior year my uncle passed away so some staff members who knew it were more like, hey I'm here if you need something.

Faith recounted how her teachers were visible.

I really liked that they were not just our teacher. . . . They were either a class sponsor, they came to sporting events, they came to variety nights, movie nights, all these things and they'd invited us into their homes for a specific reason or just open their doors for us to drop in and hang out and made us food. . . . It wasn't just a teaching role, it was very much a family role as well.

Betty recalled how her teachers would choose to eat lunch in the students' cafeteria. To her, this meant that her teachers were “*around and we saw them and we could interact with them . . . and that was always nice because you knew that you could go talk to the teachers.*” Joshua spoke highly about one of his teachers who allowed him to eat lunch with him. “*I would take my lunch to his room, and because he was listening to ESPN radio so you can eat anywhere on campus, on the school grounds really. So that's where I went sometimes.*” Later he recounted how one of his teachers voluntarily took the graduating seniors on one last trip to the Andes Mountains. “*We were right next to a waterfall and slept next to a waterfall.*” Pamm recalled how accessible one of her favorite teachers was.

He also was one of the ones who took time outside of school to play sports with us and to come to the school picnics and just spend time with us. And his office or in his classroom, we'd go in and talk to him and he'd joke around with us, so he was a really good teacher.

Donald spoke to the regularity with which he would interact with some of his teachers.

Mr. ____ and Ms. ____ were my directors for at least two plays, I saw both of them seven days a week for at least six months. So it wasn't just at school, it was on the weekends, on Saturday and Sunday, at church and helping to coach children, the play practices. So it's a very small, close-knit community.

Sarah liked the fact that many of the teachers lived on the school compound.

If you needed something and it was after school hours and they weren't in their classroom anymore, you could go to their apartments or house, knock on the door and they'd be more than willing to answer a question or help you out with something.

Jennifer spoke about how fun it was to see teachers participating with the kids outside of their role as teachers.

Just . . . the aspects of being able to see them outside of class and having fun outside of class and getting to know them as people rather than just teachers, a lot of fun times. I remember talent shows and a bunch of teachers would get up and sing. We would just die laughing. It was so much fun to see them up there.

She also commented on how important it was to get to know her teachers outside of the classroom.

I remember going over to teachers' houses and just hanging out there and obviously, that's something that's unique to the place we were at. I remember real people and just talking about life and school. . . . I really enjoyed that as well, being a caring community, class nights, or whatever, and just getting to know their personalities. They were not . . . one dimensional to me.

Larry spoke about his English teacher who was also the Student Council sponsor this way, “*Just a really fun teacher, really fun lady to be around.*” Connor spoke about how he and his fellow students engaged with their teachers through youth groups, seeing each other at the mall, and even bowling together.

Paul, who attended a boarding school, reflected on the absence of his parents and the impression his teachers made when he saw them involved in community activities and modeling adult living.

P: I guess one of the really important things to me, thinking back on it, because I don't think I really actively thought about it during the time, was that since I had an absence of parents, to have a role model or people to look up to and try to emulate and so for the teachers to be doing other things besides teaching, whether it's some sort of project to help the community or being involved in the church. Basically just in our community because it's a very . . .

I: Tight-knit community?

P: Yeah. So to see them actually be actively involved in the other functions of the school besides just classroom was inspiring. Not only just to see they're taking the time when they don't have to but also that they're taking an active part in doing things that they believed they should be doing.

Jennifer discussed how in the public schools where she works, teachers attempt to separate themselves from their students and wear a "school face." She went on to say:

Whereas at [School], you can't do that as a teacher. Your kids are going to see you in all sorts of different places. Your kids see you in church. Your kids see you in your home. Your kids see you on the rugby field. Your kids see you in the class as well. . . . And it's harder for . . . a person, any person to hide themselves or to put on a face that this is all I want you to know about me. And teachers could do that at [School] but it was a lot harder. I respected my teachers more because I knew more about them and I saw them with their families. And I saw them doing this, or saw them doing that. Helping out at banquet or whatever.

Larry spoke highly of one of his teachers he referenced as a "spiritual mentor."

Speaking of him, he said,

And I saw him in so many other walks of life than just in a classroom. And that really broadened my respect for him. I saw him at church, I saw him on the soccer fields. I saw him in the classroom. And on occasion we'd go over to his house and watch a rugby game. I saw him with his family and each of those things helped me to identify with him and his family and even though he's from the U.K., I really connected with him on a level that I probably couldn't have if my only interactions with him were in a classroom.

Involvement in Extracurricular Activities

The data revealed that teachers involved in extracurricular activities made favorable relationship impressions on their students. In this area, six references were made regarding teachers who served as youth group leaders with another six references made about teachers who played games and sports with their students. Additionally, 18 references were made regarding teachers who sponsored a class, club, tutored, or coached a sport and another 18 references were made related to teachers building relationships outside of school at school or community-related activities.

A number of participants in the study recalled how teachers interacted with students by attending different retreats or spiritual events the school sponsored.

Speaking of his teachers and their participation at retreats, Joshua said,

They were there all the time. They were your parents. We had retreats twice each year. We had a short retreat that lasted a weekend in the first part of the year and then the last part of the year, we had a weeklong retreat and the teachers went to that. . . . Each cabin had their own teacher in it so we got to hang out with them.

Betty recalled how some of her teachers attended retreats with the students.

Connor said he had a great time bonding with his teachers at school sponsored spiritual retreats. Tyler recalled one of his favorite times was when students were invited into teachers' homes for vesper services.

Some of the best experiences I remember revolved around . . . a special kind of vespers where we go to faculty houses and have more of a family worship, maybe 15 people per family or 20 people per family, something like that.

A few of the participants in the study referenced coaches and the important relational roles they played in their lives. Caleb, speaking of one his teachers, who was also a coach he greatly admired, had this to say about him:

In basketball, he was my coach for a couple years. I don't know his example as far as in competition and how he presented himself and his attitudes toward the

game and how it should be played and how we should treat the other team and . . . I really looked up to him and the way that he conducted himself and the way that he lived his life. I never saw inconsistency in the way that he taught or the way he talked, the way he actually was in his personal life.

Paul was likewise impressed by his teachers who volunteered their time to coach sports.

Knowing that all of those things were completely voluntary, so it's acts of selflessness. And to coach a sport, to really involve themselves and the kids in other ways besides in the classroom, I guess this might not be inspiring for many people but for me, to see that you don't have to be isolated to your field of study or your objectives set by your superiors that you can put yourself into many different paths of life. I guess become sort of multipurpose and seeing that really played out.

Bennett had this to say about the importance of coaches in his life: *"I got to know the coaches on a personal level much more than a normal academic teacher . . . and I connected personally with them quite a bit."* Carol spoke about a teacher/coach who continues to have a lasting impact on her students.

The following year, when she became the health teacher and she was the coach [of] the basketball team and it was there that more conversation ended up happening and she, especially with the basketball team but just like taking time to get to know the students. And she also in health class, too, it was a lot more like discussion and trying to get things more at a personal level rather than just This is the things to know about health. But she . . . was always available to whoever wanted to. . . . There were definitely a few girls who she connected with the most and had their group that she would have over for dinner or sleepovers during the year. Now that she's back in the States and has gotten married, for Thanksgiving and stuff she still keeps in touch with those students and some of those students that are in college here in the States are going to spend Thanksgiving with her.

Donald spoke about the size of his school and its proximity to everyone's home and the added benefit derived from participating in sports with his teachers after school.

[Name] is a school of 500 people and everyone lives within five minutes of the school and so if you want to have a group game of football or rugby or anything like that, you're going to invite some teachers and you're going to have fun outside of school and have a relationship outside of school. And the fact that they have pushed you in class will push you to perform better outside of school, too.

Graphic Representation: Preferred Relational/Relationship-Building Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities of TCK Teachers

In addition to the interview comments, 20 of the 24 participants completed a graphic representation which identified the following relational or relationship building traits, characteristics, and qualities of the “ideal TCK teacher”:

1. Intentionally seeks to build relationships with students/is available to students (14 comments)
2. Outgoing, somewhat extroverted, interactive (10 comments)
3. Is real and personal; possesses human interaction qualities , that is, is caring, has empathy, compassion, and understanding; listens and is patient (9 comments)
4. Is a leader, a mentor, an example (7 comments)
5. Is respectful of students and student/cultural differences (6 comments)
6. Is good natured; fun and likeable; has a good sense of humor (6 comments).

See Figure 4.

These data further substantiate the primary findings that TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who possess strong relational or relationship-building skills.

Ideal TCK Teacher: Relational Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities

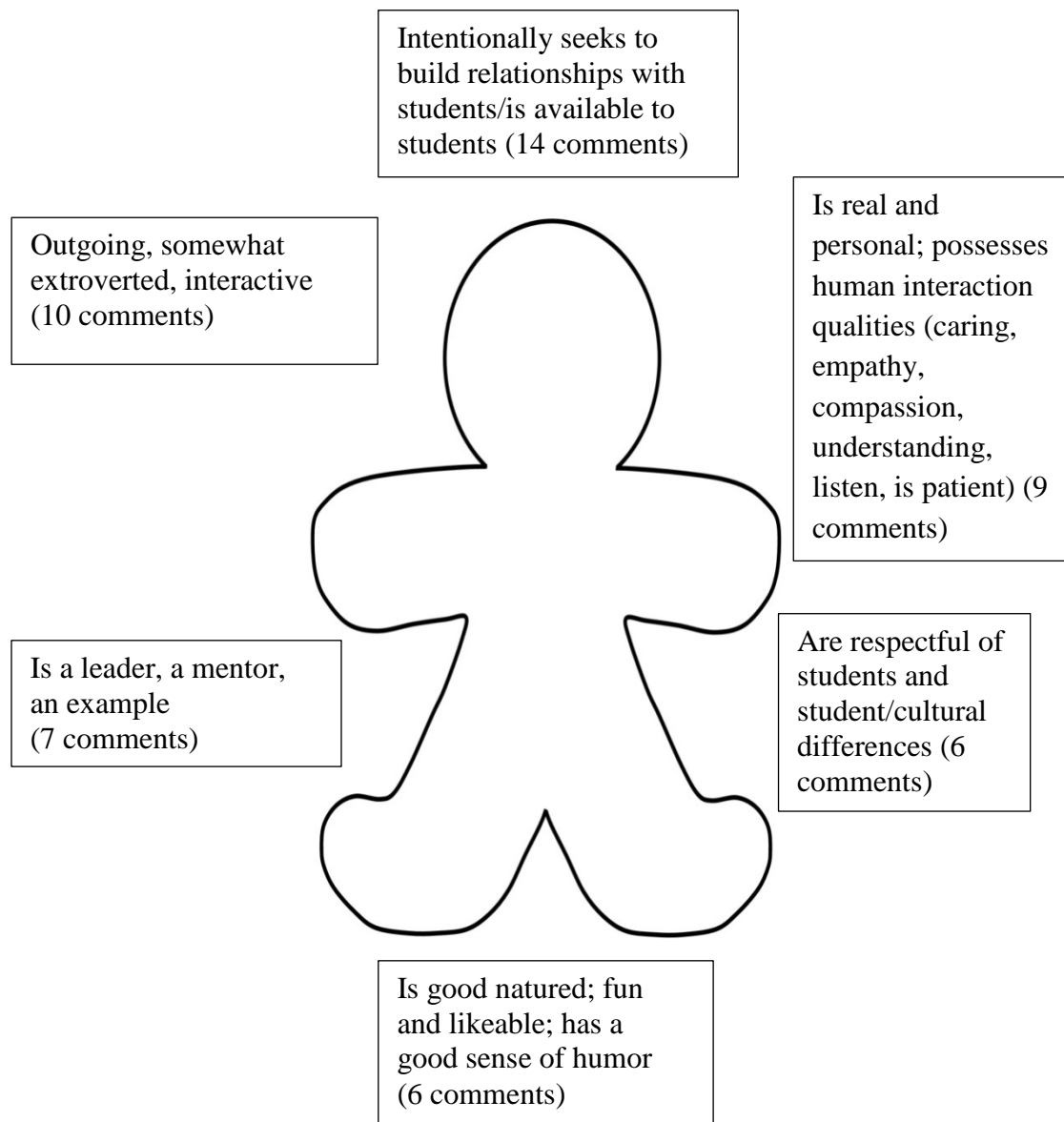


Figure 4. Preferred relational/relationship-building traits, characteristics, and qualities of TCK teachers.

CHAPTER 6

TEACHERS WHO POSSESS SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND MODEL ADULT CHRISTIAN LIVING

Throughout the interview process the participants repeatedly voiced the influence their teachers had on the development of their spiritual beliefs and practices related to their Christian faith. In addition, as has previously been identified, TCKs seek meaningful relationships with their teachers, and thus a number of participants identified the desire for TCK teachers to model aspects of Christian and adult living. Interestingly, they were also critical of teachers who did not measure up to their standards in this area. Therefore, the third primary finding of the study indicates that TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who model adult Christian living and possess spiritual qualities. See Figure 5.

- A. Live out their Christian faith as an example to follow; love for God/Christ.
- B. Express spiritual concern to, and exhibit spiritual care for, their students.

Figure 5. Teachers live their faith as an example.

In gathering data from the interviews, I was able to piece together salient comments that support the above-mentioned findings. Eighteen times the participants of the study expressed a desire for their teachers to live out their faith as an example to their

students with an accompanying five comments related to teachers expressing their love for God and/or Christ. An additional five comments were made that supported teachers who express spiritual concern or exhibited levels of spiritual care for their students. References were also made five times related to the hypocritical behavior of teachers. Additionally, one participant recalled the negative effect his teachers had on his spiritual development.

Living Out Christian Faith; Love for God/Christ

Eighteen times the participants in the study expressed a desire for their teachers to live out their faith as an example to their students.

Caleb was extremely passionate about the spiritual influence of teachers at international Christian schools. Early on in his interview, he said,

I loved that my teachers were believers and they had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and they're living out examples of what it meant to live for Christ and have a relationship with him. And so all of my teachers were not only teachers but examples of what it means to be a Christian and what it means to follow the Lord.

He then referenced in detail what he observed in one of his teachers who was also his basketball coach and the father of one of his friends.

The next teacher that influenced me or that stands out in my mind at [School] was Mr. _____. . . . He was my fifth-grade teacher and then, I believe he, in later years, was the junior high principal at [School]. And he was also my basketball coach multiple years at [School]. He had a lot of different areas of influence in my life. . . . I was friends with his son, _____, and we would often hang out at their house . . . and I'd see how Mr. _____ would treat his wife, his family, his children, and us as guests in his house. I'd see his Bible next to his chair in his living room. I knew that he was a man of God that loved God first and then turned around and loved others and his students at _____. . . . I really looked up to him and the way he conducted himself and the way he lived his life. I never saw inconsistency in the way he taught or the way he talked, the way he actually was in his personal life. One of the cool things about living at _____ was you could easily distinguish between what the teachers said, what they taught us in school, and the way they

lived as well because they lived there, we lived with them, so I appreciated his consistency in his teaching and the way he actually lived.

Later in his interview he summed up what he appreciated most about the spiritual aspects of his teachers this way:

The way that they walk with the Lord and brought that into the classroom and lived that out in front of us as students. Not forcing it down our throats but just the way that they lived and addressed us.

Rebecca commented on the spiritual influence of her teachers as they shared from their spiritual experiences with their students.

[Teachers] weren't afraid to challenge us, to share themselves with us. Bible teachers, and especially in Bible, just people who were willing to share their brokenness and for us to see as MKs, there's a lot of expectations and fear of failure on not just monetary levels or academic levels but spiritual levels. And it was really awesome for me, for all of my teachers who would share that part of their lives, like single missionary women who were getting older and were sharing their hopes and their dreams. It was so important to see. It wasn't just isolated incidents for us as high schoolers but it was something that you can succeed in life even without a spouse or just those different aspects so, again it's that personal level of connecting that wasn't left to just outside the class, it also happened in school and that was important.

Caleb, when asked what advice he would give to someone wanting to teach TCKs in an international Christian school, replied,

The most important thing is to have your personal relationship with Jesus Christ on track. Be mature enough to lead students in a relationship with Jesus Christ and be an example to the students. I think that is the number one important thing. If you are not a shining example of Jesus and how he treated people and how he loved people, you are not going to do so well at a Christian international school. But that has really little to do with the actual teaching part. There are a lot of great teachers who can teach well and know the subject well but they can't lead in a Christian setting toward Christ. That's a hard question. I would say the most important thing is a relationship with Jesus.

Jennifer suggested the following spiritual qualifications for an international Christian school teacher:

P: Well, first of all, you should be saved. And after that, definitely know how to feed yourself from the word of God. I think it is a big thing. So that, be able to

have a desire to share with the kids about what's going on, what you're learning and things like that. I think even going back to [Teacher] and how she would share with us things that she was learning in her Bible study, Be a spiritual encourager to the TCKs. Those are very important things. So you need to be spiritually mature. You can come out. It's not like any of us are struggle-free but if there's some big issue in your life that you're dealing with, it's not a good idea to come out and try to be a spiritual mentor and parent.

I: Why is that?

P: Because I know when I've been really struggling with a spiritual issue in my life, it's hard for me to be able to reach out. It's hard for me to be able to really be there for other people when I'm dealing with something myself. So . . . of course, there [are] a lot of sexual issues and things like that if you're struggling with pornography or whatever. But even if a person is struggling with assurance of salvation regularly for an extended period of time and a kid comes up and is like, Know what? I just don't even know if I'm saved and you're struggling with that same thing. It's going to be harder for you to be able to reach out for that kid . . . and help him and encourage him with the word of God at that point.

During my interview with Pamm, I noticed she frequently referenced her need for teachers to fulfill certain expected roles and duties. A rich conversation unfolded when I brought this to her attention.

I: Okay. Well, you've talked to me about all these wonderful teachers who impressed your lives and how they acted out their lives in dedication to you. The one theme I keep hearing over and over in your conversation is Be there for me. And . . . that sounds narcissistic but . . . it's not. We need you might be another way of verbalizing my interpretation of what you're saying?

P: Well, and I think the thing that makes that not narcissistic, especially in a Christian boarding school is the fact that I'm thinking I need you here for me. But the way they're filling that is by offering Christ. Then it takes away my selfishness and my understanding of who I am, what I need. Because for them to offer only themselves to me will be disappointing when they leave or when I have to leave. But the people that I remember fondly and that I remember best are the ones who offered Christ because they offered me something that wouldn't be taken away or something that I wouldn't leave. And so they offered consistency in a way that was a lot more valuable than if they had just offered me themselves.

I: Wow. They offered a spiritual dimension in spending time with you. That's pretty powerful as well. So I've got this one question. All those wonderful teachers that you identified, why do you think they acted the way they did?

P: Because they love Jesus.

I: Want to build on that any?

P: I mean their love for Jesus is what brought obedience for them to go where they went. Their love for Jesus is what made them stand up for high standards in their teaching. It's also what made them appreciate us and love us and give us something that was more valuable than a day-to-day hello. So when sending people overseas to work with TCKs, especially, and I know that not all TCKs are Christians and come from Christian families. I know there are business kids and all of that, but especially if you're sending someone to an international Christian school, they'd better love Jesus more than they love teaching, and they'd better love Jesus more than they love the idea of adventure or the idea of home or the idea of getting to know missionary kids. If they don't love Jesus more than all those things, then you shouldn't hire them.

Sarah felt that her teachers were placed in the school for a reason and went on to explain what she felt that reason was and what it entailed.

P: There [are] bigger reasons why you're there. And a lot of the teachers realize that and recognize that, just had a love for that.

I: Okay, let's explore that. In your mind, what is that love that they had and what was that reason that they were there for?

P: I think that reason was to bring kids up in the knowledge of Christ and what He's done in their lives and what He can do in the lives of the children. So you have to bring a kid up right and this is a perfect way to do it. To get that seed, that knowledge planted early that Christ is here, He loves you. Then just build on that knowledge, starting from kindergarten, all the way up through as far as they go in that school. . . . It's not only a love for the kids and a love for teachers but it's a love for Christ.

She went on to explain that her teachers were at an advantage over Christian teachers in U.S. public schools in that they could

just freely talk about whatever you're dealing with in school, whatever lessons you have planned, what your Bible lessons are going to be and what your memory verse is going to be for the week and that as teachers in the missionary kids' school and the Christian schools overseas, you have so much more freedom to be able to explore that [Christian faith] within a classroom setting.

Rebecca described the benefits of observing her teachers on a 9th-grade service project. "Having the teachers set that up and then working alongside of us was really important, modeling that godly life of service and giving of time and resources. So that

was really big for me.” Bennett also spoke of the benefits he gained from a similar exercise at his school.

We would do service projects or home stays and interact with the culture and the people where we were staying. I really enjoyed those times. It was interesting to watch the teachers because we always had several teachers chaperone us. And it was interesting to see. I liked being able to watch the teachers interacting with the cultures we were staying with and seeing sort of giving an example of how to gently and unobtrusively learn about a people and interact with the culture even if you’re not familiar with it and have never been to this place before or never met these people before. And I was able to watch adults with these teachers, showing a good example of how to be sensitive and how to be flexible and how to be willing to try the new food that is offered or gently try to say, No thank you, and go with the flow and stay wherever the home stay they offered. And that was an important lesson that I didn’t recognize until I was in college and went on a longer mission trip and realized that I was good at that and tried to figure out why I was so good at that and realizing I had good examples during high school.

Paul, who attended a boarding school, referenced how “*inspiring*” it was for him to witness his teachers involved in volunteer activities outside of school and within the local community. He reflected on the different roles teachers played in his life and what he gained from these relationships. *“It was more like they each take a different role and I naturally found those things in them. And then took what I needed in a way, in a sense, . . . from this person and saw this person had that other thing and took that.”*

Faith spoke of the leadership example teachers provide within an international Christian school and said, *“You’re not just a teacher in the academic areas. You are an example and a leader in being a Christian and what that looks like and what it sounds like.”* When Lee was asked to identify any predominant spiritual aspects of her teachers, she replied,

I think for the most part, they lived in what they preached. It wasn't all just talk coming from them. It wasn't like all right and when I tell you this is how a Christian should be and then I'm going to go do it.

Curiously, nine of the 12 male participants specifically identified married male teachers as being critical adult models to them. The frequency of such occurrences piqued my interest, and so I sought to acquire insight from these male participants.

Bennett identified how he purposely watched and observed married male teachers at the school, one of whom was myself.

P: I remember classes with your wife as well and doing drama and stuff. And one of the things I enjoyed about learning from her was the family connection. There was something neat about having you for science and coaching soccer and then having her for drama and knowing the mystery of “Oh they’re married” and also the fact that you were parents of _____. It was a neat connection there and I think it resulted in being more attentive to what you guys had to say. The lessons that you guys were teaching over someone who didn’t have that kind of connection. And, I think there was kind of an element that I connected with your family a little bit more than some of the other teachers I had.

P Another teacher that sticks out in my mind is Mr. _____ and I don’t remember what his wife did but I remember her always being around if she was teaching or if she was just there. He is another one I remember specifically. I even remember specifically some books that he read aloud to us and different activities we did in his class. And, I think that is true. Sort of seeing both husband and wife at the school, there was also something nice about watching another married couple interact, you see your parents interact all the time and you get used to those interactions or those ruts that they’re in but to be able to see another Christian married couple and the way they interact with each other, not necessarily in an academic sense but a personal, family level. I always appreciated you and your wife and your family, the _____, and the _____, the older couple, and then also there were the _____ and I liked to watch their families.

Larry likewise spoke about how married teachers are observed by their students.

Married teachers, I think, are watched, maybe even closer than single teachers because in the community that I lived in, you do get to see them on all parts of life. You do get to see them as parents, how did they tell their kids to be quiet in church when they’re getting a little out of hand? Or how do they handle when their kid’s whining because you see them in the supermarket and can’t have a piece of candy? Do they yell at them? What do they do? And we watch. Kids are observant. May not always be clear but we’re very observant, especially of the people who grade us, who measure us. We measure them just as much. And just because they aren’t taking tests and we have paper to give back to them with some red ink on it doesn’t mean we’re not watching their lives and making some internal notes. So . . . maybe a single teacher would have it easier.

Raymond favored younger, married male teachers with children over young single teachers or older married couples. In his words, they

seemed to pity us a little more and help us with stuff, especially me and my friends that weren't necessarily academically fit. We weren't too crazy about learning, weren't too happy with school, so it was nice having those teachers to help us take it more seriously and to assist us.

When asked if there were certain demographic groupings he preferred of teachers in an international Christian school, Donald shared the following:

P: Well, I've seen really great relationships between students and teachers, not so much right out of college because I feel the teachers still need to grow into who they are as a teacher but really great relationships with kind [who have] been teaching for a little while and married with kids. I've always enjoyed having good relationships with their kids because I enjoy working with children.

I: I have been surprised as I've been interviewing young men how many of them point to teachers, male teachers, married with small children as playing a significant role in their life. Why was it important for you?

P: Looking back on it, initially I think part of it was just I enjoyed working with kids because my mom was an elementary teacher and I've been around little children all my life. But looking back at it, I really valued those relationships because they give me an example of what a good relationship between mother and wife, mother and sons are, what father and sons are, what husband and wife are. And it gives kind of an example that is even outside the family. Because I don't know what it's like in other places around the world, but I feel like oftentimes, you don't get that perspective of teachers usually. But when you're in such a close community, you can't help but get that outside-of-school perspective. There's no hiding from your students after class when you're at that small of a school, in that small of a community. And so I feel like that's a really good thing because then they can kind of witness to you, not just their faith but also their life. And I really value the example that Mr. ____ gave me, that ____ gave me of what it's like to be a man, to have a family, and have a good relationship with their family, and to support them. Because even though they brought them out into a crazy world when they aren't necessarily sure what's going on, they love them and they care for them and it's wholly evident in everything that they do.

Caleb, who earlier identified that he thought “a lot of the teachers would try to be somewhat of mentors to us, father figures, mother figures” in a boarding school setting, also thought that the students were seeking people to have these types of relationships with.

I don't think if you interviewed them at the time they would say, Yeah, I'm seeking out a father figure right now in my life, because that might not be cool. But I think if I look back down at the situation and maybe look at an outside opinion, and maybe not the student, yeah, I think you'd see it is much more than just a teacher, a male figure in my life, a positive figure someone I look up to and someone I can maybe model my life after the way that they live. A lot of times as kids that's the way that we live, most of the time we become like our parents because we look up to them and become like them, especially really young kids. If your father does it, that is really a cool thing. But without that father relationship, that is gone because there is a void and sometimes that can be filled by teachers.

Paul reflected on how during his boarding school experience he looked up to his teachers in the absence of his parents, “to have a role model or people to look up to and try to emulate.” When asked if having a married teacher with children investing in his life met any need he had, he responded:

P: Like a father?

I: I don't know.

P: I think so. In a way, that wasn't forcible. I'm sure people could've gone without having people to look up to. So it's kind of a natural thing that occurred and it's interesting because thinking of different people who also influenced me during those times, it was almost like there wasn't one single person to be a role model or a father figure. It was more like they each take a different role and I naturally found those things in them. And then took what I needed in a way, in a sense, took what I needed from this person and saw this person had that other thing and took that.

Larry repeatedly identified two married male teachers with children as the most influential persons in his life and how he observed them interact with their children. When this was brought to his attention and he was asked why he thought this made such an impact on him, he replied:

P: That's an interesting question. As I'm getting older, I'm thinking more deeply about these types of things for myself even. And . . . this is just off the fly but it could be that maybe as a young child in the [Country], I think my dad was away a lot. He traveled all the time. He'd go to [Country], to [Country]. At that time he was in some kind of educational ministry, educating missionaries on how to be most effective in preaching the gospel in less aggressive ways. So I think he traveled a lot doing that and maybe him being away had something to do with me

identifying these young fathers and respecting them for being present in their kids' lives. Could be something to do with that.

Three other male participants, Joshua, Caleb, and Kenneth, also identified married male teachers as having powerful and positive impacts on their lives.

The data also revealed that some of the female participants in the study identified female teachers who played significant spiritual roles in their lives and/or modeled adult Christian living. Betty referenced her French teacher who “*just taught me a lot about being a single woman.*” Rebecca referenced single, older women who shared “*their hopes and their dreams. It was so important to see . . . that you can succeed with in life even without a spouse.*” Jennifer, Faith, and Dorothy spoke highly of female teachers who demonstrated deep levels of spiritual concern and care for them.

I also found it interesting that both Pamm and Jennifer attended boarding schools and felt that it was important to have married couples modeling their lives to students.

Pamm explained,

I really think that in a boarding school situation, it's important to have husbands and wives who are both working there because we as students who are in boarding, we don't get to see our parents interact with each other for most of the year, the only examples we have are the people we see at school and in our dorms. So to have healthy examples of marriages is very valuable. And we need just as much input from men as we need from women and to see the balance of that through people who are married, I think is really great.

Express Spiritual Concern/Exhibit Spiritual Care for Students

When asked if there were any teachers who made a significant spiritual or social impact on her life, Kimberly replied, “*Yeah, a lot of my favorite teachers did that.*” She went on to describe how one of her math teachers took time to have devotions in class where “*he would share what God was teaching him in his life and challenge us.*” She also mentioned other teachers who incorporated morning devotions and prayer times in

their classes or “they would just ask the students what’s going on in their lives and How can I be praying for you? . . . yeah, things like that.” When asked why that was important, she said,

I guess because a lot of the time, our parents weren’t TCKs and so there’s a lack of adults who really understand our situation and so it’s important to talk through everything with different people and, yeah, just have other people that we can go to since, if I was living in America, I would have all these relatives and grandma and grandpa and aunts and uncles and lots of different people at the church. But when you’re a TCK in a different culture, a lot of the time the only people that you do really connect with on a deep level or talk to are your teachers and your classmates and your parents.

Likewise, Bennett spoke of the impact one of his teachers, an adult TCK, had on his life.

I really liked that Ms. ____ had been a missionary kid. So, she was able to give us a perspective of what it would be like when we had grown up a little bit, and looking back she was able to give us examples that showed us that she knew what we were going through at the time when we were going through it. And, I remember really respecting her because of that, thinking that there was a little bit more of a connection with her because she had experienced some of the same stuff. . . . We were doing Bible verses, memorizing Bible verses, we talked about, I believe it was Psalm 119, the psalm about how God has searched us and He knows us, He knows when we sit. He knows when we rise and He sees our thoughts from afar. We were having to memorize that entire psalm and she talked about how that was her favorite psalm because there’s a line in there that says, Even if I go to the far side of the sea and rise on wings of the dawn, if I settle to the bottom of the sea, You are there. Your right hand holds me. It guides me. And she talked about how she felt as a kid with the rest of her family and friends in the States but that God still guided her and led her. And there was something that resonated with me about that comment and it sort of stuck with me since.

Kenneth recounted the result of his international Christian school teachers investing in his life this way, “I know it worked for me. It changed my life. I mean, it brought me to Christ, so that alone, I’d say it’s worth a try.”

Faith liked it when teachers integrated spiritual matters into their classrooms so they were not just teaching content from a secular point of view.

I had lots of classes where teachers would not start class without praying first. And that was awesome. . . . There were a few teachers who were really good, like science teachers who didn't just teach about the science but then they would say that now here in the Bible that says, and they would integrate it. And it would serve to prove the Bible as well as have the Bible prove the science. That was really cool.

When she was asked to identify the spiritual qualities, characteristics, or practices of a TCK teacher, she replied,

They should be an overall good example. They need to be patient. They need to be kind. They are going to be talking with students and their other colleagues and parents, Be kind to these. They're going to be implementing discipline within the classroom. They're going to be going about things that reflect on the Bible, even dealing with conflicts with the kids in the classroom and coming at it from a spiritual and emotional side rather than this is wrong and this is the punishment.

Rebecca talked about two different people who played significant spiritual and support roles in her life. One was a non-teaching staff member and the other was a teacher.

I would go there [her house] and hang out and she was always, Where are you at? How are you? Sometimes it was with a group of girls. Sometimes it was just me. It was, Where are you at? How are you and God? How can I pray for you? What do you need? Where are you hurting? Where are you concerning? Just a whole 100% of life shared. I want you to succeed. I'm praying for you. Let me know what you need. . . . I had another teacher, we were always welcomed to his house on Monday nights, our entire class was. And it was hang-out time but at the same time she was always asking us, How are you in this area? I know you were worried about it last week. What can I do? Again, How can I pray for you? was a huge part of that.

When I commented on the deep spiritual and emotional connection she experienced, she replied, “Yeah, definitely. There still is. Five years later.”

Grace, describing one of her teachers whom she really enjoyed, said:

One of them was just very passionate and encouraging and he challenged us in every aspect of life. He always wanted to know how we were doing in school and our relationships with other teachers, with our friends and family. And he was saying, Make a legacy. Go out of your comfort zone. Always be serving other people. And his class was basically called sports leadership and that was all about ministry and he had a Bible study within the class. We learned how to ref,

how to teach, coach. We would learn how to lead different events and organize them. And he was the best teacher I think I've ever had in high school.

Later she discussed how her teachers challenged and influenced her outward expression of her Christian faith.

P: The ones that I really enjoy are just so passionate about what they do. They just want to tell more and more people, they just want to be with kids. They want to influence kids. They love their job. They want to share what they're doing with us, the reason why they're there, the purpose of what they're doing. And it's kind of contagious, I would say. If that's where their heart really is.

I: They want to share their purpose for being there. Let's go a little deeper with that.

P: Like this one guy who was teaching the class, sports leadership, the one that was all about ministry and things, he just kept saying we are to be living for God. We're supposed to be serving Him. And we would do a lot of ministry trips, too. We did two, maybe three, my senior year to a Burmese refugee camp. And we organized entire camps there and my class went and spent three nights there and we ran a camp for them. And he was saying, My passion for these refugees and for serving, like the kids in our school because he taught intramurals and just different things for them as well, and just influencing kids to go out into the world and start like evangelizing and doing stuff like that. That just rubbed off on us.

Larry spoke highly of one of his teachers. He referred to the Bible study the teacher conducted as “a positive thing for me.” He also shared his admiration for this teacher and mentor.

The things I respected most about Mr. ____ were just his sincerity. He shared his testimony with me and a small group of guys that . . . he actually co-led a Bible study that some friends and I started at this school. And he shared his testimony. . . . It's really powerful to hear how God took him from a walk of life that was so blatantly in sin and really turned his life around. Actually through his wife, he came to Christ. But maybe because of his conversion or his realization that he was living in sin, he really respected all of us and I think he would say the lineage that we had of missionary parents and how our testimonies were the greatest testimonies of all because we came from a lineage of people who loved God. I guess I respected him as a teacher, as my coach. He was my friend. He was a spiritual mentor.

Joshua, speaking highly of one of his teachers who also served as the youth group leader and worship band leader, said: “He was always there at chapel practice, always

teaching, leading worship, I mean, Bible study on Monday nights. So he had a big impact on my life.” Donald also identified how he benefited from attending a Bible study sponsored by one of the school’s teachers.

In [my] 8th grade year, I joined an accountability/Bible study group of mostly older high school guys and that was one of them. And it was put on by one of the teachers from the school specifically for the guys of the school who wanted to participate. And being a part of that, especially under that teacher’s leadership, was really good. It helped me reorient my spiritual compass because it was right after coming out of the British international school and [the national], church so my spiritual compass was all over the place.

He also spoke about how one of his teachers integrated Christian principles within his history class, and according to him, *“that one class, it was a one-semester class and it really shaped how I learn about my Christian faith, how I explore it. And so it was a really valuable experience.”*

Kenneth, who struggled as a 14-year-old uprooted to an Asian country, recalled the commitment and spiritual care his teachers showed to him.

In my experience, just the commitment they had to our personal development. My teachers, honestly, were not so much . . . you could say they were more like friends than they were what you would think of teachers. The dynamics here in [Country] are completely different and I think it is in most international schools, especially small ones. But I was struggling—White kid trying to figure out how to make it in our area but then our teachers, they were in the same boat. I just liked their commitment to our personal development. They invested in us as an individual person. Teachers cared about our spiritual growth. It was a Christian missionary school, so obviously that was important, so that commitment was good.

He went on to express that his teachers helped him grow in his spiritual relationship with God.

They were the ones that picked me up and said, You’re going, you want to do this journey. We’re going to take you. That’s what you need. So they said, You’re not going to do this alone. We’re going to help you. We’re going to mentor you. And they did. . . . They helped strengthen me.

Carol referred to one of her teachers/coach as an influential teacher in her life and recounted how this teacher also played an important spiritual role in the life of a student. She said, “*I know that ____ was really involved in that girl coming along and having someone just constantly there to help her in her spiritual growth, personal growth.*”

Bennett referenced the authentic nature of teachers and their spirituality as a desired teacher trait.

I always thought that part of the reason that the teachers interacted the way they did with all of us, but with me specifically, was that we had a common faith. And that we were able to talk about spiritual things, which naturally takes your relationship a little bit deeper and makes you feel a little bit more connected. And it sort of goes back to the idea of a lot of the teachers I connected best with, especially if I took a religion class with them, was that they told us about their personal experience and personal faith journey and that helped us as students to feel more connected to those teachers. We could relate or we could respect them for their struggles and experiences they had, having to do with faith and their belief system. And I think that there were some decisions made about ways to teach that did have to do with faith and it did have to do with I'm going to do this because I believe this is the way I believe God intends me to teach this material. Or that, I believe that I am going to be able to connect with these students best.

When asked what advice she would give to someone who wanted to be a teacher of TCKs, Grace had quite a bit to say about the spiritual standards she expects of teachers.

P: I feel especially for missionary teachers or people going for TCKs. They have to live out what they're saying, what they're teaching. Because they come there and they're being like the ultimate example for us. They're missionaries who are coming there, serving us. And if that's what they're leaving their home country to do, we want to see them do it well and to be excited about their work and be passionate about God and be passionate about what they're doing. So if we see just the opposite of that, we see someone come and they're not integrating faith and learning, they're not really encouraging us and challenging us to go out of our way and do stuff. And that to us is just kind of hypocritical almost. We're seeing someone not living what they're saying they're doing.

I: What's your response when you see someone living like that, to a teacher that lives like that? Or your friends' responses?

P: Well, it frustrates me. . . . It's harder to have respect for them. Because I just want to see . . . genuine people. . . . It's hard to have respect for what they're

telling me to do if they're not doing what they're saying they're doing. So I guess it's harder to learn from them.

Building on this, she recalled how the teacher who had the most influence on her was transparent and open with his students.

He was always encouraging us to serve others, to serve God and you could see in every area of his life, was so transparent before us. He would be telling us, If there's anything in my life that you see that isn't right, tell me. And he was just very real with us.

She went on to comment on why she appreciated this trait:

It's nice to see that they're willing to say, Hey, I'm not always right, because students will see that. We know the teachers aren't perfect and it's just nice for them . . . not to come down at all but just to say, I'm not always perfect. I'm not always right. And just to be kind of humble and that. And then we have so much more respect for them as well.

Sarah noticed that in her school some teachers had better relationships with Christian students and wanted to encourage teachers to not overlook their non-Christian students.

One of the things that I saw as happening to those around me, I don't know if I would technically say that it was negative but actually, I would say it was a negative. It would be as we went on and got into that . . . area of the middle school years, we did have other kids who weren't Christian coming to [School] in those years. Some of them I went on to high school with but it was easy for the teachers to connect with the missionary kids. That was the easiest piece for them. But to have the teachers connect with those other kids who weren't necessarily Christian and didn't come from Christian homes, I saw just in those interactions a little bit, not, they're not connecting enough or they're not connecting in the right ways. Maybe something was framed wrong, in a conversation. Or the whole idea behind doing a memory verse in your Bible class wasn't explained enough to these other kids. I saw a lot of them as comments would be Why do we have to do these memory verses? I'm never going to remember them after this and I'm only learning it for this so that I get my good grade. . . . If they come in as a 6th grader, it's harder to change their mind than if they come in as a 1st grader. So that would be a negative that I saw just from the outside. Some of these kids I went onto high school with [secular international School] and I saw them go back to their old lives. So they didn't really carry anything with them beyond that.

Graphic Representation: Preferred Spiritual Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities of TCK Teachers

In addition to the interview comments, 20 of the 24 participants identified the following spiritually related traits, characteristics, and qualities of the “ideal TCK teacher”:

1. Possesses a mature, strong, passionate, “on-fire,” growing Christian faith; lead or mentor others (18 comments)
2. Lives out their Christian faith as an example and shares their spiritual experiences with students (14 comments)
3. Possesses knowledge of the Bible and spiritual matters to provide advice and wisdom to their students (6 comments)
4. Should practice various Christian virtues such as “love,” “sacrifice,” “forgiveness,” “grace,” and “compassion” (4 comments)
5. Should be leaders/participants in youth groups, Bible studies, retreats or Sunday School (4 comments)
6. Integrates faith in their teaching and challenges students in their thinking and use of knowledge from a spiritual perspective (3 comments)
7. Prays with and for students; has devotions in their classes (3 comments)
8. Is open and respectful of different perspectives and faith practices of non-Christian students (3 comments)

These data further substantiate the primary findings that TCKs desire international Christian school teachers who possess spiritually related qualities and model adult Christian living. See Figure 6.

Ideal TCK Teacher: Spiritual Traits, Characteristics and Qualities of TCK Teachers

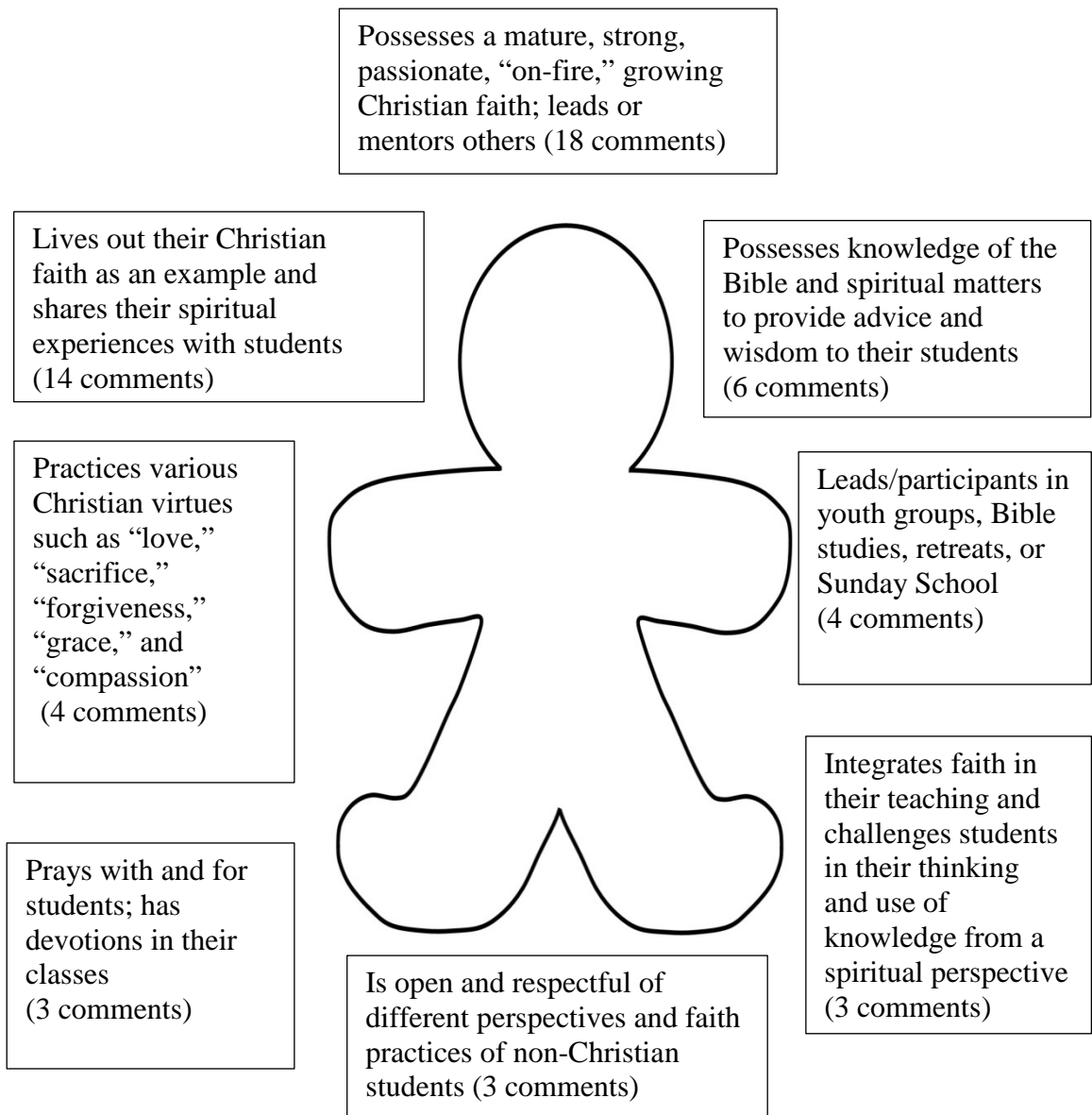


Figure 6. Preferred spiritual traits, characteristics, and qualities of TCK teachers.

CHAPTER 7

SITUATING MAIN FINDINGS IN THE LITERATURE

This study was qualitative in nature employing principles of grounded theory in which 24 American/Canadian Third Culture Kids describe their desired qualities, traits, and characteristics of international Christian school teachers.

Finding 1: TCKs Desire Teachers Who Are Pedagogically Qualified, Trained, and Proficiently Skilled

Finding One stated that TCKs who had attended international Christian schools desire teachers who are pedagogically qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled. Within this finding the participants identified specific teacher traits, characteristics, and qualities defining the finding. Teachers they value demonstrate these qualities in a number of effective ways. To begin with, these teachers are valued as qualified if they were trained through a teacher preparation program and have had real classroom teaching experience beyond their pre-service educational program.

Valued teachers also know how to manage their classrooms for academic success and demonstrate organizational skills. This type of preferred teacher holds students to high academic expectations and demonstrates a desire to be invested in their students' academic success. Thus, they are knowledgeable of their students and their individual academic strengths, are conscious of their performance levels, provide helpful feedback to advance their learning, and are available to assist students. Valued teachers in this finding also know how to create a learning environment which appeals to student

interests and inspires them to learn. This type of teacher demonstrates mastery content knowledge of the subject(s) they teach and find ways to make learning an enjoyable and fun experience. They also demonstrate strong affective teaching skills which are demonstrated by their ability to be in tune with their students' needs and are described as being thoughtful, reflective, and flexible to make changes. They possess the ability to explain concepts and/or convey information well to their students, invite student feedback, and emphasize with their students appropriately. This type of teacher employs various instructional activities and strategies which engage students in the learning process. Such strategies include hands-on and/or life applicable, are project, interactive and/or field based, incorporate subject or topic review games, and provide time for meaningful discussions and/or simulation based learning. Lastly, TCKs greatly value teachers who incorporate cultural experiences or examples and demonstrate a valuing for different cultures.

After a thorough review of the data, I was struck by the blending of the desired teacher pedagogical traits/skills and the affective or positive personal traits/skills identified by the study participants. Combined, *the science and act of teaching* (Pedagogy) and skills associated with positive teacher affect, define an effective teacher. Taken together, these observable skills and actions are defined as teacher dispositions.

Katz and Rath (1985) define *dispositions* as teachers' behavior that "describes trends or summaries of frequencies of given categories of action" (pp. 306-307). They further state that when people discuss teachers as "good" or "bad" they "tend to refer to teacher dispositions rather than their skills" and point out that "good teachers are often described in terms of their dispositions to be accepting, stimulating, encouraging, and so

forth,” while bad teachers are “usually described in terms of dispositions as impatience, remoteness, being rejecting, cold, and so forth” (p. 305).

The concept of teacher dispositions has a murky history in American education but has emerged as a salient definition crafted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). According to an NCATE press release (2007), professional dispositions for teachers are defined as “*professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development*” (<http://www.nea.org/grants/46326.htm>). This definition came after years of development beginning with the term first being used interchangeably with the word “perceptions” in 1969. At that time the prevailing thought was that teachers who possessed certain professional beliefs and attitudes demonstrated more desirable teacher traits (Singh & Stoloff, 2008, p. 1171). The term resurfaced and was inserted into the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Model Standards in 1992 as desired teacher qualities recognized for teacher certification. A few years later the term was codified into the educational jargon by NCATE where it became associated with desired effective teacher traits and qualities of pre- and post-service teachers (Diez, 2007, p. 389). A second, more recent use of the term has found its way into the world of practicing teachers and their performance assessment. In a policy statement on teacher evaluation and accountability, the National Education Association (NEA) states,

All teachers should be regularly evaluated by highly trained evaluators on the basis of clear standards as to what teachers should know and be able to do. Such standards should be high and rigorous and define the rich knowledge, skills,

dispositions and responsibilities of teachers. (National Education Association, 2011)

The focus on this discussion has not been to accentuate a particular definition for teacher dispositions but to acquaint the reader with their importance and how they support the findings from this study. According to Singh and Stoloff (2008), “there is empirical evidence that suggests that teacher inputs have impact on student outcomes. It is also believed that teacher dispositions are as crucial for student achievement as a teacher’s pedagogical and content knowledge/skills” (p. 1169). In this study, Katz and Rath’s (1985) definition of *dispositions* (teacher behaviors which “describe trends or summaries of frequencies of given categories of action”) is used to describe the teacher traits, characteristics, and qualities identified regarding effective or desired international Christian school teachers by the participants in the study.

Describing effective teachers, Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf (2003) state:

Most people would agree that good teachers are caring, supportive, concerned about the welfare of students, knowledgeable about their subject matter, able to get along with parents . . . and genuinely excited about the work that they do. . . . Effective teachers are able to help students learn. (p. 329)

Reynolds (2006) sought to understand why school effectiveness may exist across “country differences” and identified a number of teacher skills, not dispositions, as identified effective practices.

It is clear that many of the factors that have formed the intellectual backbone of the teacher effectiveness research and practice movement internationally, to do with the quality of teachers’ classroom manage, their instruction, and their classroom climate, do explain variation in pupils’ achievement gains in many diverse countries across the world. Indeed, at the level of the discrete behaviors exhibited by teachers, it is factors such as clarity, questioning, high expectations, a commitment to academic achievement, and lesson structuring that have formed the core constructs of the teacher effectiveness tradition that partially explained why the less effective schools of the world differ from the typical and the more effective. (Reynolds, 2006, p. 554)

An investigation of the research on teacher effectiveness reveals that when students rate the effectiveness of teacher practices, they often list characteristics, qualities, or traits that are both skill related as well as dispositional. In an online essay, Thompson, Greer, and Greer (2004) reflect upon Cruickshank et al.'s (2003) description of effective teachers and support the crux of this study when they state, "What teachers have spent years discovering and writing about, our students knew already" (p. 2).

Brown (2004), researching student perceptions of teacher effectiveness, found that students described their teachers as being "knowledgeable, helpful, nice, organized, patient, and as being clear, and teaching for understanding" (p. 59). Delaney's (2009) survey of 451 Canadian high-school students listed 74 teacher characteristics with three important supporting findings within the top five cited: knowledgeable, patient, and organized. Ruddock and Flutter's (2004) interviews with British secondary-school students revealed that students perceived "good teachers" as those who demonstrated the following characteristics:

1. Respectful of students and sensitive to their difficulties in learning
2. Enthusiastic and positive
3. Professionally skilled and expert in their subject (p. 76).

In addition, their research highlighted that students perceive good teachers as those who recognized "pupils' desire to take more responsibility as they grow older" and ensure that "they make all pupils feel confident that they can do well and can achieve something worthwhile" (Ruddock & Flutter, 2004, p. 137). In addition, they stated, "What was striking about pupils' views of the qualities of a good teacher was the consistency across schools" (Ruddock & Flutter, 2004, p. 79).

McCabe's (1995) interview of 12 high-school students identified the following characteristics of effective teachers, which is supportive of what the participants in this study said about their teachers. These include teachers:

1. Who not only care about their subject matter but about students as well
2. Who integrate the cognitive and affective domains of teaching and learning
3. Who have high expectations yet are flexible
4. Who engage students in a variety of learning activities (p. 125).

R. Walker (2008) collected 15 years' worth of college essays written by potential future teachers who identified the "outstanding characteristics" of teachers who had "made the most significant impact" on their lives (p. 61). From these essays he created 12 personal and professional characteristics of effective teachers, four of which match the findings of this study. These include teachers who are:

1. Prepared—Come to class each day ready to teach
2. Positive—Have optimistic attitudes about teaching and about students
3. Hold high expectations—Set no limits on students and believe everyone can be successful
4. Creative—Are resourceful and inventive in how they teach their classes (pp. 64-65).

Over a period of time, University of Memphis education professors, Thompson et al. (2004), asked their college students to tell them about their favorite teacher from whom they were able to learn. They write,

The answers are not surprising. The surprise is the consistency in the answers over time. Semester after semester, we collected data from students enrolled in our classes. At the beginning of a new semester, we engaged our students, all teacher candidates, in a discussion of what characterizes good teaching and

they consistently recalled the very same characteristics year after year. These characteristics of teachers uniformly affect students in a positive way. (p. 1)

From their student data source, they compiled a list of 12 common traits linked to student success: fairness, positive attitude, preparedness, personal touch, sense of humor, creativity, willingness to admit mistakes, forgiving, respect, high expectations, compassion, and sense of belonging (Thompson et al., 2004, pp. 3-7).

Young et al. (1998) presented their survey findings of 108 high-school students, 109 college freshmen, and 104 college seniors in education classes regarding the “characteristics, methodology, and effectiveness of their teachers in general” (p. 3). The high-school student findings, when separated from the college students, revealed the following effective teaching characteristics were identified as “very important” or “important” at the 70% level (adjusted) or above (see Table 2).

The results, when factored for which statements were rated higher for the categories of “somewhat important” or “not important,” revealed the following teacher practices ranked highest to lowest. See Table 3.

In their book, *How to Improve Your School: Giving Pupils a Voice*, Rudduck and Flutter (2004) found that students engaged with learning if the teacher created lessons that provided:

1. Opportunities for participation and engagement such as working in groups or pairs
2. Active lessons with a variety of learning tasks
3. A challenge that was exciting but not overwhelming
4. Opportunities to exercise autonomy (p. 79).

Table 3

High-School Teacher Characteristics: Important/Very Important

Statement Rated	Total %	Very Important	Important
Teacher who is knowledgeable	91.50	63.20	28.30
Study guides provided before tests	89.30	53.40	35.90
Amount learned in the course	86.10	47.20	38.90
Assignment of major paper or project	85.20	50.00	35.20
Class discussions	83.00	35.80	47.20
Instructor inspiring me to think deeply	79.50	42.10	37.40
Volume/clarity of instructor's voice	78.80	39.80	38.90
Using visual aids and technology	74.70	30.80	43.90
Friendliness of instructor	72.00	37.40	34.60
Working with other students in groups	69.90	27.40	42.50

Table 4

High School Teacher Characteristics: "Somewhat/Not Important"

Statement Rated	Total %	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Instructor moving and gesturing	59.40	31.10	28.30
Calling on students	58.50	39.60	18.90
Humor in the classroom	38.90	25.00	13.90
Parent/teacher communication	38.30	22.40	15.90
Number of outside assignments	37.00	29.60	7.40
Difficulty of the tests	35.50	23.40	12.10
Getting course information without reading	34.60	23.40	11.20
Number of tests taken	32.70	24.30	8.40

They further state, "Pupils' accounts of what helps them to learn and what gets in the way of their learning can provide a practical agenda for improving teaching and learning" (p. 133).

Brown (2004) surveyed and interviewed students and teachers at the high-school level to learn how they perceived teacher effectiveness. According to her data analysis,

the most frequent strengths reported by students included their teachers as being knowledgeable, having clarity or being able to explain the subject matter well, having a sense of humor and making class fun, teaching for understanding, being helpful, caring, nice, organized and patient. (p. 37)

Marzano and Pickering (2011) identify that a teacher's positive demeanor is "the second and most general influence on emotional engagement" of her/his students and is evidence through the enthusiasm and teaching intensity they display (p. 5). This includes telling personal stories (p. 30), demonstrating a "zest for teaching" (p. 31) and integrating appropriate humor in their classrooms (p. 32). According to the authors, the inclusion of these and other strategies effectively engages students in the learning process. This is further supported by Thibodeau and Hillman's (2003) comparative study analyzing the comments of pre-service and newly retired teachers to discern the teacher actions that made a difference in the lives of students. The categories receiving the highest percentage of responses from both groups were Instructional Skills (42.28%) and Personality and Respectful Treatment of Students (23.50% and 21.54% respectively).

Similarly, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (Plunkett, 2006) measurements regarding teacher excellence lists a set of teacher skills and characteristics which include:

1. Accomplished teachers base their instruction on knowledge of child development.
2. They are committed to students and their learning.
3. They know the subjects they are teaching and how to teach them to diverse learners.

4. They are able to effectively organize the learning environment to engage students in the learning process and to sustain their learning so that instructional goals are met.

5. Accomplished teachers are active members of learning communities; they systematically review and improve their practice and learn from their experiences, and they are aware of the policies and resources that can benefit their students (Plunkett, 2006, p. 25). Plunkett further states that in her own research regarding the characteristics of highly qualified teachers, both administrators and teachers agreed that “pedagogy, intrinsic qualities, content knowledge, and engaging students are all necessary characteristics of highly qualified teachers” (p. 68).

According to Charlotte Danielson (2010), teachers should employ various strategies to engage learners that:

1. Provide students with interesting “puzzles” needing solutions.
2. Provide students with opportunities to think and reason things throughout, to be creative, to analyze information, and to recognize patterns and connections.
3. Offer students an opportunity to work together.
4. Allow students some choice in what they will do (p. 81).

Further support in this area is added by James Stronge (2010b) who identified seven instructional strategies practiced by effective teachers. These involve the teacher:

1. Staying “involved with the lesson at all stages” and making necessary adjustments based on student feedback
2. Using a “variety of instructional strategies”
3. Using “research-based” and “student-centered” learning strategies

4. Involving the “students in cooperative learning” activities to foster “higher-order thinking”
5. Employing the use of teaching strategies that activate “students’ prior knowledge in an inquiry-based, hands-on” approach that “facilitates student learning”
6. Meeting individual student-learning needs through the use of “remediation, skills-based instruction, and individualized instruction”
7. “Using multiple levels of questioning aligned with students’ cognitive abilities within appropriate techniques” (Stronge, 2010b, p. 46).

Stronge further states:

There is no single classroom practice that is necessarily effective with all subject matter and all grade levels. Effective instruction involves a dynamic interplay among content to be learned, pedagogical method applied, characteristics of individual learners and the context in which the learning is to occur. (2010b, p. 46)

In Elaine McEwan’s (2001) book, *10 Traits of Highly Effective Teachers: How to Hire, Coach, and Mentor Successful Teachers*, she identifies 10 traits of highly effective teachers within three categories:

1. *Personal Traits That Signify Character:*

- a. Mission Driven and Passionate: “The effective teacher is mission driven, feeling a ‘call’ to teach as well as a passion to help students learn and grow” (p. 9).
- b. Positive and Real: “The highly effective teacher is positive and real, demonstrating the qualities of caring, empathy, respect and fairness in relationships with students, parents, and colleagues” (p. 10).
- c. A Teacher-Leader: “The highly effective teacher is a ‘teacher-leader’ who positively affects the lives of students, parents, and colleagues” (p. 11).

2. *Teaching Traits That Get Results:*

a. With-It-Ness: “The highly effective teacher demonstrates with-it-ness – the state of being on top of, tuned in to, aware of, and in complete control of three critical facets of classroom life: the management and organization of the classroom; the engagement of students; and, the management of time” (McEwan, 2001, p. 13).

b. Style: “The effective teacher exhibits a personal unique style, bringing drama, enthusiasm, liveliness, humor, charisma, creativity, and novelty to teaching” (p. 14).

c. Motivational Expertise: “The highly effective teacher is a motivator par excellence who believes in his or her own ability to make a difference in the lives of students and relentlessly presses and pursues students to maintain the highest possible behavioral and academic expectations” (p. 16)

d. Instructional Effectiveness: “The highly effective teacher is an instructional virtuoso: a skilled communicator with a repertoire of essential abilities, behaviors, models, and principles that lead all students to learning” (p. 17).

3. *Intellectual Traits That Demonstrate Knowledge, Curiosity, and Awareness:*

a. Book Learning: “The highly effective teacher has a sound knowledge of content (the structure of the discipline) and outcomes (what the school, district, or state has determined is essential for students to know)” (p. 18).

b. Street Smarts: “The highly effective teacher has knowledge of the students, the school, and the community in which that teacher is teaching and uses this knowledge to solve problems in the instructional setting” (p. 19).

c. A Mental Life:

The highly effective teacher has a substantive thought life that includes the abilities to be the following: Metacognitive: able to read one’s own mental state and then assess how that state will affect one’s present and future performance; Strategic: able to think aloud and model strategic learning for students; Reflective: able to think about personal teaching behaviors for the purposes of self-growth; Communicative: able to articulate ideas, issues, beliefs, and values about the act of teaching with colleagues, students, and parents; Responsive: able to ‘flex’ to changing needs and demands of the profession. (McEwan, 2001, p. 20)

Effective teachers not only know how to teach, they also know how important it is to connect with their students to enhance their learning. Danielson (2009, 2010) emphasizes that teaching is immensely hard and complex work and states that it is emotionally challenging in that “the more caring a teacher is the more demanding his or her work will be” (2009, p. 7). According to Stronge and Hindman (2006), “student learning is increased when students are taught by well-prepared professionals who integrate their knowledge of instruction with a deep sense of caring about the individual students they teach” (p. 13). Stronge further supports this in his book, *Qualities of Effective Teachers* (2007), in which he draws on the literature from predominate educational researchers and characterizes effective teachers as those who possess a strong set of affective skills, manage and organize the classroom, plan and organize their instructional goals, effectively implement instruction in the classroom, and monitor student achievement. This is supported by Danielson (2010) who believes that teachers who create “a purposeful, organized classroom environment” do so through the respectful

relationships they build with their students in making the classroom a safe learning environment (p. 98).

He also provides formative evidence that effective teachers need to be pedagogically qualified. This is an important point because many of the study participants identified non-trained teachers as less than desirable. According to Stronge (2007),

Studies support the finding that fully prepared teachers understand how students learn and what and how they need to be taught. In addition, their background knowledge of pedagogy makes them better able to recognize individual student needs and customize instruction to increase overall student achievement. (p. 5)

Stronge (2007) admonishes that individuals trained through alternative teacher education programs and individuals with no formal teacher training are less desirable as classroom teachers. According to him, “there is little research on the long-term effects of alternatively prepared teachers, but studies indicate that they may have more initial difficulty in the classroom than traditionally prepared teachers” (p. 5). He further insists that teachers who have no formal teacher training are extremely limited compared to teachers who have been formally trained.

Teachers who are not formally prepared to teach know little about how children grow, learn, and develop or about how to support learning differences. Teachers with little or no coursework in education consistently have difficulties in the areas of classroom management, curriculum development, student motivation, and specific teaching strategies. They are less able to anticipate student knowledge and potential difficulties, or to plan and redirect the lesson to meet the individual needs of the students. (Stronge, 2007, p. 6)

Amalia Nickle’s (2007) story lends supports to Stronge’s beliefs about untrained and unqualified teachers. Writing about her experience as an international Christian school teacher, she stated her beliefs about teachers this way. “I believe that degrees are ‘inherently education’ and that only informal teacher training is needed. Thus, I think that

a bachelor's degree in education may not be necessary or helpful" (Nickle, 2007, p. 3).

However, later in the article she shares from her experience and the frustrations she encounters and states,

I have observed several disadvantages to teaching without any formal training. Although I have had an amazing experience, I have struggled. I break down and cry at least once a week. And I question what on earth could possibly make this all worthwhile. I have made a lot of mistakes in my teaching. Because I am unorganized, managing classroom time and making lesson plans have been obstacles. I get too flighty in my class and become carried away with my passion for the subject. I sometimes rant about topics that the students cannot understand. . . . I wish I had learned how to organize my lectures and assignments more efficiently. . . . If I had known when I began teaching here what I know now, I would have tried to take some correspondence education courses to gain more tools to work with, and I would have sat in on my mom's ESL classes to pick up some tips. (pp. 8-9)

Linda Darling-Hammond (2003), reviewing the research on attrition rates of teachers, writes, "A growing body of evidence indicates that teachers who lack adequate initial preparation are more likely to leave the profession" and that "29 percent of new teachers who did not participate in a student teaching experience" along with 49% of "uncertified entrants . . . compared to 14 percent of certified entrants" left the profession within 5 years (pp. 9-10).

Novice teachers, trained or untrained, face numerous difficulties and thus they teach differently than experienced teachers. Fuller (1969, as cited in Weasmer, Wood, & Coburn, 2008) stated that "novice teachers center on themselves and their survival in the classroom, and as they develop mastery and confidence their focus shifts to content. Eventually, they become alerted to means of facilitating students' learning" (Fuller, 1969, as cited in Weasmer, Wood, & Coburn, 2008, p. 22).

Pointing to the “important outcomes related to educational coursework in teacher preparation,” Stronge (2007) builds his case for professionally trained and qualified teachers by stating,

1. A teacher’s formal pedagogical preparation has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement, especially in the areas of mathematics, science, and reading.

2. A teacher’s subject-matter expertise supports student learning up to a point, but educational coursework appears to have a substantive value-added influence on student achievement.

3. Teachers prepared in schools of education demonstrate stronger classroom-management skills and can better relate content to the needs and interests of students.

4. The ability to apply and integrate knowledge or skills to a particular population in a specific setting is the key characteristic of an effective teacher (Stronge, 2007, pp. 8-9).

Continuing, Stronge (2007), concerning the important relationship of teacher certification and effective teaching, states, “One of the best predictors of low student performance in individual schools is the number of uncertified teachers in the building” and that “teaching a grade level of subject for which a teacher is not certified or has little training may convert a highly qualified and capable teacher into an ineffective one” (Stronge, 2007, p. 8). He then lists various findings from research which provide support for having formally trained and certified teachers in classrooms. These include:

1. Fully prepared and certified teachers have a greater impact on gains in student learning than do uncertified or provisionally certified teachers, especially with minority populations and in urban and rural settings.

2. Teacher certification status and teaching within one's field are positively related to student outcomes.

3. Teachers with certification of some kind (standard, alternative, or provisional) tend to have higher achieving students than teachers working without certification.

4. Students of teachers who hold standard certification in their subjects score from 7 to 10 points higher on 12th-grade math tests than students of teachers with probationary, emergency, or no certification.

5. Some studies have demonstrated relationships between standard certification and teacher practices (e.g., hands-on learning, connections to student experiences). These teacher practices have themselves been found to be effective in supporting student achievement, thus illustrating a possible indirect relationship between traditional certification and student achievement (Stronge, 2007, p. 9).

Stronge (2007) provides further evidence for supporting teachers who are qualified and trained by stating that "teachers with subject matter knowledge are better able to go beyond the basic textbook content and involve students in meaningful discussion and student-directed activities" (p. 10). He also states that "teachers with a major or minor in their content area are associated with higher student achievement, especially in the areas of secondary science and mathematics" and that "teachers with greater subject matter knowledge tend to ask higher-level questions, involve students in lessons, and allow more student-directed activities" (Stronge, 2007, pp. 10-11).

According to Charlotte Danielson (2009), teaching is enormously “complex work involving many dimensions” and is “daunting in its challenges.” She further states that many newly trained teachers “find themselves ill prepared for their first few years” (p. 7). She emphasizes the need for teachers to continually gain additional professional knowledge related to the content area they teach, as well as updating their pedagogical knowledge and practicing skills.

Within this study, participants identified that they desired teachers who were experienced professionals and practitioners. Several participants specifically voiced their displeasure of being taught by individuals who arrived at their schools directly after completing college. This corresponds with their desire for qualified and experienced teachers whom they believe enhance their personal learning. According to Stronge (2007), teaching experiences does matter. He states,

Experienced teachers differ from rookie teachers in that they have attained expertise through real-life experiences, classroom practice, and time. These teachers typically have a greater repertoire of ways to monitor students and create flowing, meaningful lessons. Teachers who are both experienced and effective are experts who know the content and the students they teach, use efficient planning strategies, practice interactive decision making, and embody effective classroom management skills. These experienced and effective teachers are efficient—they can do more in less time than novice educators can. (p. 11)

Stronge (2007) also lists the following research support related to teacher experience:

1. Teachers with more experience tend to show better planning skills, including a more hierarchical and organized structure in the presentation of their material.
2. Effective experienced teachers are better able to apply a range of teaching strategies, and they demonstrate more depth and differentiation in learning activities.

3. Experienced teachers tend to know and understand their students' learning needs, learning styles, prerequisite skills, and interests better than beginners do.

4. Teachers with more than 3 years of experience are more effective than those with 3 years or fewer.

5. Teacher expertise as defined by experience (as well as education and scores on licensing exams) accounts for as much as 40% of the variation in student achievement, which is more than race and socioeconomic status.

6. Schools with more beginning teachers tend to have lower student achievement (Stronge, 2007, p. 12).

As it has already been pointed out in Chapter 2, international schools tend to attract higher performing students due to the higher levels of academics provided and use of English as the medium of instruction. According to Sheard (2008), there are commonalities between Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and gifted children. Stronge's (2007) review of the research and literature on effective teachers of high-ability students or "gifted students mirrors that of the more general research on teacher quality" (p. 15). He further states that "effective teachers of gifted students tend to demonstrate strong communication skills and perform well on tests of verbal ability. They are valued by students for having high intelligence, and intellectual curiosity similar to those of high-ability learners" (p. 15). Stronge also states:

Effective teachers of gifted students are characterized as having in-depth subject-matter knowledge as well as in-depth knowledge of gifted education. This knowledge of gifted education includes an understanding of the characteristics of gifted learners, the needs of gifted learners, and effective approaches to instruction for gifted learners. Effective teachers of gifted and talented students are aware of their emotional and social needs as well as their academic needs. (Stronge, 2007, p. 15)

Later, he states that “effective teachers of gifted students are willing to work hard and devote the time necessary to do so” and that effective teachers of gifted and talented students are described as “passionate about their own learning and the learning of their students” (Stronge, 2007, p. 34).

Other effective teacher characteristics Stronge (2007) points to which support Finding One include the following practices:

1. *Self-reflection, self-evaluation, and self-critiquing.* The teachers seek to “constantly improve lessons, think about how to reach particular children, and seek and try out new approaches in the classroom to better meet the needs of their learners” (p. 30).

2. *Classroom management and organizational skills.* The teachers are “thoroughly prepared and keep their students actively involved in the teaching and learning process . . . from the very first day to the last” (p. 40), are “organized in terms of routines, behaviors, and materials typically is better prepared for class and sets an example of organization for students that supports their learning” (p. 42), and “set and reinforce clear expectations for student behavior” (p. 45).

3. *Focus on instruction, maximizing instructional time, expecting students to achieve, and planning and preparing for instruction.* The teachers “recognize[s] academic instruction as central to his or her role” which “comes across clearly to students and represents the major element in a robust learning environment” (p. 53). Additionally, they “prioritize instruction” and “remain involved with the students during the entire class period from start to finish, allowing for no idle or down time” (p. 54); they understand that “student academic performance is influenced” by the teacher’s

“expectations and goals for student achievement” (p. 56), and plan for instruction and then follow their “instructional or lesson plan while continuously adjusting it to fit the needs of different students” (p. 57).

4. *Use a variety of instructional strategies and practices.* Research indicates that “students whose teachers develop and regularly integrate inquiry-based problems, hands-on learning activities, critical thinking skills, and assessments into daily lessons consistently outperform their peers” (Stronge, 2007, p. 67).

5. *Communicate high expectations for learning while supporting student engagement in learning.* The teacher “expects students to learn” and “they take the responsibility to make sure all students do learn” by setting “high standards” and providing a “challenging curriculum for all students” (p. 71). They also support and keep students engaged in learning by incorporating “varying strategies, including calling on students in random order, providing any necessary additional clarification and illustration, and finding something positive to say when students do respond or interact” in their teaching (pp. 76-77).

6. *Understand the complexities of teaching and use appropriate questioning techniques.* The teacher recognizes the “dynamic and complex entity” which exists among the students in their classroom and “plans and practices for managing the environment, and preparation and differentiation for student learning needs” (Stronge, 2007, p. 74). They encourage “students to respond to questions and activities that require them to discover and assimilate their own understanding, rather than to simply memorize material” (p. 74) and engage students in various levels of complexity, using a broad range of objectives and activities and employing activities and questions that address higher and

lower levels of cognitive complexity. They scaffold lessons to guide students in their emerging skill and knowledge acquisition through step-by-step instructions, modeling, and opportunities to apply new information and skills to novel situations” (Stronge, 2007, pp. 75). They also employ good questioning skills which allow for students to formulate answers, rightly or wrongly, vary the cognitive level of questions asked, and use appropriate “wait time” to increase student participation (pp. 75-76).

7. *Monitor student achievement, use appropriate assessments, and provide meaningful feedback.* Effective teachers “not only assess student learning during and after instruction, but also assess student knowledge of content and skills to be taught prior to instruction” so they can “adapt their instruction to meet the students where they are” (Stronge, 2007, p. 91). In addition, they “use a variety of assessment practices to monitor student learning, including formal and informal assessments and formative and summative assessments” (p. 91) and provide “clear, specific, and timely feedback” throughout the “learning process,” which is “supportive and encouraging to students” (p. 90). They also “reteach material to students who did not achieve mastery” (p. 90).

Each of the above-mentioned effective teacher characteristics supports what the participants in this study identified as teachers they desire who are pedagogically qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled.

Robert Marzano (2003), a respected educational researcher, states that the “effective teachers have a profound influence on student achievement and ineffective teachers do not” (p. 75). Dean and Marzano (2012), writing in the second edition of *Classroom Instruction That Works: Researched-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, state that “one of the most important influences on student achievement is

the relationship between the teacher and students.” They go on to explain that such teachers

hold high expectations for their students, convey these expectations to their students, and help their students meet these expectations. They design learning activities that are worthy of students’ effort, are relevant to students’ lives, and require higher-order thinking. (Dean & Marzano, 2012, p. xx)

In Marzano’s (2003) book, *What Works in Schools: Translating Research Into Action*, he identifies three teacher-level factors that increase student learning:

instructional strategies, classroom management, and classroom curriculum design. He states, “The expert teacher has more strategies at her disposal than the ineffective teacher” (p. 87). Referencing classroom management he writes,

Although classroom management is on nearly every list of factors associated with student achievement, it is not a simple construct. Four integrated aspects of this factor were identified: establishing and enforcing a comprehensive list of rules and procedures, using disciplinary interventions that strike a balance between positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior and negative consequences for inappropriate behavior, establishing relationships with students that involve appropriate levels of dominance and cooperation, and developing the mental dispositions of withitness and an emotional objectivity toward students. (p. 105)

Lastly, he recommends that as teachers design the curriculum they use in their classrooms that they:

1. Identify and articulate the specifics of content
2. Ensure that students have multiple exposures to the content
3. Identify procedures to be mastered
4. Structure content and tasks using the principle of sameness
5. Engage students in complete tasks that require them to address content in

unique ways (Marzano, 2003, p. 120).

Drawing from MacDonald and Healy's (1999) book: *A Handbook for Beginning Teachers*, Ellen Black, in Braley, Layman, and White (2003), lists the following characteristics of effective teachers:

1. Willingness to be flexible, to be direct or indirect as the situation demands
2. Ability to perceive the world from the students' point of view
3. Ability to personalize one's teaching
4. Willingness to experiment, to try out new things
5. Skill in asking questions (as opposed to seeing oneself as a kind of answering service)
6. Knowledge of subject matter and related areas
7. Provision of well-established examination procedures
8. Provision of definite study helps
9. Demonstration of appreciative attitudes (evidenced by nods, comments, smiles, etc.)
10. Use of conversational manner in teaching—informal, easy style (p. 156).

T. Lee (2006) sought to identify the additional competencies, beyond what teachers received in their education training programs, which would be necessary for elementary teachers to be effective in Taiwan. Drawing from the literature on effective teachers, he highlighted that “excellent teachers know how to motivate their students to achieve their potential, use group interaction in classes to promote student collaborations, and never rank students by grade” (p. 21). He also stated that “quality teachers know their subjects very well, maintain currency in the subjects, and provide meaningful learning for their students” (p. 21). Furthermore, he identified that

expert teachers could evaluate student performance by lessons rather than by classroom management, create their own teaching style and instruction, recognize each student's level in order to provide suitable instruction, and were aware of their own mistakes and are more willing to make adjustments. Quality teachers exhibit their teaching effectiveness with their knowledge and skills in teaching, and becoming lifetime learners who keep their teaching profession at a state of the art level. (Lee, 2006, p. 21)

Daniels and Arapostathis (2005) interviewed and observed reluctant learners attending an alternative school to determine ways for teachers to create meaningful learning environments for such students. Through their research they discovered that “when teachers plan learning activities that are challenging and provide students with opportunities to learn the skills necessary for success, they create motivating learning environments and make it more likely that students will engage and find happiness” (p. 50). Marzano and Pickering (2011) state that using “games and inconsequential competition” that are academically focused can “help trigger and maintain situational interest” among students (p. 57).

In their book, *Teaching in a Distant Classroom: Crossing Borders for Global Transformation*, authors Michael Romanowski and Teri McCarthy (2009) provide assistance to individuals without formal teacher training who desire to teach overseas in higher education or TESOL programs. They devote an entire chapter to providing an overview of excellent qualities of teachers. According to them, these include:

1. Good teachers know what they are teaching.
2. Good teachers know how to teach their subject.
3. Good teachers are credible and trustworthy.
4. Good teachers are flexible.
5. Good teachers promote active learning in students.
6. Good teachers have high expectations.

7. Good teachers create a positive learning environment.
8. Good teachers enjoy teaching.
9. Good teachers have a sense of humor (Chapter 7).

The literature regarding effective teachers further provides evidence of support for Finding One of this study: TCKs desire teachers who are professionally qualified, trained, and proficiently skilled.

In addition to the above-mentioned teacher qualities and characteristics of effective teachers, one additional area is important in respect to teachers of international Christian schools. That is, that they demonstrate appropriate skill levels associated with being culturally proficient. By virtue of the letter “C” in TCK, the participants in this study, like all TCKs, value culture and cultural differences. Therefore, they expressed a desire to have teachers who also value culture and cultural differences as they do. It should go without saying that cultural proficiency is an important skill for overseas living. According to Romanowski and McCarthy (2009), “it is important to understand that other cultures view the world much differently than you do, and this affects the classroom dramatically” (p. 150). Wallis’s (2006) study of a first-year teacher at an American overseas school revealed that although the teacher possessed competent teaching skills, she was ill-prepared to live successfully abroad and make the necessary adjustments in her teaching practices and attitudes towards her non-American students, their parents, and the overseas culture. The researcher attributed this to a set of misguided reasons behind her desire to teach overseas (pp. 277-278), lack of training, and American ethnocentrism (pp. 286-287).

Hartt (1995) declares that many teachers taking jobs in overseas schools “are not prepared for the challenges that face them,” especially the “challenges of third culture student issues” (p. 2). He further states that the success in retaining new teachers “often depends on how well the new teachers have made cultural adjustments” (pp. 39-40).

The European Council of International Schools and University of Cambridge International Examinations jointly created the International Teacher Certification (ITC) to address the purposes of, and differences that exist within, the cultural makeup of international schools. This teacher certificate addresses six standards specifically aimed at helping teachers become effective international educators. These are:

1. International Education in Context
2. Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms
3. Multiculturalism
4. Student Characteristics and Learning
5. Transition, Internationalizing Curricula
6. The Reflective International Teacher (Snowball, 2007, pp. 248-253).

For international school teachers, the lack of multicultural understanding of one’s students can be more than problematic. Bennett (1979) states that

the greater the differences between the world view of the teacher and students, the more likely it is that students’ and teachers’ preferred ways of communicating and participating are different. Those teachers who are unaware of their pupils’ needs and preferences force the learner to do most of the adjusting. Those pupils who can’t make the adjustment can’t learn much in the classroom. (p. 265)

The need to frame instruction within a culturally sensitive manner is vitally important for the international school teacher. Joslin (2002) reminds teachers that differences between teaching in a mono-cultural and international setting do indeed exist.

The teacher can present to a national group of students a topic from a national perspective and the students will probably accept that interpretation without question. In the international school, the international teacher must present the topic to a multinational group of students and consider many interpretations of the topic content. . . . Therefore the unique population of the international school necessitates that the teacher is able to accommodate a range of cultural interpretations leading to a broader understanding of phenomena from different cultural perspectives. *Any teacher who is unable to accommodate a range of cultural interpretations in the teaching and learning environment could be viewed as an obstacle to the international school students' realization of a meaningful experience* [italics added]. (Joslin, 2002, p. 43)

McDougal (2005) sought to “determine the common characteristics of effective teachers of successful students of color” and wanted to “gain a better understanding of the professional practices employed by these teachers” (p. 6). According to her research, these teachers demonstrated many of the same effective teacher qualities espoused by Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001), Stronge (2007), and McEwan (2001). According to McDougal’s (2005) research, these teachers demonstrated “excellent classroom management skills keeping students on task and engaged in the learning process” and focused on “classroom time on teaching and learning and are consistent in maintaining procedures and routines” (p. 119). They also were found to “utilize a variety of instructional strategies, emphasize reading as a priority, provide clear examples, and utilize instructional strategies that address different learning styles with emphasis on high order thinking skills” (p. 119). They were also effective in the way they monitored “student progress through guided practice during class time, homework, quizzes and tests” and provided “students with timely and meaningful feedback” (p. 120). In addition, and of interesting note was the cultural background of these most effective teachers. Her data revealed that the majority of them were “either of color themselves,” “transracial, or [had] lived in countries other than the United States”; an indication of their cultural proficiency. These teachers could also be classified as a “cross-culturally competent

person” as defined by Irvine and McAllister (2002), citing Gudykunst and Kim’s (1984) definition as someone:

who has achieved an advanced level in the process of becoming intercultural and whose cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics are not limited but are open to growth beyond the psychological parameters of only one culture. . . . The intercultural person possesses an intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans and, at the same time, accepts and appreciates the differences that lie between people of different cultures. (Irvine & McAllister, 2002, p. 4)

Robins (2002) constructs a continuum which includes six phases of a cultural proficiency. She identifies the final two stages as “cultural precompetence” in which a person’s “behavior or practices . . . seek to acknowledge cultural differences in healthy ways but that are not quite effective,” and “cultural competence” where “effective interactions with individuals and groups of people from different ethnic and social cultures; use of the essential elements as the standards for individual behavior and organizational practice” are evident (p. 126).

According to James Banks (2006), teachers typically fall within four levels of “cross-cultural function.” These include, (a) superficial, brief, and individualistic cross-cultural interactions/experiences; (b) the assimilation of symbols and characteristics of an outside group into their lives; (c) an advancement toward biculturalism and; (d) complete assimilation into a new culture (p. 58). Although Banks conceptualizes his model within an American-centered multicultural learning environment, it can be expanded and applied to levels of cross-cultural function for TCK teachers as well. He believes that schools should “help students develop three kinds of highly interrelated identifications . . . cultural, a national, and a global identification.” He states that

individuals who have positive cultural, national, and global identifications evaluate their cultural, national, and global communities highly and are proud of these identifications. They have both the desire and competencies needed to take actions that will support and reinforce the values and norms of their cultural, national, and global communities. Consequently, the school should not only be concerned about helping students develop reflective cultural, national, and global identifications; it should also help them acquire the cross-cultural competencies (which consist of knowledge, attitudes, and skills) needed to function effectively within their cultural, national, and world communities. (pp. 29-30)

As has already been pointed out in Chapter 2, within an international school setting, these areas of cross-cultural proficiency would already be established, or at least under development at various stages for most TCKs attending the school. Thus, the development and practice of such cross-cultural competencies would be equally important for a teacher to gain and put into effect within an international school. This is supported by Cattanach (2007) who writes,

Changes in how the roles of international educators are being enacted are necessary and inevitable if international educators want to succeed in multiculturalized and globalized classrooms full of third culture kids. To play the roles in the very real world in which they have been cast, international educators need to become familiar with their own culture as well as who TCKS are and the cultures in which they live. (p. 4)

Hartt (1995) found that American overseas teachers who demonstrated greater levels of flexibility and adaptability had a “longer and more enjoyable” teaching experience (p. 97). D. Lee (2005) highlighted that international teachers were more “cross culturally adaptive” than non-international teachers and were “highly engaged” in school and cultural activities, and taught using various culturally responsive approaches. These same teachers also possessed great passion and commitment.

According to Brown and Kysilka (2002), “good teaching implies solid learning by all students, and such learning does not happen when the heritages, experiences, interests, and needs of the individual student are not taken into account”; therefore, “effective

teachers try to learn as much as possible about their students” (p. 23). This supports Wardle and Cruz-Janzen’s (2004) belief that “teachers must be prepared to work in affirming ways with all students” (p. 184).

According to Gay (2002), there is a level of “culturally responsive caring” that takes place among teachers who are culturally proficient. This “places teachers in an ethical, emotional, and academic partnership with ethnically diverse students, a partnership that is anchored in respect, honor, integrity, resource sharing, and a deep belief in the possibility of transcendence” (p. 109).

The literature regarding multi-cultural teaching, culturally responsive teaching, and/or teachers or cultural proficiency support the findings that TCKs value international school teachers who demonstrate culturally responsive behaviors.

Finding 2: TCKs Desire ICS Teachers Who Are Highly Engaged and Build Meaningful Relationships

In this study, TCKs identified that they value teachers who possess strong relational skills, make students their priority for being at the school, take time to get to know their students, and make meaningful connections with them. According to the participants interviewed, teachers accomplished this by listening and advising students; demonstrating qualities of caring, friendship, and mentoring; shared food, fun, and life with their students; were accessible and available to discuss non-academic-related issues; and were involved in extracurricular activities with their students.

Graham (2011) believes in the primacy of positive-meaningful teacher relationships between Christian teachers and their students. He states,

If we are serious enough about teaching to want to actually influence the lives of the children who populate our classrooms, we must first consider the relationship

we seek to create with them. Life change will come about more through that which is personal than professional. (p. 2)

Supporting the importance of meaningful teacher-student relationships, Dean et al. (2012a) state that “teachers who have good relationships with students care about students as people and learners” (p. xx). Danielson (2010) speaks to the importance of caring teachers this way,

The deep caring that teachers express for their students may be reflected in many different styles. Some teachers are warm, with a friendly, joking approach. Others have a stern demeanor, projecting a tough exterior. But beneath all styles is an essential *caring*, an acceptance of the student as valued and worthy of support. (p. 37)

By their given nature, international schools are community activity centers, and close personal relationships are often the norm between teachers and students. In Garii’s (2009) research, she sought to explore the early experiences of international teachers. One of her research participants (Bill) had this to say about his school and the relationships he developed with his students.

Teachers at International Schools develop a lot closer relationships with their students than they do in the United States. You spend more time with them, you’re teaching them, coaching them, and traveling internationally with them for sporting events. International schools tend to be the hub of all social activity for students, teachers, parents and all members of that school community. Therefore, you spend time socially with your students as well as academically. This increased bonding allows the teacher to understand individual student needs at a far greater level than any teacher in the states could ever hope to achieve. (p. 89)

Grappo (2008), writing about transitional difficulties TCKs face, believes that it is important for TCKs to know that “their parent, a teacher or a mentor cares and understands what they are going through” (p. 81).

Ruddock and Flutter’s (2004) interviews with British secondary-school students identified teachers who were viewed good teachers as:

1. Human, accessible, and reliable/consistent
2. Respectful of students and sensitive to their difficulties in learning
3. Enthusiastic and positive
4. Professionally skilled and expert in their subject (p. 76).

Their research also supported Finding Two by revealing that relationships were of vital importance to students. In this regard they highlighted the following:

1. Teachers being available to talk with pupils about learning and school work, not just about behavior
2. Teachers' readiness to engage with pupils in adult ways
3. Teachers being sensitive to the tone and manner of their discourse with pupils, as individuals and in groups, so that they do not criticize them in ways that make them feel small (especially in front of their peers)
4. Teachers being seen to be fair in all their dealings with all pupils
5. Teachers' acceptance, demonstrated in action, that an important aspect of fairness is not prejudging pupils on the basis of past incidents (p. 137).

Likewise, McCabe's (1995) research identified a number of teacher relational skills as student-defined characteristics of effective teachers. These characteristics included teachers who relate well to students in the following ways:

1. Show interest in their students as persons
2. Respect their students and, in turn, are respected by their students
3. Make their students feel a connection with them (p. 125).

R. Walker's (2008) *Twelve Characteristics of an Effective Teacher* also listed a number of teacher relationship skills, which included teachers who:

1. Display a personal touch: Are approachable
2. Cultivate a sense of belonging: Make students feel welcome and comfortable in their classrooms
3. Are compassionate: Demonstrate concern about students' personal problems and can relate to them and their problems
4. Have a sense of humor: Do not take everything seriously and make learning fun
5. Respect students: Give the highest respect, get the highest respect
6. Are forgiving: Do not hold grudges
7. Admit mistakes: Are quick to admit being wrong (Walker, 2008, pp. 65-66).

The survey results, compiled by Young et al. (1998), revealed that 72% of the high-school students who took their survey identified the “friendliness of the instructor” as “very important” or “important” with 61% of the students identifying the teachers’ use of “humor in the classroom” as “very important” or “important” (p. 4). Rudduck and Flutter (2004) state that “if pupils feel that they matter in school and that they are respected, then they are more likely to commit themselves to the school’s purposes” and that “if teaching and the conditions of learning are experienced as congenial then pupils are more likely to commit themselves to learning and develop positive identities as learners” (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004, p. 133). Marzano and Pickering (2011), concurring with Rudduck and Flutter, state, “If students perceive that the teacher respects and likes them, they are more likely to attend to classroom content” (p. 36). They further state that

one of the most interesting aspects of powerful teacher-student relationships is that they are forged by behavior and words as opposed to thoughts and feelings. Stated differently, it is not what a teacher thinks and feels about a particular student that forges a positive relationship with the student. Rather, it is how the

teacher speaks to and behaves with the student that communicates respect and acceptance. (Marzano & Pickering, 2011, p. 36)

According to Nancy McCabe (1995), the best teachers are friendly, and possess and sense of humor (p. 126). The human dynamic supported in the findings of Young et al. (1998) where high-school students also identified the teacher's "friendliness, and use of humor" as effective teacher qualities. High-school students responding to Delaney's (2009) survey listed teachers being "humorous" and "respectful" as two of the top five valued teacher characteristics. Marzano and Pickering (2011) also identify the use of humor and respect for students as an important teaching attribute.

Both McEwan (2001) and Stronge (2007) identify relational qualities as a trait of effective teachers. McEwan's (2001) second trait of effective teachers, *Positive and Real*, paints the picture of an effective teacher who is respectful, caring, empathetic, fair, positive, and real with their students. Referencing the numerous daily exchanges teachers have with students, she writes, "These personal exchanges can either become the glue that bonds students and teachers together, or the sparks that ignite indifference, anger, and fear on both sides of the desk" (p. 31). She further stresses that the traits which make a teacher

positive and real . . . are like pieces of a puzzle. When assembled, they reveal what Stephen Covey (1991) calls "a moral compass" (p. 95). This compass does not point north, south, east, and west, but rather to goodness, truth, justice, and authenticity. Every highly effective teacher has a moral compass and uses it daily by being respectful, caring, empathetic, and fair. (p. 31)

Stronge (2007) dedicates an entire chapter to the teacher as a person and identifies the associated effective teaching qualities as caring, being fair and respectful, and engaging with students. According to him, "specific teacher attributes that show caring include listening, gentleness, understanding, knowledge of students as individuals,

nurturing, warmth and encouragement, and an overall love for children” (p. 23).

Likewise, Danielson (2010) emphasizes the importance for teachers to know their students individually (p. 47) and to demonstrate qualities of caring toward them (p. 37).

Knight (2006) believes that “one of the most beneficial gifts teachers can offer their students is the gift of companionship in work and play. It is important to build relationships outside the classroom if teachers are to be successful inside of it” (p. 220). According to him, these kinds of “personal relationships with students lead to understanding on part of both parties” (pp. 220-221).

Within the British education system, the emphasis of pupil care has been well established for over a century. According to Lang (1983), the concept of “pastoral care” had its beginnings in the 19th century “when public schools came to recognize the teacher’s responsibility for the general and moral welfare of the pupils” (p. 55). Calvert (2009) explains that in the most common definition of pastoral care, one finds that it includes a concern for students’ “personal and social development” and “fostering positive attitudes” through quality academic and meaningful personal encounters students have with teachers and other adults associated with the school (Calvert, 2009, p. 268). Van Brummelen (2009) contributes to the discussion of caring for students when he writes,

Teachers care about their students. That means that they not only create a warm and supportive tone in their classrooms (“love your neighbor as yourself”), but they also provide an environment in which students will develop their talents to make a positive contribution to the classroom and to their future life contexts. Caring has both interpersonal and curricular implications, and they must complement each other. (p. 181)

As has already been referenced, Thompson et al. (2004) compiled a list of 12 effective characteristics every teacher should possess. In their concluding remarks they identify the theme of “caring” as central to these identified traits:

These twelve characteristics—displaying fairness, having a positive outlook, being prepared, using a personal touch, possessing a sense of humor, possessing creativity, admitting mistakes, being forgiving, respecting students, maintaining high expectations, showing compassion, and developing a sense of belonging for students—center around the theme of caring. When demonstrated by classroom teachers, our students remembered school in a positive way. (p. 7)

The concept of effective teaching and expressed care for students is a strong pedagogical and effective combination. Nell Noddings (1992) observes that “the desire to be cared for is almost certainly a universal human characteristic” (p. 17). In her book *Happiness and Education*, Noddings (2003) states that teachers need to “create caring relationships” with their students (p. 18) recognizing that “students will do things for teachers who care is regularly demonstrated, and caring involves responding to the expressed needs of the cared for” (p. 242).

Knight (2006), writing about Christian teachers, points to the “social characteristics found in the life of Christ” as examples they should model before their students. His list includes: “tactfulness, patience, sympathy, insight into the problems of others, the ability to convey a sense of personal concern to them, ability to gain respect and confidence, firmness when needed, flexibility, and impartiality” (p. 221).

Jupp (2006), writing in the *Annual Editions: Multicultural Education 06/07*, describes his experience of teaching in multicultural settings as an experience of “crossing cultural borders” (p. 53). Jupp offers to the reader theoretical insights which he believes are required to become a culturally relevant teacher including the feminist theory of care. Citing Ladson-Billings (1994), Jupp (2006) states, “Caring relationships in the

classroom ‘encourage students to work in a collective structure’ that focus on developing a community or family feel” and that “teachers engaging in culturally relevant teaching cultivate ‘relationships beyond the boundaries of the classroom’ that move toward church, recreation, and home” (p. 55).

In Daniels and Arapostathis’s (2005) study of reluctant learners, they found that “the relationships between students and teacher influenced the levels of intrinsic motivation and the amount of effort students were willing to exert” and that when students “felt that their teacher was their ally and advocate . . . they also believed that the teacher’s ultimate goal was student success, not failure” (p. 51). Ruddock, Chaplain, and Wallace (1996) found that as British students ended year 8, they defined their “ideal teachers” as persons “who would consult them, make them feel important and treat them in an adult way” (p. 31). They also found that teachers who build trust with their students demonstrate a “willingness of teachers to listen to pupils and respond to their learning needs. This is a matter of communication which requires both parties to know and like each other” (p. 37). In addition, they stated that “it takes time for pupils and teachers to make the necessary relationships for effective teaching and learning” and that new teachers “have to work exceptionally hard to establish themselves” (p. 38). They also found that pupils identified “the importance of interpersonal relationship with understanding teachers who were prepared to listen” and that “without mutual respect and caring in the relationship, pupils can feel that their efforts are futile” (p. 39).

Marzano and Pickering (2011) state that recognizing and acknowledging student concerns “lets students know they are personally important to the teacher” (p. 40). In their book, *How to Improve Your School*, Rudduck and Flutter (2004) highlighted

different kinds of teacher/student interactions they deemed as “caring strong positive tones.” The listing below is a selection from their findings:

1. Teachers being available to talk with pupils about learning and school work, not just behavior
2. Teachers’ readiness to engage with pupils in adult ways
3. Teachers being sensitive to the tone and manner of their discourse with pupils, as individuals and groups
4. Teachers being seen to be fair in all their dealings with all pupils (p. 137).

According to Myers (2010), there is a direct relationship between teachers who practice qualities of mentoring and student performance.

As teachers become more skilled at mentoring, they develop a new approach to their students—one that mixes high expectations with an attitude of warmth, caring, support and acceptance. As it turns out, these skills are conclusively and overwhelming related to student success. (p. 30)

He highlighted a number of student benefits derived from teachers who practice mentoring skills such as:

1. Student’s sense of being liked, respected, and valued by a teacher predicted whether they would value the subject matter and expect success.
2. Students who believed their teacher cared for them believed they learned more.
3. Students’ feelings of being accepted by teachers were significantly related to emotional, cognitive and behavior engagement in class.
4. Teachers who expressed greater warmth tended to develop greater confidence in students.

5. Teachers' nurturing behaviors were related to students' adoption and internalization of teachers' goals and values.

6. Teachers' interpersonal relationship skills were significantly associated with students' achievement, motivation, and self-esteem (Myers, 2010, pp. 30-31).

Stronge (2007) also points out that "respect and equity are identified as the prerequisites of effective teaching in the eyes of students" and that such teachers "know and understand the facts before responding to any disciplinary situation, and then tell the students specifically what they did wrong" and "they tell students what they need to do right" (p. 25). This also lends to the need to ensure "fair and equitable treatment of all students," which according to Marzano and Pickering (2011) "can forge positive relationships with each student as well as encourage strong peer relationships" (p. 36).

McEwan (2001) states that effective teachers shared "a belief in the importance of creating a positive, caring learning environment through the development of relationships with students" and they accomplish this by "participating in extra-curricular activities serving as athletic coaches, club advisors, and tutors and through the development of positive working relationships with their students in the classroom" (p. 119). Stronge (2007) also states the importance of positive teacher/student interactions as a trait of an effective teacher.

Effective teachers use a wide variety of strategies to interact with students. However, the basis for these interactions goes beyond the four walls of the classroom. In fact, students reveal that effective teachers demonstrate interest in students' lives beyond the classroom. Teachers who attend sporting events, concerts, and other special programs in which their students participate are valued by their students. Additionally, researchers contend that constructive social interactions between teachers and students not only contribute to student learning and achievement, but also increase student self-esteem by fostering feelings of belonging to the classroom and school. (p. 26)

The concept of “fostering feelings of belonging” is vitally important to the identity development of TCKs. According to Pollock and Van Reken (2009), “the sense of belonging” for TCKs “is in the relationship to others of similar background” (p. 23). Fail (1996) found that Adult TCKs “rated their strongest sense of belonging in terms of relationships rather than place” (p. 35). Frederick (1996) noted that the international school plays a pivotal role in “fostering feelings of belonging” among TCKs. He states,

Young TCKs are already aware they do not quite “fit” either culture, but their own third culture is a place of security and identity. This place for young TCKs becomes the school environment, which is also a neutral ground, also claiming parts of both cultures. The school becomes the place for the TCK identity development because of the security of others also struggling with the process of balancing all the influences on their lives. (p. 246)

One of the major findings of McDougal’s (2005) research regarding effective teachers of students of color found that the relational skills of teachers played a prominent role in relating to and academically challenging students.

The teachers in this study share a belief in the importance of creating a positive, caring learning environment through the development of relationships with students. They do this by participating in extra-curricular activities serving as athletic coaches, club advisors, and tutors and through the development of positive working relationships with their students in the classroom. (p. 119)

McCabe (1995) states that “in a holistic way, the best teachers are also considered somewhat of a friend and create a sense of community and bonding within the class” (p. 126). Cattnach (2007) advances this idea of teacher-friend. Using data collected from survey responses from 110 TCKs, most of whom had or were attending an international Christian school, and 36 practicing educators in international Christian schools, she created a comparison analysis reflecting the differing priorities between TCKs’ perceptions of their needs and practicing educators’ perceptions of TCK needs. The analysis yielded one statistically

significant finding, which according to her showed that TCKs valued their teachers in “the role of friend,” something the “international educators downplayed in their responses” (p. 3). Explaining this further she states,

When international educators play the role of friend to the fullest extent possible, many of the other roles that they are trying to fulfill in the lives of the TCKs that they work with will fall into place and seem natural rather than forced. Roles such as mentor, teacher of life, role model, guide, encourager, listener, fan, moral instructor, and spiritual leader will have a greater likelihood of coming across to TCKs as real and genuine and honest if international educators are open enough to being true friends. (p. 4)

Interestingly, there are a number of similarities between the desire of TCKs to be mentored and that of the current American generation referred to as *Millennials*. Myers (2010), writing about Millennials, states that when individuals belonging to this group “are approached from the standpoint of understanding, they respond with a strong desire to form relationships. You are someone they’d like to know and be known by” (p. 59). Egeler (2003) states that this generation “craves connection and authenticity, and responds to genuine love” (p. 11). Within international Christian schools, this response often results in a form of a teacher/student “friendship.” As Myer (2010) points out, “real friendship goes beyond simply ‘hanging out’. A friend is a person with whom you express mutual caring: someone who is a confidant by choice” (p. 65).

The importance that other adults play in the lives of adolescents is noted by child psychologists. According to Berger (2011), these “other adults” can “affect a young person’s faith and morality,” “attract devotion,” and “influence vocational direction.” Continuing, she states that “relatives are more influential than nonrelatives” and “become a valued confidant” and encourager (p. 441). Within the world of the TCK, other adults often become the substitute for family members who would play this vital role if their families lived in closer proximity. Coupling this with the nature of the often small and

close ex-pat community, TCKs are comfortable around adults and are thus befriended by them in positive ways. Within this study, this was played out as some participants identified their teachers as an “older sibling” or a “secondary parent” or “relative figure” to them.

According to Pollock and Van Reken (2009), the reasons TCKs are so comfortable around adults is “because they had lots of experience with them” and often “spend more time with adults than children, which makes them come across almost as ‘mini-adults’” (p. 145). For an international Christian school teacher, this provides an optimal opportunity to befriend and mentor TCKs. Using a garden metaphor, Myers (2010) states that “mentoring is like cultivating a garden” which involves the “cultivation of young adults, the tender caring for and nurturing of them so that they will grow, flourish, and be fruitful” (pp. 28-29).

The literature above creates compelling evidence of support for Finding Two. TCKs value international Christian school teachers who possess the ability to engage with, and build meaningful relationships with their students. They desire teachers who see them as the number one priority for being at the school and especially are fond of teachers who actively engage in conversation with them, demonstrate qualities of care for them, extend adult/child-mentoring friendship to them, make themselves accessible to them, and actively engage with them through either their participation and leadership in, or support of extracurricular activities they are engaged in.

Finding 3: TCKs Desire International Christian School Teachers Who Possess Spiritual Qualities and Model Adult Christian Living

In the study, TCKs identified that they desired their international Christian school teachers to possess certain spiritual qualities. These included teachers who expressed spiritual concern for, and exhibited spiritual care to, their students. They also identified that they desired teachers to actively live out their Christian faith as an example for them to follow.

Given that 23 of the 24 participants in the study were the children of missionaries, it is not surprising that the idea of Christian faith and related spiritual practices were identified in the study. This picture of spiritual embracement is not unusual among Christian teens since “religious identity, for most adolescents, is similar to that of their parents and community” (Berger, 2011, p. 435). Zigarelli (2005), writing about Christian teens, states that “the typical teen loves God, seeks to do His will, and practices many of the spiritual disciplines to develop that divine relationship. At the same time, for most teens, the relationship may be more sporadic than continuous” (p. 86). The religious practices of American youth is often surveyed and reported on by the Barna Group, a leading research organization focused on the intersection of faith and culture. In September of 2006 they released the following statements regarding teens and participation in Christian-based activities:

1. Half of teens attend a church-related service or activity in a typical week.
2. More than three-quarters discuss matters of faith with peers, and three out of five teens attend at least one youth group meeting at a church during a typical 3-month period.

3. One-third of teenagers say they participate in a Christian club on campus at some point during a typical school year.

4. More than four out of five teens say they have attended a church for a period of at least 2 months during their teenage years.

An interesting finding from this study is that TCKs attending international Christian schools desired teachers to share their Christian faith experiences and be an adult model to their students. In short, they want teachers who model Christian adult living.

Citing the busy lives of missionaries, Gouge (2008) admonishes missionary parents not to neglect the spiritual development of their children. Van Brummelen (2009) believes that within the Christian faith, the traditional institutions of home, church, and school are responsible for the spiritual nurturing of children with the family being the “basic agency of Christian nurture” (p. 6).

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) declare that schools are not value-neutral institutions and as such “the transmission of cultural values and expectations takes place” within them (p. 199). Edlin (1999) explains that a purpose of Christian schools is to “help youngsters to learn about the world and examine their role in it with God, not man, as the focal point of their studies” (p. 35). Kim’s (2001) study of 32 Korean missionary kids (MKs) attending an international Christian school found that their experience of living in another country contributed to the growth of their religious beliefs and practices of faith.

According to this research, in addition to strong teacher-student relationships outlined in Finding Two, TCKs attending international Christian schools seek spiritual guidance from their teachers. Adkins (2007), a former TCK and third-generation

missionary kid (MK) who attended an international Christian boarding school, exemplifies the deep spiritual yearning of TCKs like her. Reflecting on her experience she writes about the spiritual guidance, and perhaps misguidance, her teachers provided.

I had teachers at RVA who fostered my identity in Christ, and I had other teachers who fostered my identity in my circumstance, my family, my friends, and my academic excellence. It was more useful to be grounded in Christ than in these other things. With Christ as my identity, as my unchanging foundation, I was able to find my way in any circumstance. . . . It's tragic when MKs wander because they have not identified themselves in Christ. They cling to the past, believing that they have lived the best and will live no better. They do not move forward because they cannot see how to fit into the world. Christ doesn't ask us to fit into the world, but He can use us, and our "labels," to change the world if we identify ourselves in Him and in Him only. (p. 6)

According to Milton Uecker (2003), there are developmental stages a child goes through of adopting and owning one's faith. The process begins early in childhood and through the elementary grade years where children "are left with deep impressions of faith through the activities and celebrations of faith. At this stage they learn the 'story' of their faith, and they slowly gain knowledge of the origins and behaviors of their faith group" (p. 226). However, as the child enters preadolescence they have a knowledge of faith and acceptable behaviors of that faith or, as he states, they have "learned what to believe and do in order to belong" (p. 226). He calls this an "immature view of faith" that "is not in and of itself bad; however, should spiritual growth never move beyond this point, the young person will be vulnerable to putting on those behaviors and values that fit the context in which he or she operates," or what he calls "conforming faith" rather than "chosen faith" (p. 226). According to him, the place to move a student to "chosen faith" is at the high-school level where through the examination of "various beliefs and choosing some, the student makes a personal commitment to Christ and a Christian lifestyle. Christian faith becomes a part of the person's identity" (p. 226). Berger (2011)

draws upon the work of James Fowler (Fowler, Nipkow, & Scheweitzer, 1991), and provides an overview of six stages of faith development with Stage Four: Individual-Reflective Faith as the point when individuals own their faith choice. According to her, college, not high school, “may be the springboard to stage 4, as the young person learns to question the authority of parents, teachers, and other powerful figures and rely instead on his or her own understanding of the world” (p. 505).

Black, writing in *Foundations of Christian School Education* (2003), believes that “the teacher’s primary responsibility in the Christian school is twofold, to be both the spiritual leader and the academic leader” (p. 147). Thus, within an international Christian school, the spiritual leadership a teacher models and provides to her/his students is important.

As was already expressed in Finding Two, TCKs value international Christian school teachers who demonstrate the concept of “care” toward them. Noddings (1992) describes the importance of an “ethic of care” and “moral education” (p. 21). She states that “moral education from the perspective of an ethic of caring has four major components: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation” (p. 22). According to her, modeling caring is achieved by teachers who create “caring relations” with their students and respond as such to their students and their needs because they “are called to such a response” by their “moral orientation” (p. 22). The aspect of dialogue involves not just “talk or conversation” but that which is “open-ended” and “genuine”; a “common search for understanding, empathy, or appreciation” (p. 23). Dialog also provides students with an opportunity to question “why” while connecting the teacher and student with each other in order to “maintain caring relations” (p. 23). With respect to “practice” she

believes that teachers should “provide opportunities for them [students] to gain skills in caregiving and, more important, to develop the characteristic attitudes” she describes as evidence of caregiving (pp. 23-24). She further states that “practice” must be deliberately planned for by the teacher to “initiate or contribute to the desired attitude” and a “practice of the students” (p. 24). Such “practice in caring” she claims “should transform schools and, eventually the society in which we live” (p. 25). Her last component, “confirmation,” she believes is “an act of affirming and encouraging the best in others,” which can come only when “we know each other well enough” to what the student is “trying to become.” For students to be confirmed there must be a “relation of trust [to] ground it” and “continuity” between the teacher and student (p. 25).

Christian education philosopher George Knight (2006) calls teachers “agents of reconciliation” (p. 212) and states that “the primary function of the teacher is to relate to the Master Teacher [Jesus Christ] in such a way that he or she becomes God’s agent in the plan of redemption” (p. 213). He further identifies several secondary aims of Christian education as “character development, the acquisition of knowledge, job preparation, and the development of students who are socially, emotionally, and physically healthy” (p. 213). Kienel, Gibbs, and Berry (1998) echo Knight (2006) when they write,

Because we as Christian educators accept the Biblical precept that our students become good only through Christ, we then have an added responsibility that non-Christian educators do not have. Our prayer and our missions should be that those students in our classrooms who have not experienced personal salvation will see Christ in our lives, hear of Christ in our words and see the love of Christ in our countenance to the extent that they, like us, will become His lifelong disciples. (p. vii)

Knight (2006) also believes that teaching is “not only a ministerial act, but it is one of the most effective forms of ministry” (p. 217) and identifies the following four major qualifications of a Christian teacher:

1. Spiritual Qualifications: Has a personal saving relationship with Jesus.
2. Mental Qualifications: Communicates the subject matter of their specialty in the context of the Christian worldview.
3. Social Qualifications: Builds personal and meaningful relationships with students.
4. Physical Qualifications: Is a healthy individual (pp. 220-221).

According to Knight (2006),

That which Christian teachers are striving for in the continual improvement of their personal qualifications is the same as the goal that they are seeking for their students—a restoration of the image of God physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially. This balance, as it was found in the life of Christ, will form the base for their professional activity. (p. 221)

Graham (2011) believes that for Christian teachers their job is “‘missional’, in that you live out the truth of the gospel where you are and reveal both the kingdom and the heart of Jesus” (p. 59). Phil Dow (2011/2012), superintendent of an international Christian school, writes that it is the teacher who plays the most instrumental role in modeling how to integrate intellectual character in Christian schools. He states,

There is no more powerful way to inspire students toward godly intellectual character than by being living, breathing models of it. This challenge can be deflating; when I honestly look at the character of my own thinking, I see more vice than virtue. But the example students need is not one of perfection (which, this side of eternity, will always be a nonstarter) but rather a model of the *pursuit* of intellectual character. We can establish the ideals with our words, but students need to see us striving toward those ideals. (p. 24)

Van Brummelen (2009), addressing the personal characteristics of Christian teachers, writes, “We cannot guide pupils in the truth in authentic and effective ways unless we possess certain personal characteristics. In the first place, we must be committed personally to Jesus Christ” (p. 49). He later states that “modeling a Christian way of life is effective only if we are committed to it ourselves and if we show this commitment in our dealings with our students” (pp. 49-50). This type of teacher is not just found in Christian schools. Nelson’s (2010) case study of two Christian public-school teachers in the American South found similar beliefs and patterns of faith engagement with their pupils. Jada, one of the teachers, saw her own religious identity as being very much “in play” and used her Christian beliefs and experiences to “connect to issues in the classroom or the larger culture” (p. 344). Gwen, the other participant in the study, felt that to deny her Christian “connections would be to handicap not only her own health but also her ability to carry out her purpose and be able to create whole and genuine connections with others” (p. 344). She stated, “I want to teach in a way that respects the individuals’ spirits, and enhances a positive, caring, community. Most of all, I want Jesus’ love to be felt through me” (p. 347).

Graham (2011), writing about “grace filled classrooms,” says, “If a teacher is to have a relationship with a student that transforms the life of that student, it must begin, and continue, with grace” (p. 3).

The literature cited above provides support for Finding Three. Integrating both academic and matters of Christian belief are dual identifiers of a Christian school which are played out in the lives of students through their teachers.

The TCK participants in this study identified that, for them, spiritual matters were of great importance. They valued international Christian school teachers who possessed spiritual qualities and modeled adult Christian living. In addition, they identified a desire for teachers to demonstrate expressions of spiritual care for their students.

CHAPTER 8

THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS AND CONCLUSION

In this study, 24 American Third Culture Kids (TCKs), ages 18-30, who had attended at least 2 years as secondary students or a combination of 4 or more years as primary and/or middle-school-age students at international Christian schools were interviewed to discover the traits, characteristics, and qualities they most valued in their teachers. Accompanying the collection of interview data, 20 of the 24 participants in the study wrote comments on the graphic to identify the traits, characteristics, and qualities of the “ideal” TCK teacher in four areas: “Academically,” “Socially,” “Spiritually,” and “Physically.” The compiled data from the interviews and graphic representations provided three primary findings important in understanding, through the voice of the TCK, the types of international Christian school teachers they prefer.

Of particular interest to this research is the voice of TCK students in regard to the traits, characteristics, and qualities of teachers in international Christian schools that they, as students, found to be of value to them. Rarely, have TCKs been provided an opportunity to identify or speak about their experience and, when they do, it most often relates to their sense of identity (Fail, 1996; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008; Lyttle et al., 2011; Moore, 2011; Schaetti, 2000; Walters, 2006), transition and adjustment (Hervey, 2009; Klemens, 2008; Thurston-Gonzalez, 2009) from an overseas country to their home country after prolonged absence.

Grimshaw and Sears's (2008) review of TCK literature reveals that research incorporating the voice of TCKs was quite limited. According to them, "Our review revealed a relative gap in the current literature. To date, research has tended to allow little space for the voices of global nomads themselves" (p. 272). A review of the literature related to the international educational experience of TCKs reveals an alarming absence of their voice, especially in regard to the types of teachers they value. This is an unfortunate finding because there is much to be learned from listening to the voice of students. SooHoo (1993) underscores the importance of student voices in education by stating,

Somehow educators have forgotten the important connects between teachers and students. We listen to outside experts to inform us, and, consequently, we overlook the treasure in our very own backyards; our students. Student perceptions are valuable to our practice because they are authentic sources; they personally experience our classrooms firsthand. As teachers, we need to find ways to continually seek out these silent voices because they can teach us so much about learning and learners. (p. 390)

Likewise, Jean Rudduck, an expert on coupling the voice of students with school improvement, states in a *Quality and Curriculum Authority* website, "Pupils have a lot to tell us about ways of strengthening their commitment to learning in school" (Rudduck, 2008).

This study was not intended to be attitudinal, but reflective in nature. Drawing from the recorded and transcribed interviews, I sought to understand what Johnson (1997) describes as the "participants' inner worlds, i.e., their phenomenological worlds" (p. 285). However, to accurately interpret and understand the world of the TCK as an international Christian school student required me to seek understanding of the attitudes and beliefs I encountered within the interviews. Looking backwards, the study participants recalled teachers and events that had occurred during their enrollment years

within international Christian schools. Thus, they reflected from a perspective of “past experience” or “removal” in that, at the time of the interview, they had graduated or moved beyond high-school for 1 to 12 years. Thus, the events and memories they drew upon occurred in the past with most participants focusing their recollections from their high-school years with sporadic mention of key events or teachers from their middle or elementary/primary education school years. This phenomenon in no doubt relates to the psychological theory referred to as the *recency effect*. According to Glenberg, Bradley, Kraus, and Renzaglia (1983), the recency effect occurs when “recently encoded information is remembered better than less recently encoded information” (p. 279). This would account for the lack of focused comments referencing middle level or elementary-school teachers in the study.

It was also important for me to incorporate interpretive validity practices to accurately portray the attitudes and beliefs of the participants. Johnson (1997) states that in order for this to occur the researcher must

get inside the heads of the participants, look through the participants’ eyes, and see and feel what they see and feel. In this way, the qualitative research can understand things from the participants’ perspectives and provide a valid account of these perspectives. (p. 285)

This of course also requires some understanding of human developmental theory in respect to values, beliefs, and attitudes. Since each of the participants was 18 years to 30 years of age, they are classified as emerging or young adults. Santrock (2010) sheds light on this age group by claiming that this is a time period when individuals “detect inconsistencies in their earlier self-descriptions, construct a general theory of self, an integrated sense of identity,” practice increased levels of “self-reflection” and decision making based upon a “specific worldview” (p. 136). As with all humans, beliefs and

attitudes are generated within a co-existing relationship which, according to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), occurs as a response or reaction to a stimulus object. According to the authors, the stimulus object (person or event) creates a reaction based upon held beliefs, which in turn creates an impression or “attitude” in the mind of the individual. Coupled together, these attitudes and beliefs are then ordered and held within a “habit-family hierarchy” in a person’s mind (p. 27). Of interest is that the intensity of the reaction is directly proportional “to the strength of the association between the stimulus object and the corresponding responses in the hierarchy” (p. 28).

In other words, the responses elicited from the study participants were based upon repeatedly strong emotional experiences or attachments associated with the teachers they encountered while attending international Christian schools. As young or emerging adults, their memories were vivid, which indicates that even after years from when they last attended an international Christian school, they shared perspectives and events that were powerful and meaningful. In addition, these memories were shared through the maturing mental processes of a young or emerging adult in which they analyzed, filtered, and prioritized the past to distinguish the traits, characteristics, and qualities of teachers they valued as former students enrolled in international Christian schools.

This lends credibility to the findings of the study as the interview comments were derived from young adults reflecting backwards and not from current adolescent youths whose attitudes and beliefs often fluctuate, are in a state of contradiction, and are at times a mixture of realism, idealism, truth, and falsehoods (Santrock, 2010, p. 134). Their recollections also speak to the powerful influence a teacher holds in the lives and minds of their students. Danielson (2010) states that “when adults recall their school

experiences, it is the interactions with teachers that stand out in their minds. They can remember, sometimes after 40 years, a teacher's insulting comment or the way a teacher demonstrated confidence in their abilities" (Danielson, 2010, p. xxi).

Therefore, this study provides a significant understanding of what an "effective international Christian school teacher" looks like through the eyes of their students. The voices of the TCKs in this study validate what experts in the field of education have promulgated for years about the traits, characteristics, and qualities of "effective teachers." Specifically, the study participants identified that they desired teachers who:

1. Are qualified, trained, and experienced and who effectively manage and create a meaningful learning environment (Cruickshank et al., 2003; Danielson, 2009, 2010; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2009; Marzano & Pickering, 2011; Marzano et al., 2001; McEwan, 2001; Rudduck, 2008; Rudduck et al., 1996; Stronge, 2007, 2010a, 2010b; Zigarelli, 2005), while demonstrating desired levels of cultural competence and responsiveness (Banks, 2006; Edlin, 1999; Gay, 2002, 2003; McAllister & Irvine, 2000; Romanowski & McCarthy, 2009).

2. Are highly engaged with students, building meaningful relationships in and outside of the classroom (Banks, 2006; Cattanach, 2007; Danielson, 2010; Dean & Marzano, 2012; Knight, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Marzano & Pickering, 2011; McEwan, 2001; Noddings, 1992, 2003; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004; Stronge, 2007; Van Brummelen, 2009).

Additionally, the responses of the participants mirrored previous studies that involved the voice of current and former students identifying desired teacher qualities, traits, and characteristics for Findings One and Two of this study (Brown & Kysilka,

2002; Delaney, 2009; McCabe, 1995; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004; R. Walker, 2008; Young et al., 1998).

3. Possess spiritual qualities and model adult Christian living (Braley et al., 2003; Dow, 2011/2012; Edlin, 1999; Graham, 2011; Knight, 2006; Noddings, 1992; Van Brummelen, 2009; Zigarelli, 2005).

Of noted interest is that the 24 participants in the study were of an age classification as “emerging adults” or “young adults,” and yet throughout the recorded conversations, each participant referenced elements of a practicing Christian faith. In addition, all but one participant directly connected their practicing Christian faith to positive aspects or experiences directly attributed to their teachers and/or their international Christian school experiences. In light of the Barna Group (2011) research indicating that “only one-fifth of twentysomethings (20%) have maintained a level of spiritual activity consistent with their high school experiences,” the continued faith practice of the study participants and the importance their international Christian teachers played in modeling adult Christian living and faith practices speaks to the significance of the third finding of this study.

Theoretical Constructs

The findings that emerged from this study provide insight into the type of teacher that TCKs both value and want as their instructors within international Christian schools, and they also furnish insights into TCKs as students. In essence, a series of coexistent relationships are built between teachers who *invest* themselves in four distinct areas, each parallel to a distinct TCK characteristic. See Table 5.

Table 5

Blended Theory Matrix

Third Culture Kids as Students Are:	Coexistent Relationships	Teachers Who INVEST:
Educational Connoisseurs	↔	Professionally
Cautious Investors	↔	Relationally
Normative Seekers	↔	Spiritually
Global Citizens	↔	Culturally
OBSERVANT MORALISTS		

The first area that desired international Christian school teachers invest in is labeled, *professionally*. Teachers who invest professionally possess the qualities, characteristics, content knowledge, and pedagogical skills associated with high quality or effective classroom teachers (Danielson, 2009, 2010; Dean & Marzano, 2012b; McEwan, 2001; Stronge, 2007). The direct coexistent relationship to teachers who invest *professionally* is an indication of the importance TCKs place on such qualities or characteristics in their international Christian school teachers. This is because, by virtue of their mobility, TCKs tend to be *educational connoisseurs*. They tend to attend multiple schools and/or are educated through a variety of different types of educational venues

including home schooling, home-country public or Christian school, internet-based online schools, international schools—Christian and non-Christian.

Within this study, 11 of the 24 participants attended two or more international Christian schools at some point of their K-12 education. In addition, 13 of the participants attended public schools and four attended Christian schools in the United States either prior to moving overseas, or during times when their parents returned to the U.S.A. permanently, or in between overseas assignments. In addition, five of the participants were homeschooled and one participant attended an online school while living abroad. These experiences, coupled with the academic prowess typical of TCKs (Fail, 2002; McCluskey, 1994; Pascoe, 1993), create a desire for a meaningful coexistent relationship with teachers who have invested themselves professionally in training and effective practice.

The second area of value is found in teachers who invest *relationally* with their students. According to Keyson (1991), students attending international schools “relate well to adults” (p. 57). His point is strongly supported in the data from this study where 380 references were directly attributed to the relational aspects between teachers and students. The TCKs in this study seem to desire and thrive off of strong, meaningful relationships with their teachers. Yet, at the same time, it was noted that some participants in the study voiced a hesitancy to build such relationships with their teachers right away, thus TCKs have been labeled *cautious investors*.

According to Pollock and VanReken (2009), TCKs often live with “unresolved grief” stemming from a number of experienced losses including the “loss of relationships” (pp. 74-83). This in part is a response to the seemingly endless list of

“goodbyes” TCKs face in their life overseas. Their lives are often lived in constant fluctuation whereby they are either being uprooted from the familiarity of “home” to a “new home” or their friends are. Pollock and Van Reken (2009) also point out that TCKs often “will go to greater lengths than some people might consider normal to nurture relational ties with others” (p. 131), yet because they can suffer from multiple losses of such relationships they sometimes revert to protecting themselves relationally by “erecting walls . . . to keep out anyone from coming closer” (p. 137). The authors go on to outline three reasons why TCKs may establish relationships quickly. First, the TCK possesses the ability to build relationships quickly because they have had so much practice doing so. By virtue of their mobility, a defining feature of their life is one of building new relationships. Second, their rich life experiences allows the TCK a level of “expertise” which can lead to stimulating conversation and additional knowledge, which spurs the development of mutual interest between the TCK and the recipient. Third, upon meeting someone new, the TCK may be prompted by a “sense of urgency” whereby they understand the time limitations of the particular relationship and value that could come from establishing a relationship, even for a short time (p. 135).

Within international Christian schools, the teaching staff is made up of individuals who come for short terms of service (weeks to a couple of years) and those who commit to longer terms of service. Within the secondary findings of this research, TCKs reported that although they liked having both short-term and longer-term committed teachers, they preferred the longer term teacher. In part, this is probably because they provide the TCK with much needed stability. At the same time, according to Cattanaach’s research (2007), TCKs attending international Christian schools desire teachers who create meaningful

relationships with them at deeper levels such as “Teacher/Friend.” Therefore, it is probable that TCKs are *cautious investors* of new teachers until they determine the answer to two questions:

1. Is the new teacher committed to a focus of “teaching me,” as one study participant noted, or are they using the teaching experience for personal reasons outside of being involved with students?

2. What value is gained or what personal need is met by me investing in the building of a relationship with this new teacher?

A third important area in which TCK teachers invest is when they live their lives transparently, or *openly* before their students. The participants in this study recounted how important it was for their teachers to model living on both an adult and spiritual level before them. Of particular interest was the discovery that nine of the 12 male participants in the study highlighted young married male teachers with families as individuals they repeatedly referenced as being highly influential in their lives. When I inquired about this phenomenon with several male participants, they identified a desire to seek out this kind of “adult guide” in their lives. Similarly, several female participants likewise revealed the significance that both single and married teachers played in their lives. Addressing the importance of role models in the lives of TCKs, Pollock and VanReken (2009) state, “In the same way we ‘catch’ culture almost instinctively from those around us, we also learn what to expect at upcoming stages of life by observing and interacting with people already in those stages” (p. 79). It is therefore most probable that TCKs living abroad, but knowing full well that they will return “home” for future schooling or work, seek to learn from their teachers how they are expected to act as adults. Furthermore, because the

Christian faith was of importance to the participants, they identified the importance for teachers to live out their Christian faith in real ways as an example to their students.

Clearly, the research findings highlighted that the TCK participants in the study were dismissive of teachers whose behavior was deemed hypocritical. The participants wanted to observe and learn from teachers who lived out the spiritual dimension of their lives honestly, even with imperfections.

As such, TCKs, in essence, are *normative seekers*; individuals who are aware that their third-cultureness is unique and rich but also socially and culturally restrictive in regard to understanding the practicing norms of the places or “home country” they will go to at the end of their K-12 educational experience. They value teachers who live their lives in a manner which invites them to peer into their future.

The fourth and final area of value found in desired TCK teachers is when teachers invest *culturally*. By the very nature of their definition, TCKs are defined by the initial “C” and the word “Culture,” found within the acronym and name associated with them. It is their vast cultural experiences that formulate their abilities to function cross-culturally. Robin Pascoe (2006) refers to the shared characteristics as espoused by the Oxfam global citizen profile as model characteristics of TCKs (p. 197). In the first edition of their book, Pollock and Van Reken (1999) dedicated an entire chapter to the practical skills of TCKs listing them as cross-cultural skills, observational skills, social skills, and linguistic skills. It should be no surprise that the TCKs in this study verbalized their embrace of cultural diversity and abhorrent opposition to ethnocentric behavior and thought. TCKs thus value teachers who value what they hold dearly as an identifying mark of their “cultural self.” Such teachers are willing learners about culture, demonstrate cultural awareness, and

have other cultural experiences and knowledge from which they teach. This type of teacher, like the TCK, values cultural differences. It is no wonder then that the TCK engages in a co-existent relationship with such teachers because they affirm TCKs as *global citizens*.

Underlying this conceptual model is a keen awareness of the observational skills of TCKs. The participants in this study revealed to me, that, as a group, they actively participate in observing and assessing their teachers in each of the valued areas addressed. It is apparent that the participants in this study highlighted both desired and undesired behaviors of teachers they encountered while enrolled in international Christian schools. One surprise was the strategic observational skills TCKs employ when assessing their teachers. This led me to determine that TCKs are *observant moralists*; individuals who use their finely honed cultural observation skills to evaluate teachers on the basis of their teaching qualities, levels of relational/relationship-building interactions with their students, the genuineness from which they model an adult Christian lifestyle, and the degree to which they embrace and celebrate culture and cultural differences.

Implications of the Study

Drawing from the perspectives of the participants in the study who attended at least one, if not several international Christian schools spread across the globe, school administrators, missionary-sending organizations, and agencies responsible for recruiting teachers for such schools now have TCK student-generated profile descriptions of the type of teacher best suited to provide quality instruction and care, while modeling adult Christian living to their students.

Future study should ensue on this topic. Ideally, this study should be replicated to include a more expansive group of participants including non-Western missionary kids and non-missionary TCKs who attended international Christian schools.

Conclusion

This study provides insight into the traits, characteristics, and qualities of the “ideal” international Christian school teacher desired and valued by Third Culture Kids (TCKs). For the first time, the voice of the TCK has been codified in respect to their preferences and dislikes of teachers they interact with on a daily basis. The findings of this study point to the multi-dimensional significance an effective teacher has on the lives of TCKs. Such teachers should be qualified and experienced, well versed in the subject matter they teach, and possess a vast array of effective pedagogical practices. They also need to possess a dual-focused desire to not only teach TCKs well, but to interact with them on deeper relational levels than is often experienced or expected by teachers in a mono-cultural setting. TCKs in international Christian schools also desire their teachers to demonstrate levels of care toward them (academically, personally, and spiritually) and model adult Christian living. Finally, TCKs value teachers who value what they hold as dearly important: culture. They desire teachers who respect and embrace cultural differences and can learn and teach from cultural perspectives.

This study identifies that an international Christian school teacher need not be perfect, but they do need to be adept teachers possessing proven pedagogical knowledge and associated skill sets that enable them to genuinely relate to students and engage them in meaningful learning experiences. TCKs value educational excellence, but just as

importantly, they value quality investment in their lives by Christian teachers who respect them, model adult Christian living, and value their cultural experiences and differences.

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH STUDY & BIOGRAPHY

The Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities of Teachers Valued By Third Culture Kids

Researcher: Dale B. Linton, M.A.; Ph.D., Andrews University (www.andrews.edu)
Contact Information: dlinton@arbor.edu (Tel: 517-750-6413)

Advisor: Dr. Larry Burton (professor, Teaching Learning, and Curriculum, Andrews University)
Contact Information: burton@andrews.edu (Tel: (269) 471-6674)

About the Study

Incorporating the voice of former school students, this study explores the qualities, traits, and characteristics associated with teachers who contributed in a positive and meaningful manner to the educational experiences of American or Canadian Third Culture Kids (TCKs) enrolled in international Christian schools overseas.

The study incorporates qualitative research methodologies to identify themes related to quality and characteristic traits most associated with favored or effective teachers of TCKs. Participants will engage in a one-on-one interview with the researcher who will ask a series of questions. Interviews will take place in person, via the telephone and internet connections (email & internet conferencing) and follow up interviews may be necessary to gain further clarification. The initial interview usually lasts for 45-60 minutes. All interviews will be recorded and participants will be provided with a transcribed copy of their interview(s) to verify accuracy of their expressed accounts. Participants will receive an iTunes card.

Why This Study Is Important

Anyone who has ever associated themselves with TCKs learns quickly that TCKs possess unusually rich qualities and life experiences which differ tremendously from individuals raised and educated in mono-cultural settings. One also learns that TCKs possess perceptive insights but rarely, if ever, are given an opportunity to express themselves to larger audiences. This study provides for the first time an opportunity for TCKs to reflect upon and describe the qualities, traits, and/or characteristics of their teachers who contributed in positive and meaningful ways to their educational experiences.

The practical application of the research findings will allow agencies, organizations, and schools responsible for recruiting and hiring teachers for international Christian schools a list of teacher qualities and characteristics most valued by TCKs. With this information a more deliberate approach to recruiting and hiring the best possible teacher candidates can take place thus improving and enhancing the educational experiences of future TCKs.

Meet the Researcher

Dale Linton has been involved educating children and adults for over thirty years. Even before graduating from high school he knew that he wanted to be a teacher; but not just any kind of teacher. Influenced by the children of missionaries he knew from childhood his dream was to teach overseas. As often happens, life has way of changing plans, temporarily. After teaching in public schools in Michigan and Maryland for fifteen years he and his family moved to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where they taught at Bingham Academy for two years. They returned to the U.S. for what was expected to be a short home assignment but it quickly became apparent that Dale's health had been compromised by living overseas. After a year of rest and recovery it was obvious that a return to Ethiopia was not in their future. Instead, they were invited to join the teaching staff at Rift Valley Academy (RVA) in Kenya. Over the next eight years, the Linton's taught at RVA and watched both of their children graduate and go on to college. It was also during this time that Dale began his Ph.D. work in Curriculum and Instruction at Andrews University with a focus on international Christian schools. Over the years he has worked closely with educational leaders from various missionary sending agencies, international Christian teachers, and the Association of Christian Schools International. He has written several articles related to missionary kids and international schools and has traveled throughout the world providing professional development opportunities for international Christian teachers. He currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Education in the School of Education at Spring Arbor University, Spring Arbor, Michigan where he directs the student teaching program. It is his desire to complete his Ph.D. and use his educational experiences and knowledge of international Christian schools to provide support and assistance to them as they seek to provide the highest levels of academic quality and care for their students.

APPENDIX B

GENERAL INFORMATION FORM (GIF)

Participant's Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Citizenship: _____

Marital Status: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone # _____

Email: _____

Overseas School Information

- List the names of international schools you attended, approximate dates, and grade levels

Name of International School: _____

Location (city/town & country): _____

Approximate dates attended: _____ to _____

Grade levels enrolled in: _____

Name of International School: _____

Location (city/town & country): _____

Approximate dates attended: _____ to _____

Grade levels enrolled in: _____

Name of International School: _____

Location (city/town & country): _____

Approximate dates attended: _____ to _____

Grade levels enrolled in: _____

Before beginning the interview please take some time to reflect upon your educational experience(s) overseas and favorite teacher or teachers.

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT



School of Education: Teaching, Learning, Curriculum Department

Informed Consent Form

Title: The Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities of Teachers Valued by Third Culture Kids

PURPOSE OF STUDY

I understand that the purpose of this study is to interview Third Culture Kids (TCKs) who attended international Christian schools and is an attempt to reveal the traits, characteristics and qualities of teachers valued by TCKs. I also understand that I will be asked a series of questions requiring me to reflect upon my educational experience as a TCK enrolled in one or more international Christian schools and that the interview process will be recorded.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

In order to participate, I recognize that I must be an adult between the ages of 18 and 30 and of sound mind, and at some point in the past, spent a minimum of two years attending at least one international school overseas at the secondary level or a minimum of four years in a combination of primary and middle grade years in at least one international school overseas. I also understand that participants must be valid citizens from either Canada or the United States.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

I have been informed that there are no physical or emotional risks to my involvement in this study.

BENEFITS/RESULTS

I accept that I will receive no significant monetary remuneration for my participation, but that by participating, I will help the researcher, sponsoring and recruiting agencies of international Christian

schools identify the most favorable teacher dispositions and/or types of teachers to be sought after when recruiting candidates to teach in such schools.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I understand that all information will be kept confidential. Records will be identified by numbers and be kept secure by the investigator. Only the investigator will have access to my individual data. At no time will I be identified individually in any type of publication or presentation.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

I understand that my involvement in this survey is voluntary and that I may withdraw my participation at any time without any pressure, embarrassment, or negative impact on me. I also understand that participation is anonymous and that neither the researcher nor any assistants will be able to identify my responses to me.

CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event that I have any questions or concerns with regard to my participation in this research project, I understand that I may contact either the researcher, Dale Linton at dlinton@arbor.edu (Tel: (517) 750-6413), or his advisor, Dr. Larry Burton, professor in Teaching Learning and Curriculum at burton@andrews.edu (Tel: (269) 471-6674). I have been given a copy of this form for my own records.

Sign and date this form in the presence of the researcher or an approved witness. Forms can be scanned and emailed to Dale Linton (dlinton@arbor.edu).

Signature of Subject

Date

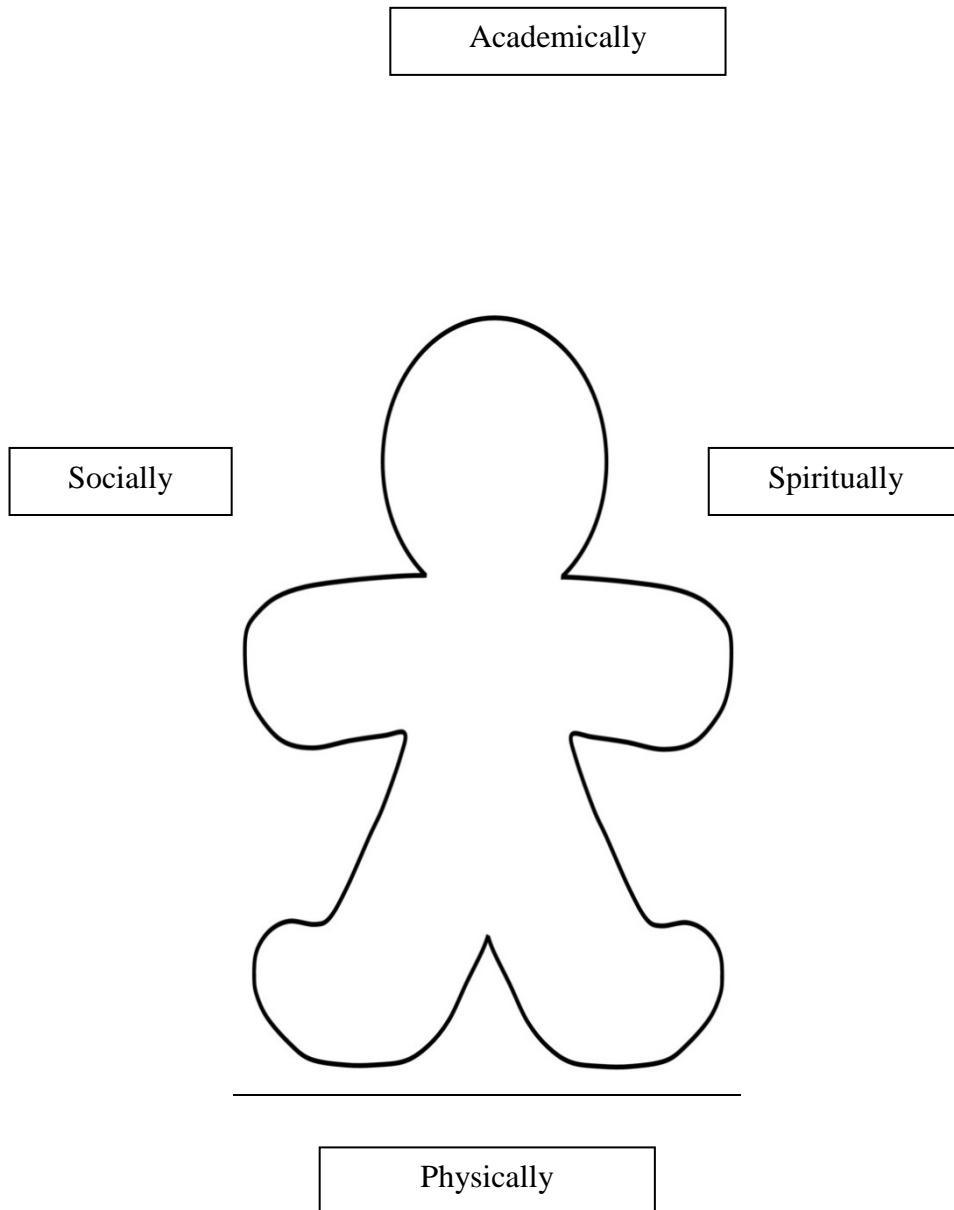
Signature of Witness

Date

Signed at: _____

APPENDIX D

GRAPHIC WAITING AREA



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Zilber, E. (2005). International school educators and their students: Implications for educator-parents, colleagues, and schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 4(1), 5-22.

VITA

DALE BENNETT LINTON

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2000-2002	
2004–Present	Assistant Professor of Education, Spring Arbor University, Spring Arbor, MI
1996-2000	
2002-2004	Teacher/Administrator, Rift Valley Academy, Kijabe, Kenya
1995-1996	Educational Representative, Serving in Mission (SIM), Charlotte, NC
1993-1995	Teacher, Bingham Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
1980-1993	Teacher, Talbot County Public Schools, Easton, MD

EDUCATION

1979	BA	History Education (Secondary); Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
1991	MEd	Public School Administration, Salisbury State University, Salisbury, MD
2012	PhD	Curriculum & Instruction, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI

PRESENTATION/RESEARCH INTERESTS

International Education, International Christian Schools, Third Culture Kids, Teacher Education, Curriculum Development, Cross Cultural Studies

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)
American Association of Education (AAE)
Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
Christian Educators Association International (CEAI)