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THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE ON TEACHING WITH A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: REFLECTIONS OF RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER TEACHERS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate

School of The Ohio State University

By

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2001

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ABSTRACT

Demographic, economic, political, and environmental world trends have combined to create a qualitatively different class of unavoidable world-level problems that were virtually unknown to traditional diplomacy, that are beyond the reach of national governments, that cannot fit into the accepted theories of competitive interstate behavior, that are coming increasingly to dominate affairs that cannot be wished away, and are indifferent to military force.

Because global issues are increasingly difficult to assess and solve, it is important to develop a global consciousness by developing global perspectives, understanding global awareness, and integrating global education into all facets of teaching and learning. The purpose of this study was to examine the various perceived effects of cross-cultural experiences on the subsequent curricula and instruction of returned Peace Corps volunteer teachers. The objective was to provide insight into how teachers have incorporated international cross-cultural experiences into their teaching with a global perspective.

This study utilized qualitative inquiry. Data collection methods included an initial correspondence to collect logistical data, followed by recorded interviews, follow-up telephone conversations, and notes to guide the analysis. Evidence from the
study revealed that motives for joining Peace Corps were guided by different influences—most strongly, that of personal achievement and self-gain. Overall, the major findings indicated how the respondents perceived a change in their instructional practice; however, the strongest impact of change occurred within themselves rather than in their curriculum and instruction.

Further investigation of global education and teaching with a global perspective, as well as recommendations for international experiences for perspective teachers is also discussed. Implications from the study include considerations for the integration of Peace Corps and Global Education with that of school curricula, to be utilized in teacher preparation.
Dedication

This Publication is dedicated to my husband, Daniel Robert Myers, and our son, Noah Daniel Myers.

They have traveled the journey with me ... supportive, caring, and joyful in all aspects of my work and study.

It is also in appreciation of my family, Betty and Glenn Hubbard and Pat and Bob Myers. Their unconditional love, guidance, and wisdom served as an inspiration for success and achievement throughout the academic and personal challenges of my life.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

That men may know wisdom and instruction, 
understand words of insight, receive instruction in wise dealing, 
righteousness, justice, and equity; 
that prudence may be given to the simple, 
knowledge and discretion to the youth; 
the wise man also may hear and increase in learning, 
and the man of understanding acquire skill.

Proverbs 1:2-5

My faith in Christ has led to the fulfillment of this study. As I encountered obstacles toward the completion of my writing, God gave me strength, endurance, and courage to continue my endeavors. I am also very grateful for the many friends and family members, particularly my church family at Maize Manor United Methodist Church, who offered prayers, love, and support during my most difficult days. Their encouragement led me to believe in myself and maintain balance in my life as a new wife and mother, working and studying full-time to fulfill commitments in the many realms of my life.

I especially appreciate my affiliation with the U.S. Peace Corps as a returned Peace Corps volunteer. I am also proud to have worked for The Ohio State University as a Peace Corps recruiter throughout central Ohio. To the participants of my study who willingly gave of their time and expertise, I am very grateful for the opportunity to learn about their international experiences. To my editor, Sharon Bierman, I
express my gratitude for her professional expertise to refine and edit the writing of this study.

My teachers, Antoinette Errante, Steve Miller, and Anita Woolfolk-Hoy, have graciously served as mentors, challenging me to explore and reexamine my work, offering their guidance and friendship. They, too, shared in the vision of this work and have had a tremendous impact on my life within the academy.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Global Education in the Classroom</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking Global Education with Peace Corps Work</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for the Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Peace Corps and Cross-Cultural Experiences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design and Methodology</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Perspectives of The Peace Corps</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Corps Area Assignments in Education</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Education</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptualizations of Global Education</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications of Global Education for Classroom Teaching</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporating Global Education in the Curriculum</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Perspectives in Teacher Education</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

viii
3. METHODOLOGY ......................................................................................................... 42
   Introduction ................................................................................................................... 42
   Rationale for the Use of Qualitative Research Design ................................................... 43
   Role of the Researcher ................................................................................................... 46
   Research Design ............................................................................................................. 48
   Selection Process ........................................................................................................... 48
   Interview Strategy ......................................................................................................... 50
   Methods for Collecting Data ....................................................................................... 52
   Strategies for Analysis and Data Management .............................................................. 53
   Description of Inquiry Process ..................................................................................... 55
   Interview Techniques ................................................................................................... 55
   Data Collection and Management ............................................................................... 57
   Data Analysis ................................................................................................................ 60
   Establishment of Trustworthiness ................................................................................ 63
   Credibility ..................................................................................................................... 63
   Transferability ............................................................................................................... 64
   Dependability/Confirmability ....................................................................................... 64
   Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 65

4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA ......................................................................................... 67
   Introduction .................................................................................................................... 67
   Demographics ............................................................................................................... 72
   Country of Service and Site Assignments ....................................................................... 73
   Influences and Motivation to Serve as Peace Corps Volunteers .................................... 85
   Personal Achievement and Self-Gain ............................................................................. 88
   Sense of Civic Duty and the Kennedy Administration ................................................... 94
   Spirit of Humanitarianism and Altruism ....................................................................... 97
   Family Background and Religious Convictions ............................................................ 100
   Most Valuable Peace Corps Experiences ....................................................................... 103
   Relationships ................................................................................................................ 105
   Cross-Cultural Awareness ............................................................................................ 109
   Learning Opportunities ............................................................................................... 113
   Influences and Motivation to Serve as Peace Corps Volunteers and Most Valuable Peace Corps Experience – Summary ................................................................. 115
   Teaching Experiences and Perceptions ........................................................................ 120
   Teachers’ Instructional Change ..................................................................................... 121
   Student Learning .......................................................................................................... 130
   Teaching for Global Awareness .................................................................................... 135
   Supplementary Materials and Procedures ..................................................................... 139
   Enrichment Procedures and Materials ........................................................................ 141
   Authentic Materials .................................................................................................... 144
   Technological Materials .............................................................................................. 148
   Teaching Experiences and Perceptions and Supplementary Materials and Procedures – Summary ................................................................................................................. 151
   Teachers’ Perspectives on Global Education ................................................................ 155
   Elements of a World View ............................................................................................ 160
   Elements of a Local View ............................................................................................ 168
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Schematic for the Information Presented in this Chapter</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Respondents and Country of Service</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Infusing Global Education in Teaching Practice – the Literature vs. RPCVs’ Comments</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Concepts from Participants’ Definitions of Global Education</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participant’s Role as Teacher and Curriculum-Instructional Change</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

xii
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

My life has been a tapestry of rich and royal hue.
An ever-changing vision with an ever-changing view.
A wondrous woven magic, in bits of blue and gold,
A tapestry to feel and see, impossible to hold.

King (1977)

Having lived most of my life in a rural setting in the Deep South, I often wondered how I would ever have an opportunity to see parts of the world other than the low country of South Carolina. I always dreamed of traveling overseas, to experience life within a culture different from my own. Little did I know that acting on that dream would have such a dramatic impact on my personal vision and perspective of the world, particularly as a teacher-educator.

Accepting the invitation to serve as a Peace Corps volunteer teacher/trainer for the Ministry of Education in Liberia, West Africa, I was propelled into a world of opportunities to experience teaching in a different culture. My work in Liberia included traveling to 10 village schools, teaching teachers how to teach. Along with this, I periodically provided instruction for students in the classroom, although the physical settings did not always resemble the typical American classroom.
This opportunity triggered my interest in international and cross-cultural experiences, in how they affect one’s teaching, and how these experiences might advance teacher education programs if processed and integrated into the curricula. My experience as a teacher/trainer taught me that cross-cultural exchange through international experiences not only benefits the teacher who goes abroad, but can also be beneficial to that teacher’s students in her classroom back home.

As a classroom teacher for many years in the United States, I recognized how the interpersonal interactions and other opportunities made available to me through teaching overseas enabled me to develop a global perspective and an appreciation for global awareness. It ultimately inspired me to acknowledge the importance of incorporating global education values in teaching. Consequently, I developed an interest in finding out if and how other educators believe international experiences contribute to their competency in teaching. For students to understand, interact with, and learn from people different from themselves, they need to focus on individuals in the local community, as well as those in the larger global community, to think globally, and act locally (Alger, 1977).

Upon my return from Peace Corps service, I was motivated to pursue a higher degree in education. In line with my academic study of teacher and global education, I was particularly interested in understanding how classroom teachers promote global education and develop global awareness in their classrooms. The cultural sensitivity I learned through the Peace Corps influenced my belief in the value of infusing global education in the classroom and in teacher education. My own overseas experience led
me to wonder about the impact that teaching in another culture had on one's teaching generally.

The purpose of this study is to examine the various perceived effects of cross-cultural experiences and the infusion of global education on the subsequent curricula and instruction of teachers with Peace Corps experience. My objective in examining the experiences of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) is to provide insight into how teachers have benefited from international/cross-cultural experiences to promote global education into their teaching. Through a qualitative analysis of interviews, I examined how returned volunteers perceive their Peace Corps experiences have influenced their teaching practice in the classroom, particularly the integration of content and experience that create a global perspective in the minds of students. Research on the relationship between teachers' international experiences and their subsequent teaching is still at an exploratory stage. My study will contribute to this research by exploring the experiences of Peace Corps volunteers.

Research Questions

The following research questions served as a basis for the investigation. In comparing and contrasting how the participants answered questions from the interview guide, to Research Questions #1 and #2, an overall question addressing the basis of what we can learn from the study is stated in Research Question #3.
1. How do former Peace Corps teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and their perception of their role as teacher as a result of serving overseas in the Peace Corps?

2. How do former Peace Corps teachers say that their teaching and curriculum has been influenced or changed by this international, cross-cultural experience?

3. Do teachers with international experiences such as The Peace Corps infuse global education in their teaching practice, and if so, how?
   a. Did the infusion happen naturally or did they purposely implement strategies for more successful teaching and learning?

Significance of the Study

The views of RPCV could help us understand whether international teaching experiences can better prepare teachers to teach with an awareness and understanding of our increasingly interdependent global society. Knowledge is no longer circumscribed by national borders (Burch, 1996). Global issues, as well as multicultural, international, and global education are receiving national and international attention, not only within the educational community but within society at large (Grant, 1992). As we enter the new millennium, telecommunications technologies provide instant access to global information and the global sharing of natural and human resources. A network of transactions links us continuously with worldwide systems of travel, education, military interventions, communications,
finance, production and governmental regulations. Moreover, we are increasingly aware of the need to foster an appreciation for cultural diversity among the school-aged population of our country.

Specifically, we have turned to "global education" as an avenue to fostering that appreciation throughout the school curriculum. Global education's approach to diversity and globalization comprises a great deal more than just the study of history or social studies. Rather, global education is a holistic approach that enables students and teachers alike to understand themselves and their relationship to the world community. Because Peace Corps volunteers are trained to adapt to diverse cultures, and we have opportunities to develop the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary for teaching in a cross-cultural environment, our experiences suggest an enhanced potential for teaching with a global perspective. Generally speaking, global educators promote the development of a perspective that examines the interdependence among peoples, cultures, and societies resulting from increasing globalization of the world order.

**Importance of Global Education in the Classroom**

Many challenges and controversies face global education, and a variety of definitions are currently used in the field. I find the strongest affinity with Case (1993) and Anderson (1992). Case (1993) distinguished two dimensions of a global perspective he called a substantive and a perceptual dimension. The substantive global perspective promotes knowledge of people and places beyond the student's
own communities and country, and the knowledge of events and issues beyond the local and immediate. The perceptual dimension of a global perspective describes an attitude or outlook. In this context, global perspective refers to the capacity to see the “whole picture,” whether the focus is local or international. Anderson (1992) argued that global education consists of efforts to bring about changes in the content, methods, and social context of education, to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age. Anderson argued that the acceleration of global interdependence and the competencies developed through global education are necessary for students in today’s world. He also focused on conceptual aspects of global education as a response to a changing world and shows how American demography and culture are becoming more global in nature. He linked social change with educational change, arguing for global education for the improvement of society.

Proponents of global education assert that there is now a need to make it a sustainable force that will change the very structure and goals of education in American schools. As members of religious, ethnic, and cultural groups, we live in a multiboundary world (Alger & Harf, 1985). This multiboundary world consists of values, transactions, actors, procedures, mechanisms, and issues that have an impact on world citizens.

There are several definitions and perspectives of global education, which I address and explore in more detail in Chapter 2. From these different perspectives and interpretations of global education, however, three major themes emerge:
1. Global education focuses on perspective consciousness, the recognition that one's own view of issues or events is not universally shared and that others have different perspectives and world views (Alger & Harf, 1985; Case, 1991; Hanvey, 1976; Kniep, 1986).

2. Global education is concerned with a world system, linked through ecological, economic, and political systems, and through transnational, technological, and human issues (Alger & Harf, 1985; Becker, 1979; Hanvey, 1976; Kniep, 1987).

3. Global education addresses how seen and unseen human choices often affect each of us in some way (Anderson, 1979). In the global education literature, Anderson’s (1980) concept of “seen” and “unseen” choices is in reference to the way people are affected by cross-cultural and international exchange. The “seen” choices are those decisions made in circumstances where we recognize and literally “see” or deliberately choose to interact, buy, select, or partake of things that we know are “intercultural” or culturally different from what is familiar to us. An example of this would be choosing to eat at a particular ethnic restaurant or attend an international festival, where we are completely aware of the cross-cultural exchange. “Unseen” choices are decisions made in circumstances where we do not recognize or “see” the intercultural exchange. “Unseen” choices might occur, for example, when we purchase an item in the United States, not knowing that it is actually manufactured in another country. We choose to support, purchase, or interact in ways that are deeply cross-cultural, but we are unaware of the cross-cultural exchange and its significance.
Much has been written about factors necessary to implement global education in American curricula. As recommended by DeKock and Paul (cited in Banks, 1999), global education represents the culmination of the total curriculum, teaching strategies, and materials that must be modified so students could develop the knowledge, attitude, and skills needed to understand and participate effectively in a highly interdependent world.

Global education faces many challenges in American classrooms. Global perspectives taught in classrooms have been slow to develop, despite the growing awareness that infusing global perspectives in students begins by infusing those perspectives in teachers. Moreover, teachers often deal with parochial, monolingual, middle-class and lower-middle-class young people who have had limited exposure to diversity generally and other cultures specifically. The implementation of global education thus requires new approaches and resources.

**Linking Global Education with Peace Corps Work**

The significance of this study linking global education with RPCV lies in the fact that characteristics of Peace Corps service are directly related to the traits and characteristics of teaching and implementing global education. To be selected for service in the U.S. Peace Corps, volunteers need a balance of strengths, including motivation, productive competence, cultural awareness, and social sensitivity. Transferring those skills to others, setting goals, solving problems, and employing effective methods of communication are critical to the success of Peace Corps
teachers. Likewise, the same skills are necessary for infusing global perspectives through global education. Diverse human values, perspective consciousness, relationships between people's values and actions, interconnections across different global systems, and interrelationships across issues and problems are all mutual elements that both Peace Corps volunteers and global educators deem necessary for success as global citizens.

**Rationale for the Study**

Researchers have documented that international and cross-cultural experiences can make a particularly powerful contribution to an individual's knowledge and perception of the world. For example, Wilson (1984) pointed out that teachers who were only short-term travelers taught about global matters with more accuracy, authority, creativity, and enthusiasm. Educators (Anderson, 1977; Angell & Avery, 1992; Evans, 1987; Morris, 1979) also asserted the need for global education in the schools. They point out that the elementary years especially represent a critical opportunity for children to develop concepts and skills for reorganizing their thinking about global issues and cultural understanding.

There is, however, little known regarding what types of experiences are needed to foster global awareness and how those experiences impact teaching practice over time. The experiences of RPCV shed light on this because many returning volunteers go into the teaching profession. Furthermore, despite numerous studies on the history
of the Peace Corps, its organization, and other affiliations, very few have looked at the
Peace Corps and its impact on teaching with a global perspective.

The Peace Corps and Cross-Cultural Experiences

There are good reasons to believe that Peace Corps experiences have a
significant and lasting impact on classroom teaching, and provide opportunities for
sustained experiences in cross-cultural settings. Since 1961, Peace Corps volunteers
have taught more than 5 million students in developing nations. Education is the
Peace Corps' largest program. More than one-third of Peace Corps volunteers are
teachers or teacher/trainers. Peace Corps education volunteers have little access to the
commercial textbooks and supplies commonly available in the United States. Instead,
they work at the community level with substantial creativity and ingenuity to develop
lesson plans and teaching tools, using available materials gathered locally.

Serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in education thus promotes responsibilities
and opportunities as a teacher, teacher/trainer, or curriculum developer. Teaching
assignments for education volunteers differ from teaching positions in the United
States. Many educational environments for Peace Corps volunteers involve adapting
to a new culture, new location, different disciplinary practices, harsh climate, and the
ability to cope with a lack of resources, including everything from electricity to
textbooks, chalkboards, desks, writing utensils, and other tools and materials for
learning.
In other words, Peace Corps teachers either possess or must develop very quickly "pedagogical resourcefulness." Although the situation varies from country to country, all education volunteers are part of a larger community of students, teachers, parents, and local leaders. Many volunteers teach in both formal and informal settings. As part of a larger community, Peace Corps teachers often work in close collaboration with host-country nationals to develop human resources and educational materials. Moreover, teachers may work with parents, design programs for community involvement, or establish student organizations. Although formal education projects usually begin in the classroom, all education volunteers struggle with new lifestyles, traditions, languages, and sparse living conditions.

Peace Corps assignments are available in more than 93 countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, and the countries of the former Soviet Union. Assignments last for two years. Before their departure overseas, new volunteers receive two weeks of preliminary training and evaluation. This is followed by three months of in-country training to learn theories of national development and techniques for living and working successfully with host-country nationals. The training sessions also include intense study for proficiency in the local language.

Specific skill levels required for each position vary, but Peace Corps' educational projects generally fall into the following categories: primary and secondary school, teacher training, curriculum development, university English teaching, secondary school teaching, and special education. Subjects include
Mathematics, Science, English, Vocational Education, Industrial Arts, Special Education, Business Education, Physical Education, Art, and Library Science. Depending on one's education, expertise, and assignment location, opportunities might include teaching English conversation in a classroom with a host-country teacher, or designing daily lesson plans and teaching several classes of secondary students. In many disciplines, volunteers serve as resource teachers working in classrooms with teachers. By gaining familiarity of the host-country educational system, Peace Corps volunteers help to devise methods for developing the curriculum, improving teaching techniques, and introducing new activities and materials that reinforce classroom learning (Coyne, 1994).

There are also many positions in primary education classrooms with local teachers. The quality of facilities varies greatly. Occasionally, volunteers are requested to teach other subjects because of staff shortages. Teaching and observing others, and participation in structured activities are examples of a cooperative approach; sharing information and skills and promoting new methodologies are all part of the Peace Corps Educational program. Ultimately, my theories emanate from personal experiences combined with formal study and educational practice.

Research Design and Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative methodological approach. The flexibility of qualitative methods affords the researcher and respondent the best opportunity to consider a full range of human interactions and discover important issues. The
primary method of data collection used in this study was semistructured telephone interviews. The interview protocol was based on my knowledge and experience with the Peace Corps and an extensive literature review regarding global education.

Because qualitative research often relies on purposeful sampling to locate participants who can provide the best information for the purpose of the study (Patton, 1980), participants were selected on the basis of their previous experience as Peace Corps volunteers and their subsequent commitment to remain in the teaching profession.

Throughout the course of the investigation, I conducted two rounds of interviews with each participant. For further clarification and follow-up, I communicated with the participants using electronic mail correspondence. To analyze these experiences, I took notes during the interview sessions. These included reflections and comments about the interviews and my interaction with informants. Following the interviews, I transcribed the tapes and checked their accuracy with each respondent.

The analysis of qualitative data involves several activities, including data selection, sorting the data into categories, displaying the data, reading within and across the categories for themes, and synthesizing the information (Chism, 1994; Huberman & Miles, 1994). Data analysis was an ongoing process in this study. Selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transcribing the interviews were the main activities. The interview data were analyzed to identify preliminary themes,
emerging categories, and patterns regarding teacher’s perceptions of their subsequent curricula and instruction.

To address issues of trustworthiness, I drew upon the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985). Time is considered a major factor in the acquisition of trustworthiness. I have a great appreciation for the time spent interviewing, building sound relationships, and analyzing data, which all contributed to the trustworthiness of the data. Cross-case analysis of the interviews allowed me to compare viewpoints across respondents and clarify my own thinking. To ensure reliability, careful records were kept of the procedures used so that participants in the study could check the plausibility of my overall interpretations.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to clarify their use in this study:

Behavior – The actions or reactions of people under specified circumstances.

Culture – The fundamental values, beliefs, attitudes, and patterns of thinking that are embedded in a society’s or region’s view of how the world works and of how individuals and groups can and should operate in the world and the resulting behaviors of these individuals.

Global Education – Efforts to bring about changes in content, methods, and social context of education to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age (Anderson, 1992).
International Cross-Cultural Experience – Returned Peace Corps volunteer teachers’ cross-cultural interaction and experience with host-country nationals during their Peace Corps experience overseas.

International Education – Study of other countries and relationships between nations.

Multicultural Education – Study and critique of race, gender, and ethnicity, and the integral part it plays in the lives of people within the United States.

Peace Corps – A nonprofit government organization providing opportunities for volunteers to work and live in developing countries with a basic mission of grassroots, person-to-person development and interaction.

Service Learning – Integration of the regular classroom curriculum with a problem or issue in collaboration with the community to meet a community or school-based need. The method by which young people learn and develop through active participation in organized service projects.

Universalism – The belief that certain absolutes apply across the board, regardless of circumstances or particular situations and that all should be treated alike, without exception.

Values – The basis upon which people decide what is desirable, good, and right (and the opposite) in their culture.
Assumptions

My study’s methods and objectives reflect some of my underlying assumptions. First, I assume that the teachers’ responses in the interviews are truthful and that prospective teachers’ global understanding and, subsequently, the infusion of global perspectives in their classroom teaching, is needed by kindergarten through 12th-grade students. The methods and objectives of my study reflect this underlying assumption. My study also assumes that returned Peace Corps teachers would be able to articulate how their Peace Corps experience influenced their teaching.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are framed by those typically associated with qualitative approaches to research. The findings may be limited to understanding characteristics of the teachers interviewed rather than being generalizable to the larger teaching population. Participants’ individual Peace Corps assignments overseas may not be comparable or easily transferred to their teaching situation in the United States. It is important to remember that the findings came from teachers who volunteered for an experience such as The Peace Corps; this may indicate a psychological predisposition to cross-cultural experiences that is not easily generalizable to all teachers.

In addition, while my status as an insider gives me the empathy and experiential background to be effective in understanding participants’ perspectives, it can also be viewed as a limitation in that it is a potential source of bias.
Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides the background of the study and a statement of the research problem. It also addresses the purpose of the research; that is, to examine the various perceived effects of cross-cultural experiences of teachers with Peace Corps experience on their subsequent curricula and instruction. Next, the significance and rationale of this research are discussed with regard to global education, the Peace Corps, and international experiences. The design of the study includes definitions of terms, assumptions, and limitations of the study.

In Chapter 2, the review of literature presents selected relevant literature of Peace Corps history and area assignments in education. To support the theoretical framework for the study, the bulk of my review focuses on the literature regarding conceptualizations and implications of global education, global perspectives in teacher education, and incorporation of global education into the curriculum.

Chapter 3 presents the study’s research design, methods of data collection, procedures for analysis, the establishment of trustworthiness, ethical concerns, and an overview of my presentation of the interview data. Results and findings of the study are discussed in Chapter 4, including the participants’ perceptions of how Peace Corps experiences influenced their teaching. Finally, Chapter 5 presents a summary of the study and discusses implications for future research. With respect to incorporating aspects of global education into their teaching, I took into consideration suggestions
made by these former Peace Corps volunteers along with their recommendations for international experiences for prospective teachers.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of selected relevant literature of two general areas: the Peace Corps (Historical Perspectives of the Peace Corps, Peace Corps Area Assignments in Education), and the Importance of Global Education (Conceptualizations of Global Education, Implications of Global Education for Classroom Teaching, Incorporating Global Education in the Curriculum, Global Perspectives in Teacher Education).

The literature is presented to support the theoretical framework of the study. However, the paucity of research relating international experiences to teaching practices becomes abundantly clear in the review. The literature is much more extensive with respect to the needs and objectives of global education generally. Wherever appropriate, therefore, I have incorporated this broader literature to suggest its implications with respect to international experiences and its role in the curricula and instruction of classroom teachers who are RPCV.

This chapter begins with an overview of The Peace Corps history, specifically addressing Peace Corps area assignments for education programs. I subsequently
review some of the literature that explores the definition and conceptualization of
global education. A discussion of the research addressing general aspects of global
perspectives for classroom teaching follows, with a summary of implications for
classroom learning, and the impact of global education in the curricula. An overall
summary concludes the review.

The Peace Corps

Historical Perspectives of the Peace Corps

The U.S. Peace Corps became a reality on March 1, 1961. John F. Kennedy
founded it in spirit on that evening, in an impromptu speech to 10,000 students at the
University of Michigan. The Peace Corps owes much to the spirit of social justice
embodied in the Civil Rights Movement, students' stirrings for change throughout the
nation, as well as the innocence and incredible optimism of a new decade and the
newly independent nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The Peace Corps
tapped into the idealism of Americans to help with the social, economic, and
 technological change in newly emerging nations.

At its inception, Peace Corps volunteers represented a broad cross-section of
American men and women who symbolized America's pioneer spirit and sense of
altruism. Americans were neither the first nor the only ones to express altruism
through the act of volunteering. The United States was the first nation, however, to
incorporate volunteering into its foreign policy in an attempt to demonstrate one
alternative to power politics (Hoffman, 1998).
Sargent Shriver, the first Peace Corps director and former chairman of Chicago’s Board of Education, was instrumental in developing the initial programs for the agency. He strongly supported the Peace Corps role in education and is quoted in the New York Times, “The Peace Corps gave Americans the chance to dedicate themselves to meaningful work worthy of free men” (Hoffman, 1998, p. 81). In the United States, this was the era of “new math,” the “new physics,” and the President’s Commission of Physical Fitness with growing federal aid to colleges, universities, and medical schools; thus, the emphasis on educational programs was widely recognized (Cross, 1998).

Since 1961, more than 150,000 men and women have joined the Peace Corps for two years of service overseas. Each volunteer’s experience is unique but each person makes a commitment to live and work in a developing country whether to teach math, science or English, or to work with a community to protect the local environment; whether it is helping others stay healthy, expand their business, or improve their farming techniques.

Peace Corps volunteers are not so much the typical tough, political idealists. They are more gentle idealists, supporting forms of activism for human rights, and helping people help themselves to build a better future for themselves, their children, and families. Serving in the Peace Corps involves a significant personal commitment, and to a degree, physical risk. For these reasons it is considered “the toughest job you’ll ever love,” as suggested by the Peace Corps logo. Peace Corps volunteers do not always create broad-scale change. They rather tend to affect individual’s lives.
For the volunteer, the Peace Corps is a noble and humble undertaking (Stein, 1999). Returned volunteers often voice how they gained much more than they gave through their service overseas. The cross-cultural exchange itself is of great value and an exceptional learning experience as well.

The Peace Corps today remains important in creating people to people programs where host country individuals and programs are well served. Peace Corps service offers opportunities to develop the ability, sensitivity and experience needed to work with diverse peoples while enhancing one's global consciousness. Although there are no specific studies demonstrating the development of Peace Corps volunteers' global perspectives, the following section reviews area assignments in education.

**Peace Corps Area Assignments in Education**

This section of the review focuses on Peace Corps area assignments and programming in education, from Peace Corps' conception to more current trends and issues. In recent years, there has been a trend toward global development as the central focus of the Peace Corps. More focused programming and a stronger commitment to the role of development means that measuring direct impact on developing countries will be more feasible in the future (Viorst, 1986). However, the Peace Corps has had at least one central focus from the beginning: education. In the early days of the Peace Corps, host countries wanted teachers. Fortunately, it was

22
precisely teachers, (or generalists who could be trained as teachers) who tended to volunteer (Stein, 1999).

Despite its success, the Peace Corps’ role in education has always been controversial. Critics charged that it was inappropriate to emphasize formal education for people in developing countries who were for the most part destined to return to subsistence farming (Cross, 1998). Development economists did not regard education as a form of capital investment. Nevertheless, Sargent Shriver remained a staunch supporter of a strong education program. He was convinced that basic education was crucial for a country’s long-term development. In the long run, development economists came to agree with Shriver’s point of view. The World Summit for Social Development approved a world social charter, and endorsed a new paradigm of sustainable development to address global concerns. This proposal introduced a new concept of human security, based upon national development rather than arms, as envisioned by Kennedy and Shriver through the Peace Corps initiative.

The impact of The Peace Corps over the past 38 years has been astounding. Peace Corps teachers have taught nearly 5 million students and can take credit for a long list of accomplishments. In recent years, the emphasis has shifted from expanding school availability and enrollment to improving the quality of education (Viorst, 1986). Fewer volunteers are now being placed as teachers, and more are being asked to develop curricula, write text, and train teachers.

The Peace Corps World Wise School agenda is one such example of a Peace Corps program focusing on cross-cultural experience. This program is concerned with
connecting students in American classrooms with volunteers overseas. In 1989, this innovative global education program was developed to provide students in the United States with a view of life in one of the more than 93 countries where Peace Corps volunteers serve. Students in America’s schools correspond with volunteers serving overseas in an effort to promote international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. More than 1 million students in all 50 states have participated in the World Wise Schools program.

Of those volunteers who pursue higher education after Peace Corps service, approximately 75% enter graduate school. More than 40% of those in graduate programs study education. Several colleges and universities recognize the educational value of a volunteer’s training and overseas experience and give graduate or undergraduate credit for Peace Corps service. As of 1990, opportunities such as the Master’s Internationalist program were devised to motivate educators to serve overseas. This program allows volunteers to work toward a master’s degree in education while simultaneously serving overseas in a Peace Corps education assignment. There is also a Peace Corps Fellows Program, which provides graduate assistance to RPCV. Upon their return from Peace Corps service, volunteers are hired to teach in specific school districts in urban city schools, while simultaneously attending graduate school. The incentive is that RPCVs’ school fees are paid in full by The Peace Corps.

According to Robert Blackburn, director of Philadelphia’s Office of Integration and Intergroup Education, returned volunteers have proved especially
effective in urban schools (Viorst, 1986). When considering the implications of the numbers and the cumulative effect of Peace Corps teachers in classrooms throughout the developing world and the United States, those teachers’ international experiences and global perspectives are obviously worthy of investigation and research.

Serving as a Peace Corps volunteer teacher affords one the opportunity to “live” many of the precepts valued by global education advocates. Volunteers are not only exposed to the cross-cultural experiences global educators value, but as teachers, teacher-trainers, and curriculum developers, they gain experiences in the many levels of teaching and learning that global education proposes needs to be re-conceptualized. This is evident if we explore common conceptualizations of global education.

The Importance of Global Education

Global education is designed to develop perspectives that deal with the interdependent nature of the world. World events have forced the American public to look beyond its borders to better understand global issues, territorial conflicts, and racial tensions. According to Tucker and Cistone (1991), global education has become a mainstream concern. Concepts such as “global village” and “think globally, act locally” are promoted to enable the American public to cross borders if only psychologically.

Generally speaking, global education assumes that through cross-cultural experiences, teachers are able to obtain global perspectives. Although I am not aware of many studies regarding these assumptions, I will present related literature that
suggests this to be the case. Gilliom (1981), for example, also pointed out that teachers are key agents in introducing global education and that they should serve as living examples of the globally concerned citizen they are attempting to produce. To become living examples of global citizenship, he suggested that international travel and study are invaluable for exploring other ways of life and for collecting teaching materials for use in the classroom.

Anderson (1990) developed a rationale for global education based upon three fundamental changes in the world’s social structure: growth of global interdependence, erosion of western dominance, and the decline of American economic and political power and influence. He also shows how American demography and culture are becoming more global in nature. Anderson links social change and educational change and argues for global education, as the direction society is moving.

Alger and Harf (1985) viewed global education as a diverse and highly decentralized movement. This movement is a cumulative response to a variety of concerns: the population explosion, the environmental crisis, arms competition, the influx of refugees, terrorism, and U.S. involvement in other nations. In a classroom that promotes global awareness, these concerns can be addressed accordingly, thus encouraging the development of student’s perspective consciousness.

Because of perceptions that education was not keeping up with a rapidly changing world, the global education movement has depended upon a small group of articulate spokespersons to give it life and direction (Kniep, 1985). Success of the
global education movement is attributed to those spokespersons and to effective networks of individuals and groups who foster grassroots efforts at making global education a part of the school curriculum. It has been strengthened by the establishment of centers for research and materials development both in the private non-profit sector and at several major universities.

The focus on global issues and solving global problems has forced us to consider the world at large rather than emphasizing a limited local view. Global education views world areas as parts of larger, interacting interdependent systems connected through global issues such as the depletion of natural resources, population explosion, and human rights issues (Kobus, 1983). Alger and Harf (1985) addressed the need to emphasize the substantive dimension of global education by maintaining that global problems cannot be solved at national levels, but rather require international solutions, for they argue that today’s interdependence is best understood through awareness of the historical contacts among civilizations.

**Conceptualizations of Global Education**

Conceptualizations of global education are fast moving from the periphery of education to the mainstream. There have been many debates about precise definitions of global education. Regardless of the definition, it is helpful to understand the interconnectedness of the varying conceptualizations.

According to Becker and Anderson (1980), global education is defined as "learning to perceive and understand the world as a single and complex system,
viewing oneself as a participant in the world system, and understanding the benefits, costs, rights, and responsibilities inherent in such participation. It is a form of teaching designed to promote student's global perspectives through learning the problems and issues which cut across national boundaries and the interconnectedness of cultural, environmental, economic, political and technological systems."

In addition, Becker (1979) differentiated between a world-centered approach versus those based on international relations or world cultures. He asserted that teachers should employ an interdisciplinary approach to promote students’ global perspectives (Becker, 1990). Furthermore, Kniep (1987) defined the content of global education as having the following dimensions: universal and diverse human values and cultures, global systems (economic, political, technological, ecological), persistent global problems and issues (peace and security, human rights, environment, development), and global history.

Global education is committed to preparing teachers and students for effective participation in a globally interconnected world. Hanvey (1976) argued that global education is a process of learning to understand and appreciate our neighbors with different cultural backgrounds from ours; to see the world through the eyes and minds of others, and to realize that people may view life differently than we do, even though people of the world need and want much the same thing.

Hanvey’s (1976) five dimensions of global perspectives have become one of the identifying characteristics of a global perspective. These five dimensions include state of the planet awareness, perspective consciousness, cross-cultural awareness,
global dynamics, and awareness of human needs. These dimensions are frequently used as the basis for developing specific goals and objectives for global education.

Implications of Global Education for Classroom Teaching

Although ideas and attitudes expressed in writing about a global perspective are important in defining global education, an examination of global education instructional strategies themselves can give us a better sense of what sets this type of instruction apart from others. According to Merryfield (1992), guiding principles and the contextual factors (teacher beliefs and experiences) are driving forces in instructional decision-making that capture many aspects of teaching about the world. Global education promotes a new way of teaching and learning about the world utilizing interdisciplinary strategies for teaching content and active learning methods that promote involvement in learning both within and outside of the formal classroom.

Alger and Harf (1985) argued that global education is a fundamentally different approach in teaching because of its interdisciplinary content and the different kinds of people it has the potential to reach. The fact that global education is designed to be accessible to all individuals is one of its strengths. It promotes the idea that students should be encouraged to bring their own unique backgrounds into the learning environment to help form the content of the curriculum. The concept of involvement is stressed in global education along with action as a result of learning about connections that exist between the local and global community.
Global education proposes to help individuals obtain a global perspective, a perspective that has both a substantive and perceptual dimension (Case, 1993). The substantive dimension promotes content knowledge while the perceptual dimension encourages acquisition of an outlook that allows for the integration of this new information within the context of one's immediate environment. Substantive definitions of global education have not been the norm in global education literature; rather, the effort of global educators has focused on developing a rationale for and demonstration of the practical nature of global education.

Lamy (1987), for instance, emphasized the need for a practical application of Case's concept of the perceptual dimension. Case (1993) argued that the perceptual dimension of global education consists of open-mindedness, anticipation of complexity, resistance to stereotyping, inclination to empathize, and nonchauvinism. In his view, a global perspective is based on the infusion of and integration into the curriculum for awareness to emerge global education concepts rather than on implementation of new courses or extensive revision of curricular content. Lamy (1987) similarly identified four intellectual goals of global education: knowledge acquisition from multiple perspectives, the exploration of world views, the development of analytical and evaluative skills, and strategies for participation and involvement to establish global education programs in the classroom.

Many educators have argued for greater distinction among global education goals. The divergence in the field is a significant one in terms of planning curricular programs and teacher inservice. While global education authors do not offer specific
curricula, their stated intention is to identify phenomena that curriculum designers should be aware of. While global education is increasing in the curriculum in schools, it is still not the central curriculum (Banks, 1993; Hu-DeHart, 1994). Many teachers view and interact with the world, schools, and students in individualistic, personal and apolitical terms and ignore gender, race, and social class dynamics (Ahlquist, 1992; Liston & Zeichner, 1990). Some view global education as a way of meeting the needs of individual students rather than part of collective, social change (Goodwin, 1994). Frequently, preservice teachers do not consider global education very important.

Global education is looking for fundamental changes in schools, people, curriculum, and methods. Anderson (1992) suggested that we think about global education as efforts to bring about fundamental changes in the content, in the methods, and in the social context of education, to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age. Indeed, Anderson (1979) argued that even though we are gradually recognizing that we are part of a global society, this has been a fact for quite some time.

Today's students must learn to think in a whole new way about life on a global scale, recognizing the oneness and wholeness of the human race, that this wholeness is supported by complexity and diversity, and that change is not inevitable (Johnson, 1990). These simple principles have profound implications for classroom learning, teaching methods, curriculum design and response to the needs, aspirations, and resources of both teachers and learner.
Establishing connections between students in classrooms and people around the world is a major goal of global education. This is to ensure that every aspect of the curriculum, including culture, language, literature, history, geography, economics, politics, and science is utilized to inform a global perspective. In an address to the American Education Research Association, Gilliom (1990) proposed an overview of a project design that urges reconstruction of the entire education system based on an interdisciplinary approach. With a kindergarten through 12th-grade curriculum, the learner’s experiences are organized thematically around studies of world systems. The most significant portion of Gilliom’s design was a step-by-step development plan for those wishing to implement a successful global education program.

Global education should not be considered something that comes into focus after completion of formal education. Teachers should instead regard education as an inclusive and humanistic endeavor, and should be aware of global education methods to empower their students with the same skills and attitudes. In essence, this awareness will better prepare both teachers and students to take an interest in and support initiatives as citizens of the world.

In conclusion, the continuous debate among global educators over the substance of global education has been problematic. Adherents of a particular perspective often insist that only their view of the world is important, thereby dismissing the assumptions and priorities of other valid perspectives. These arguments or debates reflect the diversity existing within global education, of this
world view, but they also emphasize the difficulties that educator’s face in attempting
to reach consensus on elements regarding global education.

Despite different ideas about global education, there does exist a high level of
consistency and agreement among global educators about what constitutes significant
content for defining, developing curriculum, and promoting global perspectives.

**Incorporating Global Education in the Curriculum**

Tucker’s (1983) research in Dade County Florida pointed to the lack of
appropriate instructional materials as the most substantial obstacle to the growth and
development of global education in the schools. Perhaps this attests to the complexity
of implementing global education in the classroom. Because of the complexity of
“issues” addressed in global education, practitioners often find themselves unprepared
for and paralyzed by the diversity of issues to be addressed.

Having adequate descriptions of the content will not by itself help teachers
solve the problem of how it should be organized for instruction. The kinds of
instructional organizers that are chosen will have a critical impact on how effective
global education programs are in reaching their goals. Instructional organizers are the
major topics, themes, or ideas, around which curricula develop.

Evidence suggests that the teacher’s world views, experience, and knowledge
influence the implementation of global education and are key elements to achieve
success or resistance toward to integration of global education in the classroom
(Becker, 1998). The concept of world view is further discussed in Chapter 4. Given
that teachers develop their own idiosyncratic world views and beliefs, they are in control of the knowledge being transmitted to students. If global education is to become a successful reality in classroom instruction, teachers who teach with a global perspective will serve as examples for its implementation by providing new insights, knowledge and commitment. The idea of a long-term commitment should provide teachers with a deep understanding of concepts in global/multicultural education and the ability to relate those concepts to their own lives, classrooms, and curriculum (Freeman, 1986). Within the curriculum, students are given opportunities to build bridges between the study of other cultures and the development of positive attitudes and behaviors toward cultural and racial diversity at home. Throughout the curriculum the knowledge and skills developed are applicable in both local and global settings, reflecting Alger's (1989) phrase, "think globally, act locally."

There are opportunities that support student learning through global perspectives, such as hosting an exchange student, in-depth studies of a cultural group, visits to community businesses and organizations to examine their connections to the global economy, and communication with organizations and businesses in other parts of the world. In such cases, language charts, portfolios, and student journal writings can be incorporated into a thematic, integrated disciplined approach.

Thorpe's (1986) study of the factors that either support or hinder classroom instruction could be applied to global education as well. Although Thorpe's work does not actually address the specifics to globalize classroom instruction, it did survey 26 high school social studies classes in the San Francisco Bay area utilizing
questionnaires and interview data collected by the American School and the World Project of Stanford. The factors Thorpe found relevant to instruction include teacher commitment and knowledge based on global education, school climate, administrative support, time and material resources, student abilities, motivation, and needs.

Overall, global education is necessary at each level of education including university and postgraduate studies. The curriculum in many colleges of education however, regardless of the fact that many graduates will go on to teach diverse populations, includes little provisions for concern with an interest in, or an appreciation of a global society. Gilliom and Farley (1990) argued that bringing a world view to American education by way of both preservice training and inservice support is a challenge to teacher educators and school administrators alike. This requires a commitment not only of the single instructor but also of all faculty members and administrators. Gilliom (1993) also believed that the level of expertise required to infuse teacher education with a global perspective is best developed when a critical mass of faculty members, and a community of similarly committed people has formed. This requires a commitment of time, leadership, political "know-how" and the willingness to take risks. According to Gilliom and Annink (1993), much work remains to be done if global education programs with an international, cross-cultural focus are to be widely accepted as a necessary, integral part of teacher education.

Approaches to implementation vary significantly. Some programs and educators stress teaching knowledge of the world, interdependence and interconnectedness, and encouraging acceptance of other cultures. Others advocate a
process for achieving awareness and multi-levels of understanding and action, to provide all individuals, regardless of culture, gender, social class, and religious background, with the skills needed to function effectively in society. There is not therefore, simply one “trend” all global teacher education programs follow. Rather, it encompasses a variety of approaches designed to infuse global awareness across the curriculum. It is then hoped that student teachers will transfer this experience and awareness to the classroom. However, little empirical study of this “transference” has been conducted to date, or of how global education (much less overseas experience) influences teachers’ personal theories of teaching and learning.

The success of global education for the future rests on the ability of those who provide the necessary tools for effectively implementing curricular/instructional programs. Global education is fast becoming the subject of a growing body of literature and schools have begun to place importance on the successful incorporation of global perspectives in education.

Still, recent studies and reports on American schooling have made it clear that global education has not yet reached a place of prominence in the curriculum of most elementary and secondary schools. It is still the exception rather than the rule to find programs that include global and international content within the nation’s schools.

At the same time, policy makers, administrators and teachers throughout the country are engaged in examining curricula and pedagogy and are making changes in requirements and courses of study to correct the weaknesses that have been identified in the nation’s schools. In many cases their examinations and subsequent
recommendations reflect a renewed interest in making a global perspective a central focus of the curriculum.

Citizens of the world must develop the ability to view their lives in a global context, to understand the impact of global interdependence, and to be able to make responsible decisions on the basis of their connections with the rest of the world. This is strongly emphasized in the definition of global education. Teacher education programs might therefore consider "global education" as an essential element of teacher education. Although this presents a challenge for educators today, the integration of global education into teacher education programs will likely impact the ways in which future generations interact with the world.

Another part of that challenge is to prepare new teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners and to teach with a global perspective. In promoting that challenge, some critics urge teacher educators to learn more about preservice teachers' experiences, beliefs, and views that influence what they learn. For example, Zeichner (1994) encourages the investigation of preservice teachers' levels of social responsibility as an indicator of their commitment to teach. Goodwin (1994) suggested opportunities for novice teachers to make their beliefs about global education more explicit, to deal with misconceptions, assumptions, and prejudice. The main pressure on schools and teacher education programs to be more multicultural or global is the increasing diversity among school age children and the democratic ideals of justice and equality that schools teach but often fail to live up to
Global Perspectives in Teacher Education

In an attempt to develop global awareness and prepare students for national and global citizenship, teachers are encouraged to infuse global perspectives into their teaching. In so doing, they need to employ different teaching strategies and methods of instruction, and allow for a variety of learning situations for students. To meet the needs of students in a world where familiar geopolitical boundaries and economic assumptions are being replaced by new realities, there is a need for effective global education at all levels and in all disciplines. Nevertheless, the preparation of teachers to teach with a global perspective involves a great deal of skill. According to Cushner (1990), teachers played a key role in implementing effective teaching and learning of global perspectives. Cushner argued that globalizing curricula must be preceded by globalizing teachers.

To fully understand making global connections and globalizing the curriculum, global educators (Anderson, 1979; Hanvey, 1986; Tye & Tye, 1992) claimed there is a pressing need to globalize the content of education and to rethink the instruction and methods of teacher preparation. According to Tye & Tye (1992), teacher educators needed to be able to impart to teachers a vision of how one moves from the conceptualization of global education to everyday practice in the schools. In addition to understanding the interdependent nature of the world, global educators emphasize...
the need for applying global perspectives in recognizing choices, reaching judgment, and making decisions.

For example, Merryfield and Harris (1992) explored important elements for effective teacher education programs with a global perspective. They argued that programs should foster appreciation for cultural differences and similarities, including multiple perspective consciousness, the world as a system and the concept of interdependence, and how student's decisions affect and are affected by global connections in their community.

Case (1991) pointed out that barriers continue to exist in the implementation of global education. He argued that many teachers are ill prepared to teach global education because they lack sufficient knowledge of the world. Scholars have examined the implementation of global education and how classroom teachers infuse global strategies into classroom instruction over time. Kniep (1986), for example, spelled out strategies for teaching across world regions and time periods. His global history includes the teaching of historical antecedents to current issues, origins and developments of cultures and values.

Howey and Strom (1996) argued that good teachers should possess qualities of being adaptable, questioning, critical, inventive, self-renewing, and oriented to moral principles. These qualities are essential to fostering a global perspective. Globally aware teachers must be able to consider and employ different and conflicting perspectives in thinking and decision making, organize creative problem solving techniques, understand and utilize multiple perspectives in communication, seek a
beliefs-practice congruity, understand and accommodate the needs of diverse groups, and evaluate the impact of their actions on other people (Howey & Strom, 1996). These patterns of behavior can be measured in ongoing educative activities in the classroom and are also qualities that exemplify elements necessary for success in what teachers should exhibit in their own practice.

Wilson (1993) claimed that students attending study abroad learn new languages, become concerned about world affairs, and gave a new perspective on host cultures, such as customs, traditions, and social structure. Thus, student teachers tend to become more open-minded and show an increased interest in reflective thought and tolerance for ambiguity after overseas travels, which transfer to their teaching.

Many studies offer innovative suggestions for teacher preparation and curriculum change. Hanvey (1976) suggested that preservice and inservice teacher training as well as overseas cross-cultural experiences are essential for teachers. Wilson (1984) demonstrated that teachers with international/cross-cultural experience enhance their classroom teaching as well as make an impact on their own students. Teachers taught with more accuracy, authority, creativity, enthusiasm, and understanding about places they visited. Understanding “how” teachers implement global perspectives in their classroom instruction, therefore, provides new insights for “preparing” teachers to “teach” global education in the classroom.

Teachers who infuse global education with their instruction are better able to aid others in structuring their own approach to global education, once they possess a clear understanding of its relevance to their lives and to those who they teach. For
example, Gilliom (1981) argued that the logical way to infuse global education into the curriculum is to integrate global topics into existing courses through units and lessons that have already been adopted. Still, efforts to specify what will help student teachers develop a global perspective have been modest.

Although global perspectives in teacher education have been slow to develop, the responsibility of teacher education is to develop and nourish human resources. Tucker and Cistone (1991) stated that the content of teacher education must be re-examined, especially in general and professional education requirements. In this regard, global perspectives for teachers are an urgent priority in refining and improving teacher education programs.

Summary

In summary, to prepare students for the future, it is imperative to understand the relationship between experiences and a teacher's perception of global education, and the ability to make the link to their curriculum and instruction. Many such as Wilson (1993) acknowledged that the international experiences of teachers contribute to the way in which their students gain a global perspective as part of education and preparation for citizenship in the 21st century. In the next few chapters, I will examine how RPCV perceive their Peace Corps experience and its influence on their subsequent teaching practice.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on methodology in an attempt to clarify the process of inquiry from the choice of problem and research paradigm to the writing of the dissertation. The chapter describes the rationale for the use of a qualitative research design and the role of the researcher and general line of inquiry. Next, the research design provides a general description identifying the overall strategies used within the methodology, which included the selection process, interview strategy, methods for collecting data, and strategies for analysis and data management.

Following the research design is a more in-depth description of the specific inquiry including a discussion of interviewing technique, data collection and management, data analysis, establishment of trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. A summary of the overall process concludes the chapter. These specific procedures were used to unravel the context of dispositions and to provide detailed descriptions of the inquiry process.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the various perceived effects of cross-cultural experiences and the infusion of global education on the subsequent
curriculum and instruction of teachers with Peace Corps experience. My approach was largely phenomenological in that it follows how RPCV teachers perceive their international Peace Corps experience and the impact it had on their teaching practice. The Questions and Subquestion that guided my study are:

How do former Peace Corps teachers describe the nature of their teaching experience and their perceptions of their role as teacher while serving overseas in the Peace Corps?

1. How do former Peace Corps teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and their perception of their role as teacher as a result of serving overseas in the Peace Corps?

2. How do former Peace Corps teachers say that their teaching and curriculum has been influenced or changed by this international, cross-cultural experience?

3. Do teachers with international experiences such as The Peace Corps infuse global education in their teaching practice, and if so, how?
   a. Did the infusion happen naturally or did they purposely implement strategies for more successful teaching and learning?

**Rationale for the Use of Qualitative Research Design**

As previously stated, the purpose of this study is to examine and document how cross-cultural experiences obtained through Peace Corps service are perceived as valuable to teachers and their classroom instruction generally and in relation to global
education in particular. A qualitative approach was used to investigate the international teaching experiences of RPCVs and the degree to which these experiences influenced their subsequent teaching with a global perspective.

Inasmuch as I was primarily interested in RPCV teachers' perceptions of their experiences, I assumed that my own experience as a returned Peace Corps teacher influenced both my choice of research questions as well as my interactions as researcher with the teachers interviewed. I selected a qualitative approach to inquiry that was both constructivist and phenomenological.

Constructivists hold that knowledge of the world is not a simple reflection of what there is, but a reflection of what we make of what is there (Schwandt, 1997). Phenomenology consists of a careful description of the conscious experience of everyday life, a description of "things" as one experiences them, which includes perception, i.e., believing, remembering, deciding, evaluating, and so forth (Schwandt, 1997). In this study, I investigated the perceptions of Peace Corps volunteer teachers regarding their international experiences and the ways in which they individually and collectively interpret and perceive those experiences. From the data collected, I then constructed a narrative description by translating the data of responses regarding the individual participant's lived experiences.

The constructivist and phenomenological approach to qualitative inquiry is best suited for revealing in-depth perceptions of the context from the research, exploring the interaction between the respondent and researcher, and revealing the multiple realities encountered in the process of investigation (in this case, for example,
the Peace Corps experience that both the respondents and myself brought to the inquiry process). Qualitative methods can be sensitive and adaptable to the design of the study, the interview questions, and the process of interpretation and analysis along the way. These are the many mutually shaping influences and value patterns that may be encountered in the field of research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The flexibility of qualitative methods affords the researcher and respondent the best opportunity to draw on as well as learn from the full range of human interactions involved in the research process. In so doing, the researcher discovers critical emergent issues as the process of inquiry unfolds.

This process of changing one's values and concepts through reflective inquiry is what Lather (1986) called "catalytic validity." Through an examination of their international cross-cultural experiences as Peace Corps volunteers, I wished to engage the teachers in a reflective process regarding their perceptions of their Peace Corps experience, their perceptions and definitions of global education, and the impact of international experiences on their instructional practice. A qualitative approach enabled me to be explicit regarding the value of the research process and my role as researcher and interpreter. Much of this study is based on my personal experience as a classroom teacher, a RPCV, and a teacher supervisor for teacher education. Elements from each of these experiences have influenced all phases of the study.

Qualitative inquiry also facilitates, through in-depth, long-term interviewer-participant interaction and reflections, an understanding of what is occurring from the participant's point of view. This is especially important in this study because, as
Clandinin (1988) pointed out, the “teacher perspective” is often not articulated in the same manner as the “theoretical researcher’s perspective.” The search for teachers’ meaning is part of the data that should be fleshed out through the use of “thick description” (Geertz, 1973). Thick description probes the intentions, motives, meanings, contexts, situations, and circumstances of action. The thick description of the teachers’ perspectives is only available through the kind of “thick data” as those collected in long interviews and extended participant-researcher contact.

Lincoln and Cuba (1985) argued that qualitative methods allow for emergent design and are adaptable to the many mutually shaping (that is, researcher-respondent) influences and value patterns that may be encountered. An emergent design, which allows for the generation of hypotheses and future research questions, is especially important when there is little previous research on the topic. Although the literature dealing with the effect of teachers’ previous international experiences on their present teaching, for example, was used to create the guiding questions related to the study, new questions not addressed in the existing literature, emerged as the study progressed. Questions that focus on the experiences and perceptions of teachers as they engage in the complex activity of teaching are most appropriately explored, therefore, through qualitative methods (Erickson, 1986; Shulman, 1988).

Role of the Researcher

Instead of measuring the actual impact of the participant’s international experience—the focus of most qualitative or quasi-experimental studies—I sought to
understand what “meaning” the participants confer on their international experience. The objective was not to advance or discredit a particular perception, but to “understand” their perceptions of Peace Corps teaching experiences in relation to their classroom practice upon their return to the United States.

My motivation for this study was a desire to understand how to improve teaching and learning with a global perspective by examining how RPCV teachers perceived the Peace Corps to have influenced their teaching methods and curriculum, and if there is something about these experiences that might inform teacher education. In other words, I wanted to investigate how RPCV teachers believed their prior international teaching experience influenced their present teaching practice, and whether these perceptual changes might suggest how we could (and whether we could) design professional development experiences that might “trigger” similar attitudinal/perceptual changes in preservice and in-service teachers. Could the teachers’ perceptions regarding the influence of Peace Corps experience on their teaching tell us something about how we should approach the “teaching of teachers” for developing global consciousness?

Of particular interest in qualitative research is the personal stance of the researcher with respect to the study. Because I previously served as a Peace Corps volunteer and taught for many years in the United States following that experience, I was in a favorable position to relate to the participants. On the other hand, my position raised issues of trustworthiness. For interview data in this study to be valid and reliable, I had to be alert to my own biases and subjectivity, so as to produce more
trustworthy interpretations. To capture the nuance and meaning of each participant’s perspective, I had to gain participants’ trust and cooperation. Simultaneously, I attempted to be explicit about my standpoint throughout the research process regarding the research questions, my interaction with respondents, the data analysis, and the writing up of results.

My general line of inquiry was to examine how international experiences such as that of Peace Corps may have influenced the teachers’ perceptions of their teaching with a global perspective. The following section relates how I approached my general line of inquiry including participant selection, interview strategies, data collection, and data analysis. As a researcher seeking to understand the influence of the participants’ international/cross-cultural experiences on their teaching, I wanted to understand how RPCV made sense of “how they do what they do.”

Research Design

Selection Process

Qualitative research often relies on purposeful sampling to locate participants who can provide the best information for the purposes of the study. Patton (1980) referred to this as selecting information-rich cases in which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance. Consequently, participants were chosen based on their previous experience as Peace Corps volunteers and for their having selected teaching as their profession following their Peace Corps experience.
Considering their place of residence (Ohio) and willingness to participate in the study, teachers were selected from a RPCV network in the form of an electronic mail list of more than 300 names. Participants were also selected from the membership list of the Columbus Ohio Returned Volunteer Association (CORVA) and the Northern Ohio Returned Volunteer Association (NORVA).

Ultimately, I collected personal data from 10 individuals who served in the Peace Corps, ranging in age from mid-20s to mid-50s. I selected participants according to sex, the region in which they served as a Peace Corps volunteer teacher, and that upon their return to the United States they continued to teach.

In this study, I do not intend to change the methods and practices of classroom teachers, although, as noted earlier in my citation of Lather's (1994) note on catalytic validity, I assume that a reflective process of inquiry might encourage change by producing for the teachers a forum in which to explicitly articulate their values and attitudes toward enhancing methods and procedures for classroom teaching. Specifically this process enabled me to examine RPCV teachers' perceptions of their teaching and how (and whether) they believed their international experiences such as Peace Corps transferred to their classroom practice in the United States.

The strategy of purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) was used for selection of the participants. Based on their previous experience as Peace Corps volunteers and their subsequent commitment to remain in the teaching profession, these teachers could provide the best information for the purpose of the study.
Interview Strategy

To obtain the reflection and perceptions of Peace Corps volunteers' international experiences and their perspective of those experiences, my main method of data collection was semi-structured, long interviews in which the participants could reflect and describe their personal background, their international experiences, and their current approach to teaching and learning.

In keeping with the naturalistic paradigm, my objective was to capture through interviews each teacher's constructed meaning regarding the impact of their international experience on their teaching. By "constructed meaning," I refer to the significance of the international experience for each participant based on his or her own history. It is through their constructed meaning that we gain insight into the participant's own history, culture, and perspective. The interviews thus served as an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their motivation for an international experience, their most valuable Peace Corps experience, and their perceptions of how international experiences affect their current classroom instruction. These three areas were part of the data collection generally and of the interviews in particular.

Although the fundamental research design remained constant, the research activities were somewhat emergent to allow for further questioning, revisions and adjustments as I interacted with research participants. Following the initial contact and invitation to participate in the study, interviews were held with each participant. Follow-up telephone calls were made to clarify and elaborate on certain responses from the participants. An agreement was also made between respondents and myself.
to correspond through e-mail. This process took place as the data collection and analysis progressed. The process enabled me to interact with respondents through the process of interviewing, follow-up, and data collection. The questions for the interviews were as follows:

1. Originally, what factors influenced your decision to serve in the Peace Corps?
2. Briefly describe your overall Peace Corps experience.
3. What specific experiences do you view as the most valuable?
4. In reflecting on your Peace Corps experience, how has your curriculum been affected or changed over the years as a result of your experience?
5. Would you describe as precisely as possible how you incorporate what you have learned from your Peace Corps service into your classroom instruction?
6. Tell me specific examples of teaching procedures and curriculum materials you use that reflect the impact of your Peace Corps experiences.
7. What is your definition of global education? How have you come to this definition?
8. How would you describe teaching with a global perspective?
9. Would you recommend an international experience for prospective teachers? If so, which specific suggestions do you have to make for a rich learning experience overseas?
Methods for Collecting Data

According to Lather (1994), "methodology is a site where we make ourselves intelligible to ourselves, a place of constructed visibility and incitements to see what frames one’s seeing." In this regard, I examined how Peace Corps experiences influenced classroom teachers and what "framed their seeing" with respect to the impact of teaching with a global perspective. The ideal way to accomplish this was through interviews.

The data collection process took place in the form of listening to what the respondents said by reviewing recorded cassette tapes, e-mail printouts, and personal notes. The e-mail correspondence allowed for ongoing conversations throughout the study, to discuss as necessary, follow-up questions, explanations, and clarification of the participant's response.

I was interested in the perceptions of returned Peace Corps teachers, and how they perceived that their present teaching was influenced by their Peace Corps experience. The interview questions as well as my subsequent analysis examined the interpretations regarding teaching with a global perspective and how it impacts their teaching. To facilitate respondents' articulations of expression through their perceptions and feelings, I utilized in-depth interviewing (Marshall & Rossman, 1995) and the general interview guide approach (Patton, 1990).

Through in-depth interviewing, I pursued all points of interest with expressions that mean "tell me more" and "explain." The intent was to capture how the participants perceived their international, Peace Corps experience, and how they
teach with a global perspective. The elaborated responses that I heard provided the affective underpinnings of the teachers' perceptions. I obtained what is characteristic of qualitative inquiry: the native's point of view (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

The interview guide (Appendix A) is a structured list of questions through which I could explore the central issue of my study: "How do returned Peace Corps volunteer teachers believe that their international experiences have influenced their classroom teaching?" This guide lists questions and issues I wished to explore in the course of the interview. If a number of people are to be interviewed on the same topic, the same concepts should be discussed with them. An advantage of using an interview guide is that the interviewer carefully decides how to use the limited time available in an interview situation (Patton, 1990). The set of issues in the guide were explored with each participant, although the actual order in which I raised questions varied, to allow the interview to flow freely from the respondent.

**Strategies for Analysis and Data Management**

Qualitative research sees every act as connected to the interpretation of the researcher. In my review of the data, I was confident that the perceptions derived from the participants provided enough detailed information to be useful for the process of analysis. The interview data were analyzed to identify preliminary themes and emerging categories regarding teachers' perceptions of the relationship between their Peace Corps experience and subsequent classroom teaching. The themes and categories were refined based on constant analysis and two stages of recorded
interviews and on-going dialogue with participants through electronic mail correspondence. Lincoln and Guba's (1985) inductive process and the constant-comparative method of Strauss and Corbin (1990) guided this data collection and analysis process. For this study, I incorporated interpretive procedures including techniques such as coding, sampling, and the writing of memos that made up the final component of the qualitative research.

Initial interactions in the field are critical as a precursor to establishing trust and rapport (Janesick, 1994). I established my initial contact with the participants through introductory e-mail messages or telephone calls. I explained my background in teaching and in the Peace Corps, the purpose of the study, and what would be required of the participants. The purpose of this initial contact was to establish my credibility, to explain to the participants the role they would play in the study, and to establish their willingness to participate in the study. A date and time for the first interview was also discussed.

To gain the trust and cooperation of the participants, telephone calls and e-mail requests were followed by a packet of introductory material, which was mailed to each participant. This material was designed to explain the study in greater detail and to give more information about myself to the participants. The packet contained a cover letter (Appendix B), explaining the background of the study, confirming the date of the interview with each participant, and assuring individual participants of confidentiality. A background information sheet (Appendix C) was collected from each respondent as listed below.
1. Name; phone number, e-mail address.

2. Teaching experience before and following Peace Corps service.

3. Gender and age.


5. Area Assignment (skill area).

6. Dates of service.

7. Teaching experience after Peace Corps service (number of years and grade level).


As I spoke to each participant on the phone, the actual order in which the questions were asked varied, but all of the information was collected. A consent form (Appendix D) and a return stamped envelope provided permission from each Peace Corps volunteer teacher who agreed to participate in the study under investigation.

**Description of Inquiry Process**

**Interview Techniques**

As the investigation began, I called each participant to schedule interviews and to discuss e-mail correspondence as an additional form of interviewing. Initially, semi-structured long interviews were held face to face. Later in the data collection process, follow-up interviews were held on the telephone. Throughout the data collection process, e-mail correspondence served as an opportunity for on-going discussion and clarification of responses. Patton (1990) stated, "The fundamental
principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework with which respondents can express their own understanding in their own terms" (p. 150).

Various types of questions were asked to obtain different kinds of information. Experience and behavior questions were concerned with what each person did or has done to elicit descriptions of behavior, experiences, activities, and actions (Patton, 1990). These kinds of questions elicited responses about the participants' perceptions regarding their role and responsibilities as teachers and how they believed their perceptions related to their teaching with a global perspective. Knowledge questions were aimed at finding out the factual information from each respondent such as their specific site assignments and job descriptions. Opinion and value questions asked respondents to reflect on their motives and opinions, and their most valuable Peace Corps experience. This was so I could understand the cognitive and interpretive processes of the participants (Patton, 1990). As the research progressed, new questions emerged from the interview data and from follow-up discussions.

The semi-structured interviews used in this study promoted openness on the part of participants, allowing for free expression of their perceptions of their Peace Corps experience. Although I began with the interview guide, I was prepared to follow unexpected leads that arose in the course of the interview process. I followed up on points of interest with various expressions such as “tell me more” or “explain.” This process is what Patton (1990) called “depth probing.”

Each interview was recorded and lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour, but I was prepared to adjust the time and schedules to fit the needs of the participants.
A lengthy interview tends to tire the interviewer and the interviewee (Frey & Oshi, 1995). The former has to process the information and conduct the interview, asking questions, guiding discussion, and initiating inquiry. This was a difficult task and demanded much concentration. According to Frey and Oshi (1995), interviewee fatigue may produce responses that are not well thought out, and ideas could be less thoroughly discussed, causing data to be less complete. Another reason for staggering the interview and having multiple stages in data gathering was that repeated interviews with the participants helped to establish trust, and form a firm foundation for a relationship with them (Patton, 1987). The electronic mail interviews, for instance, continued throughout the data gathering and data analysis process.

According to Patton (1990), detail-oriented probes included who, what, when, how, and why. Probes were used in this study to elicit details that arose from knowledge questions. Probing for elaboration is more difficult through telephone and e-mail interviews since non-verbal gestures such as nods and questioning looks cannot be used (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995). Therefore, interpretation of silences and hesitations, and tuning in to verbal cues (in the telephone interviews) was necessary throughout the interview process to reflect on data to be displayed.

**Data Collection and Management**

From the interviews, contextual information for each teacher was identified, regarding their initial teaching background, their Peace Corps teaching assignment, and other aspects that played a role in their particular teaching experience overseas.
Chapter 4 itemizes quotes and examples to illustrate the findings. It is important to remember that these findings came from teachers purposely selected, based on their experience as a Peace Corps volunteer teacher. The findings may, therefore, be more useful in relation to perceptions/characteristics of "globally curious" teachers rather than findings generalizable to the larger teaching population.

During the recorded interviews, data collection notes were also taken, as notes to myself on the right side of a piece of paper. Following the interview, the left side of the page was used for my reflections or comments as I listened to the recorded data. Tapes were later transcribed verbatim and responses were compared to my notes and checked with each respondent. Data reduction was done before, during, and after data collection to make the data more manageable.

In collecting the data, all transcriptions were made using micro-cassette tapes and a transcriber as well as electronic mail printouts. Depending on the dialogue with each participant, I sometimes ignored peripheral conversation or summarized it in a phrase: for example, basic cross-country reentry situations, emotions, personal lifestyle, isolated situations, or opinions critical of the Peace Corps hierarchy. Repetitious comments were reduced; however responses pertaining to ideas on teaching and learning, the curriculum, or teaching strategies were transcribed in their totality. I replayed these recorded passages and reviewed them several times. After typing the transcription on the computer, I reviewed the hard copy while listening to the tape yet again, writing comments that I considered pertinent to the study.
The data were kept in notebooks with each line on the page numbered consecutively, starting at the top with line #1. Coding the data was an important component of the data analysis and reduction process. As Stake (1987) argued, the excellence of the research rests, in large part, on the excellence of the coding. The cut-up and put-in folders approach (Bogdan & Biklin, 1998) was also used in the process of collecting data. I made several copies of the data, adding the recorded date, respondents’ initials, and page numbers. Then I cut for each category and filed the data in different folders. The categories were identified by the specific item from the interview guide. With all the units of data in the respective folders, they were regrouped for themes.

The constant-comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) aided in the development of new categories. This method of constant comparison includes indicators from the data such as the actions or events observed, recorded, or described in documents, and in the words of interviewees and respondents. In transcribing the recorded interviews, I listened for indicators to identify common patterns and themes in the teachers’ responses. Within the categories, subcategories developed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) as the information was collected and analyzed.

As new ideas and questions developed, I read the data in each folder to compare and contrast responses. I proceeded to analyze them accordingly by listing and color coding similar responses and key words that that developed into common themes. Comments that stirred a reaction within myself were noted and highlighted on the written copy. At a later time I read the hard copy of the transcript, making
more notes in the margin regarding additional reactions I had to the interview. I tried to hear what was being said at different levels. For example, Item #5, incorporating what teachers learned from Peace Corps service into their curriculum it may well have been a behavioral or attitude change, or it may have been a change for a specific method or instructional technique in the lesson content.

Inferences were made from the comments of the respondents through a process of immersing myself in the data, listening to what I understood to be conveyed at multiple levels, and creating categories sensitive to the emergence of common patterns and themes. The analysis undertaken here is, therefore, interpretive. My understanding was constructed as I inferred meaning from the data gathered.

Data Analysis

Patton (1985) described data analysis as "the process of bringing order to the data, organizing what is there into patterns, categories and basic descriptive units" (p. 144). The analysis of qualitative data involves several activities including data reduction, sorting the data into categories, displaying the data, reading within and across the categories for themes and synthesizing the information (Chism, 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Analysis and interpretation were interconnected in the process of data collection and were a continual process that began as soon as the research began, allowing time to consider meanings and explanations to prepare for a more concentrated period of analysis. There is, however, a second order of interpretation
done at a greater interpretive level by the researcher. As an interpreter, I was not just an “authority” getting the “facts” about a topic, but more of a meaning-maker, making sense out of what the teachers made of their experiences.

While analyzing data, many conceptual relationships that are embedded in a thick context of descriptive and conceptual writing are studied (Strauss & Corbin, 1994), leading to data reduction. Great familiarity with the data is essential and data must be reviewed systematically and often (Chism, 1994) if conceptual density or richness of concept development and relationships is to be achieved.

Transcribing the interviews myself, making copies of the transcripts and reading the transcripts often, increased my familiarity with the data. Data management was made easier by charting a list of key words and phrases from the interviews that related to each question. These charts led to the recognition of themes and common patterns within the data collection. A coding process was developed to determine each theme mentioned by a participant. The coding taxonomy designated the prominent themes recognized with each participant. By employing inductive analysis of tentative categories, noting patterns and themes, making initial and intuitive sense, seeing plausibility, and clustering by conceptual groups (Miles & Huberman, 1994), I was able to know the data better and formulate a clearer picture of themes and concepts.

As I began to examine how the respondents perceived how they integrate their international experience in the Peace Corps, into their classroom instruction, numerous categories emerged. As the study progressed, some categories turned out to
be not as relevant as others, and therefore were omitted in the findings. Other categories were reduced to more inclusive ones. The data analysis was an ongoing process throughout the study. Selecting, focusing, simplifying and transcribing the interviews from data collections were the main activities. By using the constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I continued to classify and reclassify, assess and reassess the data, and cross-reference the categories that often changed, in hopes of bringing credibility and dependability to the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). After the categories had been thoroughly reviewed and analyzed, I continued to refer to the original three Research Questions and Subquestion.

Coding procedures including constant comparison and concept development gave me a broader understanding of the participants' responses. This portion of analysis defined categories that were coherent with the perceptions of the participants. Through inductive analysis I was able to organize the raw data into categories, which made them more understandable. This is a “process for making sense of the data” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Employing inductive analysis of tentative categories, noting patterns and themes, making initial and intuitive sense, seeing plausibility, and clustering by conceptual groups (Miles & Huberman, 1994) enabled me to know the data better and formulate a clearer picture of themes. Highlighting the data, using codes to note categories in the margins, and reviewing notes and taped transcriptions were specific strategies used to display and analyze the data.
Establishment of Trustworthiness

The main purpose of trustworthiness is to confirm, expand, and inform colleagues of one's own work, thereby contributing to the accumulative nature of the researcher's knowledge (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). To establish trust and rapport with the participants it was critical that positive initial interactions be established. Confidentiality of the participants was maintained, as the participants were not referred to by their real names, but given pseudonyms and numbers to be used as a code for individual identity. All reference to the respondents in the data collection and writing of the dissertation was filed under those pseudonyms and numbers to secure the participants' identity. Upon request, they were offered copies of their interviews and the transcripts. One may question how dependable is this process of inquiry. Are the findings supported by the data collection and analysis? Several criteria that naturalistic inquiry uses to demonstrate the trustworthiness of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were used in the study. Instead of internal validity, I focused on credibility; rather than external validity, I sought transferability; instead of stomping out bias, I looked for confirmability. Finally, instead of reliability, I focused on dependability.

Credibility

Credibility, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), is assured when the methods used were appropriate for the study and used systematically by the researcher. For my results to be confirmable, I used prolonged engagement, allowing
ample time for participants to express their thoughts. As previously mentioned, over a period of 18 months, different interview strategies were conducted, along with follow-up telephone calls and e-mail correspondence to discuss or review specific questions and responses.

Time is considered a major factor in the acquisition of trustworthiness. The time spent interviewing, building relationships, and analyzing data all contributed to the establishment of trustworthiness. To be alert to my own subjectivity (Peshkin, 1988), I kept a research journal to note my reactions and changes in perception of the teachers' responses.

**Transferability**

Transferability refers to the usefulness of the findings to inform other situations. By providing thick description from notes and interviews, I enabled the reader to judge whether the results are transferable to other situations. Thick description also established the contextual factors that affected the findings and richness of the study, thereby allowing the reader to understand the role of the subject under study.

**Dependability/Confirmability**

To establish dependability and confirmability, I kept a clear "audit trail," complete records of raw data, data reduction and analysis products, and reflective
notes. I also made reference to the data when drawing conclusions, an act that Guba and Lincoln call “referential adequacy.”

Through a reflective journal, sporadic entries with reflections on my positionality and continual alertness to personal biases and subjectivity assisted in producing a more trustworthy interpretation. This also provided reflective notation in the study, if I decided to write a “reflective tale” about my own international experiences as a Peace Corps volunteer. I kept a record of my feelings and responses by writing personal comments in the margins as I reviewed the data, to additionally insure that the findings were grounded in the raw data and not simply representative of my personal interpretation. Recording the responses was necessary as a subject reference for my own self-reflexivity about questions, comments, insights or issues of concern. I realized that although qualitative study is time consuming, it provides valuable techniques for analyzing the data and drawing conclusions.

**Conclusion**

The research for this study was conducted with the incentive to provide credible descriptions and generate grounded theory, by discovering concepts through constant comparative analysis leading to new direction and innovative efforts in teaching. My goal was to go beyond the mere description of significant instructional practice teachers use with their students. In many respects this information suggests effective strategies for teachers to use in the classroom, which might also facilitate changes in teacher education.
Overall, it was my intention to conduct this qualitative study not merely for personal satisfaction, but rather in the reasonable hope of providing information that will enhance the teaching practice of participants and readers who are teachers. In conclusion, through the trustworthiness of the project, I have attempted to identify characteristics linking international experiences such as Peace Corps, and teaching practices which are not yet recognized or appreciated in current classroom teaching and in teacher education.
CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from interviews conducted with RPCV teachers regarding their perceptions of the impact of their international experience on their subsequent teaching practice. The chapter addresses the following three Research Questions.

1. How do former Peace Corps teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and their perception of their role as teacher as a result of serving overseas in the Peace Corps?

2. How do former Peace Corps teachers say that their teaching and curriculum has been influenced or changed by this international, cross-cultural experience?

3. Do teachers with international experiences such as Peace Corps infuse global education in their teaching practice, and if so, how?

   a. Did the infusion happen naturally or did they purposely implement strategies for more successful teaching and learning?

   Table 1 offers a schematic for the information in this chapter:
Research Question | Chapter Section
---|---
Preview | Demographics
#1 | Influences and Motivation to Serve as Peace Corps Volunteers
Most Valuable Peace Corps Experience
#2 | Teaching Experiences and Perceptions
Supplementary Materials and Procedures
#3, #3a | Teachers' Perspectives on Global Education
Recommendations | Recommendations of International Experiences

Table 1. Schematic for the Information Presented in this Chapter

In accordance with the characteristics of naturalistic inquiry, I attempted to provide an in-depth report of the findings. As the researcher, I collected data through interviews and in the presentation of my findings, I incorporated direct quotations from the respondents.

Patton (1990) identified “two narrowing elements of heuristic inquiry. First, the researcher must have personal experience with and intense interest in the phenomenon under study. Second, others who are part of the study must share an “intensity of experience with the phenomenon” (p. 71). Because of my previous work as a Peace Corps volunteer, I felt both qualified and intrigued to pursue my interest in RPCV teachers.

In preparation for this research, I spoke with various participants to confirm their interest in the study and to discuss the research process, interview schedule, and research investigation. The voices presented are those of RPCV teachers. I have chosen them to construct an idea of how RPCVs perceive the impact of international experiences on their classroom teaching practice, at least for these teachers.
To understand the impact of international experiences on RPCVs' teaching practice, we first need to know who these RPCVs are and why they chose to join the Peace Corps. The first section of this chapter offers the demographics of the 10 teachers in the study and provides an inside view of their international experiences through the Peace Corps. The information does not specifically answer the major Research Questions. It does, however, provide an introduction to who these Peace Corps teachers are by answering Item #1 from the interview guide, "Briefly describe your Peace Corps experience." The information includes a personal introduction to each Peace Corps volunteer teacher, with a narrative description of their Peace Corps site assignment. Specifically, the section reveals relevant comments regarding their dates of service, the country and region in which they lived, and factors regarding climate, mode of transportation, housing, host country nationals, the type of work assignment they fulfilled overseas, and their current teaching practice in the United States.

Responses to Item #2, "Originally, what factors influenced your decision to serve in the Peace Corps?" discusses the influences and motivation each participant discussed regarding their decision to serve as Peace Corps volunteers. Overall, the responses reveal the underlying motives and other factors that influenced these teachers' desire to pursue teaching overseas through two years of Peace Corps service.

Responses to Item #3, "What specific Peace Corps experiences do you consider the most valuable?" address those experiences that each teacher believes had the strongest impact on them while teaching overseas, and the experiences they reflect
on as most important throughout their Peace Corps service. Information from Items 
#2 and #3 primarily support research Question #1, but not exclusively.

To further construct an image of how the participants determine whether or not 
Peace Corps service realistically made an impact on their classroom teaching, the 
teachers were asked to identify and discuss their instructional procedures and 
preferred curriculum materials. “Teaching Experiences and Perceptions” answers 
Research Question #2, “How do former Peace Corps teachers say that their teaching 
and curriculum has been influenced or changed by this international, cross-cultural 
experience?” Data collected primarily from Items #4, #5, and #6 in the interview 
guide focus on procedures and materials each teacher integrated into his or her 
classroom teaching upon their return from Peace Corps service. In addition, when 
appropriate, I added data from other items. Their responses also enabled me to 
determine various perceived effects of the Peace Corps experience on each teacher’s 
subsequent approach to curriculum and instruction.

Specifically, Items #4, #5, and #6 from the interview guide are stated as: “In 
reflecting on your Peace Corps experience, how has your curriculum and instruction 
been affected or changed over the years as a result of your experiences?” “Would you 
describe as precisely as possible how you incorporate what you have learned from 
your Peace Corps service into your classroom instruction?” “Tell me specific 
examples of teaching procedures and curriculum materials you use that reflect the 
impact of your international experiences.”
In “Teachers’ Perceptions on Global Education,” the data from Items #7 and #8 in the interview guide reflect these returned Peace Corps teachers’ ideas of global education and answer Research Question #3 and Subquestion #3a: “Do teachers with international experiences such as Peace Corps infuse global education into their teaching practice, and if so, how?” “Did the infusion happen naturally or did they purposely implement strategies for more successful teaching and learning?” By investigating RPCVs’ perceptions of global education, the data provided an opportunity to determine the degree to which these teachers believe they teach with a global perspective. The teachers’ responses generally relate their personal ideas and perspectives of global education to the ideas and perspectives of global education scholars as found in the global education literature.

In “Recommendations of International Experiences,” however, the teachers suggest ways to enhance teaching experiences for prospective teachers by way of international experiences. It states, “Would you recommend an international experience for prospective teachers? If so, which specific suggestions do you have to make for a rich learning experience?” Although Item #9 does not specifically answer the major Research Questions, the respondents’ recommendations do reflect each teacher’s perception of their cross-cultural experience through the Peace Corps. Their recommendations enabled me to determine if the participants recognize and acknowledge the fact that Peace Corps experiences can be traced in a positive fashion to their current teaching practice.
Throughout the chapter, the teachers’ unique descriptions and perceptions become the basis to compare and contrast the responses to each item in the interview guide. The respondents’ comments were arranged thematically. Each theme yielded several subthemes reflecting whether or not RPCV teachers incorporate global perspectives in their classroom teaching. The respondents’ most relevant comments are showcased in narrative form and as direct quotes in the text. The chapter, therefore, displays common themes. Overall, this study was an opportunity for me as researcher to have an inside view of teachers’ perceptions of their international experiences on their subsequent curriculum and instruction. In their own words they discuss with voices from the heart, the degree to which the infusion of Peace Corps experiences impact their teaching practice.

**Demographics**

Peace Corps people have real-life experiences dealing with cross-cultural issues. We have lived it.

Peace Corps Volunteer Kim

This section provides descriptions of RPCVs’ country of service, site assignments, and skill area. The information on site assignments for these Peace Corps teachers provides a more in-depth view of the environment, in which they worked and lived.
Country of Service and Site Assignments

From my own experience as a Peace Corps volunteer, I am well aware of the impact that one’s living conditions and work assignment have on a teacher placed on assignment in an unfamiliar culture. The following section introduces 10 individuals who are the typical, yet exceptional, type of people recruited to serve in the Peace Corps. As classroom teachers, these people are considered by many, as somewhat preconditioned to deal with issues of diversity, racial tension, a variety of socioeconomic levels, hardship, and stress. Likewise, on an international level, and throughout the course of their journey teaching both in the United States and overseas, they have lived experiences which have forced them to rethink their views of themselves and others.

These are the kinds of lived experiences that Gilliom (1981) argued transforms teachers into key agents of global education. The individual lived experiences of teachers interviewed for this study reflect their perceptions of how the Peace Corps influenced their classroom instruction. Peace Corps teacher’s service overseas is for a minimum of two years. This 2-year immersion in a new and different culture provides the opportunity for cross-cultural exchange of ideas, traditions, beliefs, and customs, enabling teachers to view the world from a completely different perspective than that to which they may have been accustomed.

To see the world through the eyes and minds of others, we need to realize that people view life differently (Hanvey, 1986). A global perspective or “world view” is a blend of many things, and any given individual may be rich in certain elements and
lacking in others, which has an impact on one's perception. Not all members of a
group share the same outlook. One striking comment that Kim made is, “I could see
the culture so much more vividly than a mere observer could. The people on the
island were my windows.” Overall, her comment served as an undercurrent
throughout the findings, pulling me back to similar themes as voiced by the
participants throughout the study.

The respondents in this study, who were specifically placed in education
assignments, adapted their instruction to the unique, cultural environment of the
developing country where they lived and worked. From conversations held with each
teacher, their comments demonstrate how they developed an understanding and
appreciation of others.

Initially, participants expressed how they began to view the world through the
eyes and minds of host country nationals, their friends, extended family, and
colleagues with whom they interacted throughout their 2-year teaching assignment.
Although these teachers were each placed in a different developing country, their
experiences, area assignments and living conditions differed dramatically. As
designated in Table 2 and shown in Appendix E, the respondents served in the
following countries:
Monty

Monty served in Mahalapyl, Botswana, from 1990 to 1992. The central part of the country where he lived was beginning to receive local attention because of the repercussions of apartheid, and in our discussions he shared, “I felt like we were making history working as volunteers.” Monty began his Peace Corps teaching at the age of 32. He lived in a village and worked as a secondary high school teacher. His small home was not traditional, as it had indoor plumbing, and he lived in the schoolhouse as well. Monty described the climate as “micro-wave hot,” and said there were several days of drought.
He was surrounded by local people, many of whom were his students, and they spoke English. All of the courses were in English, and he interacted with those people on a daily basis on a personal and academic level. Because Monty is an African-American, many of the host country nationals assumed he was a local resident.

Monty also served as a United Nations volunteer in Namibia following his Peace Corps service. Upon his return to northern Ohio, Monty worked as a public school teacher and currently teaches adult education.

Molly.

Another teacher who served in Africa is Molly, who applied to the Peace Corps at the age of 38. After accepting the invitation to serve, she was placed in Cameroon from 1990 to 1993. Molly was the first Peace Corps volunteer assigned in that area and her post was a very small village in the eastern part of the province, quite different from the life she was familiar with in central Ohio. The nearest volunteer to her site was 3 to 5 hours away, depending on rainy season or dry season. The terrain was a type of traditional savannah with no large hills or dramatic cliffs. Her home was an old concrete, kindergarten building that consisted of one big room. It was in the middle of the village, where the people lived in mud huts woven with sticks.

Molly worked on projects that would fulfill many needs in the area, which included digging fishponds and wells. She also worked with a Catholic priest and they organized four schools in neighboring bush villages. Throughout her three years of service, teaching in the village took total priority in her life. Although there were
many stressful situations, Molly remained dedicated and found it difficult to justify taking time off. One of her comments was, "I didn't take many of my vacation days while I was teaching. I had gone to work and work I did." Having returned to central Ohio, Molly now teaches at a local university. She also gives Peace Corps presentations throughout the local community.

Mack.

Peace Corps placement for Mack was in Thailand, where he served as a teacher from 1964 to 1966. He was 24 when he left for his Peace Corps assignment, which was located on a peninsula stretching down toward Malaysia, south of Bangkok, in the province of Surat Thani. There were many months of rainy season, and summer was problematic because the water was contaminated by seawater. The climate was tropical, with an average temperature around 80 degrees.

Living conditions were very poor, but despite the poverty, he found the site to be beautiful. He lived one block from the school in town, upstairs over the co-op building for the teachers, and he had a room with a tub. During his first year of service, Mack learned to speak fluent Thai and his assignment was to teach at both the Provincial Boy's school and the Provincial Girl's school. In his second year, he taught community classes for English as a foreign language (TEFL). Mack also applied for a third-year extension with the Peace Corps and was reassigned to Bangkok to work with the Ministry of Education on textbook evaluation, teacher manual preparation, and in-service training for Thai teachers. In one of our
conversations, Mack mentioned, "I was very comfortable with my work and the international lifestyle I had grown accustomed to. I had great confidence in my teaching." Currently, Mack teaches history in northern Ohio.

Noni.

Another participant who served in an Asian country was Noni. Having graduated with a degree in education, Noni served in the village of Pang in the Philippines, from 1966 to 1968, teaching English as a second language for grades 1 through 6. She worked diligently with both children and adult students who wanted to improve their English-speaking skills.

Noni’s initial Peace Corps training lasted for two weeks and took place in Hawaii, where she lived with a host family. She considered this a wonderful springboard into the Philippines. Although the national language of the Philippines is Tagalog, Noni learned to converse with her neighbors in one of the regional dialects. Noni initially lived in the district of Panpanga with a single, female hostess for three months of in-country training. They were housed in an abandoned school with classrooms in one building and a kitchen in another. Following those first three months, Noni was assigned to the village of Florida Blanca to live with a host family. Their home was not the typical Filipino house on stilts, but a small 3-room house. The climate ranged around 80 degrees, but it was much cooler in the mountains where she traveled. Her travels in the Philippines were extensive, but she said, "I was not one of the typical Peace Corps volunteers who took vacations to neighboring
countries. I preferred to stay close to my extended family and simply travel through the country I was assigned to.” Currently, Noni teaches kindergarten and first grade in central Ohio. Her devotion to teaching, both domestically and overseas, is colorfully depicted through her responses to the interview questions as well as through follow-up discussions we had over time.

Kim.

As a primary school teacher for about 200 students, Peace Corps volunteer Kim lived and worked in Kiribati from 1992 to 1994. Kiribati is a small island, one of 33 in the southwest Pacific Ocean. As a 29-year-old, Kim learned to speak the language fluently while serving in the Peace Corps. Most of the people of Kiribati are Micronesians and they live in rural villages, as did Kim. Her housing was very simple, with water from a well, collected by a corned-beef can. Temperatures ranged between 70 and 80 degrees, and there was no electricity and no mode of transportation except bicycles and a highly battered boat used for travel to and from the mainland. Throughout her Peace Corps assignment, Kim taught school on a daily basis and twice a week she worked with teachers planning teacher workshops. Regarding her site assignment, Kim said, “My Peace Corps experience was very intense and I participated fully in the life of the village.” Upon her return to the states, Kim settled in Ohio, and teaches fifth-grade social studies in the public schools.
John.

John, was assigned to the island of Rico in the Caribbean which is part of Antigua. Rico is a former English colony, and the language spoken in Antigua is English along with “patois,” a language developed by the indigenous people of the island. As a senior volunteer, John served at the age of 56 from 1993 to 1994. He lived in an urban area in an apartment with electricity and running water, and his home was located in the town of St. John where temperatures there ranged from 80 to 90 degrees.

John adapted quickly and easily to the environment, and he talked about his Peace Corps experience as a secondary physical education instructor for ninth-through 12th grade students. In an offhanded comment, John laughed as he said, “Yeah, I really suffered, what with perfect weather, beautiful beaches, and a job coaching sports.” In conjunction with the school system his teaching, coaching, and special projects were supported by the community recreation department. John told me, “Since the end of my service I have returned to Antigua several times to continue special projects that began under my leadership.” He is now retired, but is employed as a substitute teacher on a regular basis in middle schools and high schools in northeast Ohio.

Stan.

At the age of 22, Stan served as a Peace Corps teacher in Honduras in the urban town of Comayagula, from 1969 to 1972. He described his site as “perfect”
with a high of 86 degrees and a low of 68 degrees. His house was located on a city block and was built somewhat like a trailer with a patio. Sometimes Stan was fortunate to have electricity and running water available for half of the day, which was considered a luxury, compared to other Peace Corps sites. He became fluent in Spanish and taught physics at the Escuela Superior del Profesorado “Francisco Morazan” in Tegucigalpa, the school responsible for training and certifying teachers. He lived very well and periodically took several vacations to Panama, Cost Rica, and Guatemala. Regarding his site assignment and overall experience Stan said, “I loved it, partly because of, or perhaps despite, the challenges.” Stan is currently an environmental science instructor in Northwest Ohio teaching environmental science and geology on a college level. He also works on a couple of archaeological sites in Honduras.

Pam

Pam was first sent to Nicaragua where her Peace Corps service was interrupted by the Nicaraguan civil war. Within two weeks she was given a new assignment in Colombia, from 1978 to 1980. Pam’s home was called a “finca,” and although traditionally simple, it did have running water and an outhouse. The climate was mild, never over 85 degrees, with warm and constant with rain. Pam rode the bus to and from school where she taught and would often return home to find people on her doorstep waiting for her to share books with them. She commented, “Neighbors enjoyed my ‘library,’ which was a modest duffel bag collection of books!” Following
her Peace Corps service Pam attended graduate school and now has a master’s degree in education. She is currently a special education teacher at a high school in southeastern Ohio.

**Marcos.**

From 1996 to 1998, Marcos was assigned to Mongolia, which geographically sits directly between Russia and China. At the age of 23, he served as a teacher in the town of Darhan. Marcos accepted an opportunity to integrate health programs with his teaching position. His site was located in Mongolia’s second largest city at the Darkhan Medical College, where the population of approximately 70,000 was split into two towns. There were huge temperature fluctuations with extremely cold winters dropping below minus 40 degrees celsius, followed by warm springs and dry summers up to the high 80s. Marcos mentioned that the days got very dark, very early, and there was a lot of drinking and alcoholism in the community. Housed in a teacher’s wing of a college dormitory, Marcos spent most of his time enjoying his work and life with student hosts at the college. His assignment was teaching English at a school with about 400 students. In the afternoons, he usually worked with schoolteachers on projects, grants, and applications. In his second year, he added a training course for first aid and health education. Marcos noted, “I decided to put my health background as an EMT to work along with my teaching background.”

Following his two years of Peace Corps service, Marcos returned to the United States and completed a master’s degree. He worked as a teacher/trainer for economic
education and as a public school teacher in health education. For a period of time, Marcos returned to Mongolia to work on a project training health educators for USAID (United States Aid in Development). He is now working on a radio project at an inner-city high school in Washington, D.C., teaching students to gather and analyze information, and develop it into a story line. He plans to get his Ph.D. in the near future.

Louise.

Louise served her Peace Corps term in Wroclaw (Breslau), Poland. Before her Peace Corps experience, she had facilitated technical training for the National Science Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency. However, at the age of 53, she accepted the invitation to serve as a Peace Corps volunteer in Poland from 1993 to 1995. Following a brief 3-day orientation in Philadelphia, Thelma flew to central Europe to receive three months of in-country training in Lodz, Poland. She learned to speak Polish and commented, “My training in Poland was absolutely superb. It was a blend of academic, cultural, and historical training with both Polish and American trainers.”

The initial in-country visit was with a host family that immediately immersed her in the Polish culture. Upon completion of her training, Louise lived in a dormitory, which was the former communist training center. The classrooms were used as bedrooms and she had a small room close to the lobby where the TV was turned on all day. There was also a trash-burning tank near her room, and right across
the driveway cars parked up to the window outside her room. She had very little
privacy and shared a kitchen with 7 other people. In speaking of the climate in her
city, Louise noted, “It was just like an ordinary Ohio season: beautiful summers, good
springs, and cold winters.”

During her service, she moved about the city regularly, and worked with a new
program, training teachers on integrating skills for writing. Louise held methodology
workshops with student teachers for topics such as American history. She was also
responsible for instructing Polish teachers how to develop strategies for assessment
and evaluation. Because the host country nationals had no previous teaching
experience, they worked together, team-teaching. Louise explained, “The idea was to
have the Polish faculty trained enough in the American methodologies of teaching,
rather than teaching only by rote.” For several years now, Louise has been teaching
preservice teachers and international students at a small college in central Ohio, where
she sets up remedial language labs.

In summary, the participants’ descriptions of their site-assignments spoke of
extraordinary circumstances, different from what they were accustomed to in the
United States. Initially, it was not my intention for site assignment descriptions to
reveal in-depth information about the indigenous culture of each country. Therefore,
from Item #1 of the interview, the descriptions of site assignments provided no
specific evidence that their role as a teacher was affected by their country placement.
Specific comments were made, however, regarding climate, housing, Peace Corps
training, teaching assignments, modes of transportation, and other elements, which
served as a brief introductory section to generally familiarize the reader with each participant of the study.

From the descriptions of each teacher’s site assignment, it is obvious that the conditions and circumstances of their individual placements varied significantly. All, however, were exposed to a different lifestyle and a distinct form of cross-cultural exchange. Through the Peace Corps, these teachers were provided an opportunity to adapt to circumstances far different from what they had been accustomed to. By living and working overseas, they were exposed to the many challenges and benefits that come with the decision to “move beyond one’s comfort zone.”

Each teacher’s reflection of their site and work assignment, describes the exposure they had regarding educational and cross-cultural exchange. Just as Becker (1979), the grandfather of global education, discussed the value of “cutting across national borders,” the perceptions of these teachers emphasize the “border crossing” they achieved through international experiences in the Peace Corps.

**Influences and Motivation to Serve as Peace Corps Volunteers**

The spirit of the Peace Corps springs from the deepest wells in our culture, from the reasoned and strongly felt impulses of our people to share with their neighbors for caring and their labor.

Carter (1970)

To answer how these teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and perceptions of their roles as teachers, I carefully considered the participants’ responses regarding their motives for international service and their most valuable
Peace Corps experiences. This section answers Research Question #1: “How do former Peace Corps teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and their perception of their role as teacher as a result of serving overseas in the Peace Corps?” As I investigated the factors that influenced their decision to serve in the Peace Corps, each teacher considered their personal motive for accepting the challenge to teach in a developing country as a volunteer teacher. They took into consideration the influences that inspired them to pursue an international experience, which ultimately led to their true motive for service.

Regardless of the individuals’ motives for joining the Peace Corps, these teachers described the nature of their international teaching experiences as an “immersion” in different cultures with an opportunity to enhance their professional lives in teaching. They discussed moving about in different cultures, making a commitment to service, and developing an appreciation for cross-cultural change.

Having previously served as a Peace Corps volunteer teacher myself, I recognized the value of international experiences and was intrigued by other teachers’ decisions to live and work overseas. My personal background as a teacher for 10 years in a rural area of the South, inspired me to find a way to see the world. Before my Peace Corps service, each day consisted of a mundane routine in the classroom, and I often wondered how I could escape from my hometown, which I fondly refer to as “Vanilla-ville.”

Unfortunately, in my community, there was virtually nothing I considered international or multicultural, except for the day-to-day interactions between
Caucasians and African-Americans, who are still somewhat segregated. Although I take great pride in the fact that our small, southern community rests comfortably without racial tensions, it also reflects a very bland, cultural wasteland compared to the rich ethnicity and international flavor one might observe or appreciate elsewhere. The cliché I so often flaunted to my “Yankee” cohorts, “American by birth, Southern by the grace of God,” no longer appealed to my restless, Southern soul.

Traveling abroad to live and work in the Peace Corps provided the opportunity I needed for a deliberate change in my personal life and career. Reflecting on my own motivation for applying to the Peace Corps, I remember the urgency I felt in wanting to travel the globe, and the longing I had for new and different experiences in cultures different from my own. Those urgent feelings prompted me to move from behind a desk and a stack of papers in pursuit of an international experience.

Upon my return from two-and-a-half years overseas in the Peace Corps, I began to reflect on my own international experience as a RPCV, and I was eager to investigate what may have influenced other teachers who had also served in the Peace Corps.

Four categories emerged from the teachers’ responses regarding the factors that had an impact on their decision to serve in the Peace Corps. The first category, Personal Achievement and Self-gain, revealed three subthemes as well.

1. Personal Achievement and Self-Gain
   a. Travel and Adventure
   b. Alternative Career Choices
c. Educational Advancement

2. Sense of Civic Duty and the Kennedy Administration

3. Spirit of Humanitarianism and Altruism

4. Family Background and Religious Convictions

**Personal Achievement and Self-Gain.**

Several of the teachers' explanations about the influences that motivated them to pursue an international teaching experience such as the Peace Corps, revealed an emphasis on self-directed motives which I classify as "personal achievement and self-gain." Although Peace Corps volunteers are most often regarded as service oriented, and altruistic, they also receive many benefits in return for completion of their 2-year commitment. From practical benefits such as student-loan deferment to career benefits, language fluency, and polished cross-cultural skills, many people may well have a personal initiative to develop valuable and highly sought skills that only come from an international experience such as the Peace Corps.

The desire for personal achievement and self-gain revolved around three major subthemes: (1a) Travel and Adventure – making a change in their personal life through international travel and relocating to another country; (1b) Alternative Career Choice – making mid-life career changes; and (1c) Educational Advancement – teacher certification, graduate school opportunities, and cross-cultural knowledge. Each of the three subthemes was a motivating factor for these teachers to serve in the Peace Corps.

88
Travel and Adventure. International travel and opportunities for an adventure are enticing to those who pursue Peace Corps service. In an honest admission of her ultimate motive, Kim said, “My motive for joining the Peace Corps was about challenging myself in every way possible to see what my mind, spirit, and body could do, and to see the world a bit in the meantime.” Stan confirmed, “The challenge to serve in the Peace Corps provided a means for travel and adventure, and to live overseas.” Mack noted, “I had developed an interest in Latin America from people I had met and I was looking for a little adventure, and something interesting, to see part of the world. I couldn’t understand if I was really in love with being overseas or just disgusted with the United States at the time. Going into the Peace Corps was a way to get at that. I realized it wasn’t so much my rejection of the United States, but more of a love for international experiences.”

Participants also mentioned that a major influence in their decision was previous international experience, which triggered their interest for more travel overseas. The Peace Corps was an avenue that made international travel possible. Louise stated, “Because I had done some touring to other countries in Europe, I was ready for some more of that. Peace Corps service in Poland opened the way for me.” Furthermore, Louise commented, “I had a need for a mid-life adventure. I had no obligations holding me back and I could pick up and go. Mid-career adventure is what I wanted. The adventure was the most important part for me. I had participated in a study abroad program and I was eager for a chance to live and work overseas.
again." Likewise, Mack commented, "I had participated in a study abroad program and I was eager for a chance to live and work overseas again."

**Alternative Career Choices.** Personal and professional growth, along with an opportunity to alter their position in life to work internationally, and the desire to change personal circumstances emerged as another subtheme. The need to explore other career options may have been prompted, for example, by disenchantment, retirement, or graduation from college.

Reflecting on my own situation before Peace Corps service, I found myself sitting behind an office desk, lost in a sea of paperwork. I knew there was more "out there in the world," and eventually my application to the Peace Corps enabled me to make the long-awaited change in my professional life. The following comments from the interviewees describe how an interest in changing their career influenced them to apply to the Peace Corps. Four respondents said they began to explore the Peace Corps at a moment when they were exploring alternative careers and contemplating making a change in their personal life.

Marcos' response was similar to my situation in that he was restless and unfulfilled with his work at the time. He said, "My motivation was probably just because I wasn't very happy where I was and I was looking for a big change. It was a good job but it wasn't going anywhere. So when I filled out the application for Peace Corps, that was what I was thinking. It was mostly wanting to change my circumstances."
John, a senior volunteer, was inspired to serve overseas when he heard a Peace Corps executive give a commencement speech. He said, “I was so moved by the speaker and the goals promoted by the agency, that it made me reconsider and evaluate the quality of my life. I was close to retirement and Peace Corps made for another career.”

Before her Peace Corps service, Louise had dedicated half of her career to business and half to academics. She enjoyed her job and had traveled extensively, but she also said, “I wanted another chance to work internationally. What I had was good, having worked across the U.S. and Canada for 8 years, but the idea of expanding that by serving in Peace Corps was what I wanted.” Monty also mentioned, “Peace Corps and its mission presented an opportunity for personal and professional growth. I wanted to take advantage of that. I was eager to pursue it.”

**Educational Advancement.** Several volunteers noted that the Peace Corps provided an alternative means of teacher training and certification. In this subtheme, teachers expressed their interest in the Peace Corps because of the advanced education they could pursue. The certification issue and pursuing graduate study was most often discussed. Because of the need for teachers in many countries, the education volunteers use this as an opportunity to fulfill their academic goals.

As discussed in the literature review, the Peace Corps provides two academic opportunities for completion of a master’s degree through two programs, promoted as the Master’s Internationalist and Peace Corps Fellow’s program. Stan commented, “The teacher certification alternative was in addition to the other influences that
accompany motives to join the Peace Corps.” He was familiar with the Peace Corps Fellows program and it served as a way to apply for graduate school. Stan added, “Had I not served in the Peace Corps, I never would have applied to graduate school. Conversely, had I not been in the Peace Corps, the school probably wouldn’t have accepted me because my grades weren’t that great.”

Marcos said, “At the time, I was running an after-school program at a small Catholic school and I was imagining teaching grade school. I really like that age and I really wanted to teach.” He explained, “After reviewing various certification programs, I realized there were requirements for coursework I needed to fulfill to become a certified teacher. I was feeling confident as a teacher and not willing to enroll in school again. I wanted to be a teacher and get certified to teach. Through Peace Corps I could determine what level I wanted to teach without having to wait four years. That’s why I applied to Peace Corps, because at that time the agency offered an alternative in working toward teacher certification. By serving in Peace Corps as a teacher for two years, I could also use the experience to get certified to teach.” Marcos went on to say, “I was enjoying my work as a substitute teacher, but I knew if I wanted to eventually have my own classroom I would have to be certified to teach.”

There is no teacher like experience, and the opportunity to receive two years of teaching practice as well as become a certified teacher in less time, was motivating for both Marcos and Stan. As Stan reflected on his goals and aspirations in college, he remembered, “During college, I decided I wanted to go into teaching because of the
influence of several high school teachers I greatly admired. Peace Corps provided me
with the necessary experience to fulfill those aspirations.” Monty, who wanted to go
to South Africa, emphatically stated, “As a black American, I looked at this venture to
Africa as an enormous educational opportunity and a personal way to learn more
about the African culture, where I came from.”

In summary, the findings reveal that 6 participants joined the Peace Corps
because of their intrigue for travel and adventure. Kim and Monty specifically wanted
to “see the world,” while Marcos, Louise, and Mack voiced their love for living
overseas and traveling; thus, they too chose to accept the challenge to teach overseas.

From the first theme, the idea of taking on a challenge continually surfaces as
a motive to join the Peace Corps. By moving about in different cultures and taking on
new and different challenges, the Peace Corps was an opportunity for these teachers to
enhance the quality of their life. The challenge to be immersed in a different culture,
in a new location, learning a new language, kindles what some people only imagine.
The “fire in the belly” of these teachers burned in such a way that they eagerly
accepted the challenge to make a commitment of service to the U.S. Peace Corps.

The second subtheme, Alternative Career Choices, reveals that 4 of the 10
participants were anxious to change the circumstances in their personal and
professional lives. Taking into consideration the quality of their life, both Louise and
John saw the Peace Corps as a means to provide a new career. Monty sought ways to
enhance his professional life, while Marcos just generally wanted to make big changes
in his personal circumstances. All four, however, recognized the Peace Corps as an alternative measure to meet their personal need for change.

In the third theme, 4 of the respondents, all male, expressed their interest in the Peace Corps because of the educational pursuits they wanted to attain. Stan, Marcos, and Mack, each voiced their intent to become certified classroom teachers, while Monty’s personal agenda was to gain knowledge and information about his heritage. Because Peace Corps service offered easy access to fulfill their endeavors, each of the participants achieved their goal.

Of the three subthemes in this category, “travel and adventure” was the most prominent. Six of the teachers talked about being motivated to join the Peace Corps to travel internationally, four teachers pursued educational advancement, and four teachers also searched for alternatives in life regarding their career and personal circumstances.

**Sense of Civic Duty and the Kennedy Administration.**

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Kennedy (1961)

Another issue that motivated teachers to serve in the Peace Corps was a sense of civic duty and a strong affiliation and dedication to President Kennedy’s legacy for his promotion of service through the Peace Corps. Reflecting on my memories of the Kennedy years, I readily acknowledge and honestly believe that the untimely death of
John F. Kennedy and the impression it made upon me as a youngster prompted my decision to consider serving in the Peace Corps as an adult. The Kennedy legacy made a powerful impression on my life, as I watched my parents react in shock and tears to Kennedy’s death. I knew this event would have an impact on my future. As I reflect on the event and on my adolescence during the 1960s, I remember the inspiration I had to accomplish something in my life that would make a difference.

As discussed in the literature, Kennedy initiated the Peace Corps program, issuing a challenge to people of the United States to respond to the needs of the developing world (Geran, 1998). The response to Kennedy’s challenge to serve one’s country and the cause of peace by living and working overseas was a powerful influence not only on young people in the 1960s, but on young and old alike as his challenge and initiatives carried over into future decades.

Several of the participants claimed the Kennedy legacy as a reason for their motive to serve in the Peace Corps. In particular, when I asked Kim about her motive to serve as a Peace Corps volunteer she explained, “I made the decision to join Peace Corps at a very young age because when I was 8 years old, I saw a speech rerun by JFK.” Mack mentioned, “I was an idealistic sort following the John Kennedy model for world leadership.” Stan touched on Kennedy’s influence and said, “As one of the idealistic youth that President Kennedy appealed to in the early 1960s, I admit that Peace Corps was on my mind since the program was initiated.” Molly also commented on how the Kennedy administration influenced her decision to serve by
saying, “Having come to maturity during the publicized beginning years of Peace Corps, it probably further set my attitude to be a volunteer.”

Pam responded to one of Kennedy’s famous speeches where he challenged the nation with, “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” She said, “I earnestly believe that people owe some type of service to their country and that they should give back to their country in some capacity. I didn’t really feel that military was the way I wanted to do that. My way of doing that was to sign up for Peace Corps. I believe being a Peace Corps volunteer is ultimate service to your country. I was 7 years old, and for me as a little kid, I knew then that I wanted to join Peace Corps. I wanted to be one of his ambassadors in another land. I knew immediately that one day I would be a part of it. When Kennedy was killed, I read a lot about his life and discovered it was his platform in 1961 to send U.S. citizens to third-world countries to offer aid where we could. I really believe in missionaries, but I think more than doing missionary work you have to leave something behind. I thought Peace Corps was my duty.”

To summarize, within this category, 5 of the 10 teachers—Pam, Stan, Kim, Mack, Molly—shared their desire to serve as Peace Corps volunteers because of the Kennedy legacy. Pam, however, shared heart-felt motivation to make a commitment to service, reflecting her belief in civic duty in support of the earnest pleas of the Kennedy administration. It should be noted that much like my own experience, each respondent was at an impressionable age during the Kennedy years. Molly and Kim were both at a young age, Pam was 7 years old, and Stan and Mack specifically
mentioned their "idealistic youth" at the height of the Kennedy years. The Kennedy legacy triggered stirring thoughts for each of these teachers at a very young age. Interestingly, as adults these teachers followed through with their decision to make a commitment to the Peace Corps, because of their motivation to accept an assignment of service overseas.

**Spirit of Humanitarianism and Altruism.**

Each one of us is responsible for building the society we want. Peace Corps volunteers do that with people-to-people exchanges, using their energy, their spirit, and their creativity to solve problems. This is the American way. Once we see a need, we want to serve—even when the neighbor we reach out to help is halfway around the world.

Reagan (1980)

It is possible that Peace Corps volunteer teachers can improve the quality of life for others. For longer than 39 years, Peace Corps volunteers have been working with people in developing countries to help them make a better life for themselves. This theme aligns with the first goal of the Peace Corps, "To help the peoples of interested countries and areas in meeting their needs," and reflects a spirit of humanitarian. Working at a grassroots level in an assignment overseas, providing assistance in schools and clinics, and managing nongovernment organizations are examples of how Peace Corps volunteers might contribute time and energy to humanitarian efforts. Altruism represents a desire to do good for the benefit of others, even at personal expense or sacrifice, and is relevant to having a purpose for higher good.
As promoted through the Peace Corps, and reflected in the findings, fulfilling one's mission of humanitarian service is attainable through the Peace Corps. Concentrated efforts on outreach, doing service for others, and sacrificing time from one's personal life for a minimum of two years of service, all contribute to the awareness of social issues and involvement with prevention programs tackled by volunteers who "help other people to help themselves." The following excerpts from the participants' responses demonstrate their spirit of humanitarianism, which was a prominent influence on their decision to serve as Peace Corps volunteers.

Noni shared her interest in wanting to work overseas, but said she also had an inclination to help others and take on some type of mission. Her explanation was, "I wanted to work internationally and I always wanted to have a mission experience. I decided to be practical about it and apply to Peace Corps." Likewise, Molly voiced her thoughts about humanitarian interests through service to others. She reflected on her youth saying, "As a child I always imagined being in service to humankind. I wanted to be a doctor and go to the jungles of Africa to work. Just growing up, we always shared with people that were less fortunate. The good feeling I received by helping others as I had done with volunteer work in my youth, became a reality through Peace Corps. In the Peace Corps, every day that I worked I felt I was literally helping to save lives. I realize that a life of service to other people is my vocation in life." Molly's motive was genuinely one of sacrifice, much like John, who said, "I decided to give two years of my life to other people."
The teachers' responses clearly show that as Peace Corps volunteers they believe their service overseas was the fulfillment of a mission, in an effort to help others. Louise stated, "While I was in college, I talked with Peace Corps recruiters. Eventually, when I applied to Peace Corps, I felt 'called to serve.' It was a good cause. I consider Peace Corps my mission. I really wanted to contribute to others to help in the field of education. I really enjoyed the idea of training teachers to be better teachers."

On the other hand, Mack was not "mission focused," but rather, more focused on his work and assistance in helping others. He said, "I had always toyed with becoming a missionary and I was in the Methodist church at that point. I knew about a 3-year missionary program out of college, but I had a kind of reluctance to that, primarily because I felt I was putting my faith on my shoulder instead of just doing good works." He explained that the Peace Corps was a good alternative to serving as a missionary by saying, "I didn't want to be labeled a proselytizer. I was not interested in conversion. I wanted to teach and I wanted to be in a helping situation."

According to Monty, his motive to serve in the Peace Corps was an opportunity for service as well as personal growth and learning from the experience. He revealed, "I looked at this service within Peace Corps as an opportunity to serve as well as to receive a rich cross-cultural experience which would and has changed my perspectives and perception of life."

To summarize, this category, "humanitarianism and altruism," revealed that 6 participants voiced a genuine desire to respond to the needs of people less fortunate
than themselves. Two key ideas—“service to others” and “fulfilling a mission experience by helping and giving to others”—continued to emerge in the findings. Two of the respondents, Louise and Noni discussed wanting a mission experience. Louise and four other teachers—Molly, John, Mack, and Monty—shared their interest in “helping and contributing” to those less fortunate than themselves.

Three participants admitted that their motives address a “mission” focus. Their endeavors toward service were a desire to help people in developing countries meet their needs. The humanitarian interests voiced by several of the participants played an important role in each of their motives to serve in the Peace Corps. In this category, a spirit of humanitarianism is descriptive of the teachers’ willingness to serve, along with the desire to experience working on a special “mission” helping others. Both are prominently revealed in the findings. Through the cross-cultural exchange provided by the Peace Corps, these volunteer teachers were able to make a difference in the lives of others through humanitarian efforts.

**Family Background and Religious Convictions.**

Although Peace Corps does not promote proselytizing one’s religious convictions, the teachers in this study shared how their family background and religious beliefs motivated them to accept an invitation to serve in the Peace Corps. Throughout one’s service as a volunteer, there are many opportunities for cross-cultural exchange, to share religious beliefs and family values.
In many developing countries where Peace Corps volunteers are assigned, the host country nationals and their extended families value religious practices and the family unit. In this category, the participants disclose in the following excerpts how their “relatives and religion” had an impact on their motivation to serve.

In sharing with me what motivated her to serve in the Peace Corps, Louise reflected on her relatives and how they influenced her interest in Hispanic culture. She said, “I had been introduced to students from other countries by my aunt and uncle. Because of their language background, they hosted refugees from Hungary and Cuba. They also hosted high school exchange students from Peru, and I became very interested in Latin America through contacts with those people.” Because of this exposure to people from other countries through her family, Louise was led to investigate Peace Corps opportunities later in life. Upon her acceptance to Peace Corps, she had requested an initial assignment in South America. Although she ended up serving in Poland, she still maintained her interest in Latin American culture.

Mack reflected on his parents as well. He shared, “I remember that my family had visitors, not necessarily foreigners, but we always had visitors and that sort of thing influenced me. I enjoyed knowing about other people and places. That intrigued me to study abroad in Japan, and the study abroad intrigued me to go into Peace Corps.” Neither Louise nor Mack mentioned specific religious influences, but they both cited their family background.

Molly, however, provided specific examples of how her parents and their religious practice influenced her decision to join the Peace Corps. She explained, “I
describe it as a small-town, Midwest experience, where many people tend to be more willing to help. They are generous, friendly, and open. My parents were always generous. We always went to church, we put money in the collection plate, my mother did volunteer work and gave to charity—things like that. These qualities have always made me want to help those in need. I think my family influenced me because as a very lower-middle class, strictly blue-collar family, we had to watch our money. I grew up pretty poor but we were always very loving and very generous, sharing of our time and ourselves.” Those qualities of giving, willingness to help others and serve, are many of the traits Peace Corps volunteers demonstrate.

Monty gave thoughtful consideration of his religious beliefs. Regarding his motive to join the Peace Corps, he determined that, “It was a combination of my spiritual beliefs and desire to reach out and see the world, and service the world. In fact, I looked at the Peace Corps as missionary work and an opportunity to travel. I was bored stiff with American society, the hard knocks of going to school, and then right after school shooting off to work.” He also commented, “The percentage of Christian spirit that I have within me further guided me toward this humanitarian service.” Monty’s second comment regarding his “Christian spirit” supports how his religious convictions influenced his motive to serve overseas. Because of his frustration with “American society,” and the negative feelings about having to become employed immediately following college, Monty chose the Peace Corps as an option in his life at that time, but his religious beliefs and call to service also played a part in his decision.
In summary, the findings in this category reveal that two of the 10 participants—Molly and Monty—admitted one of their motives for international service was based on religious convictions. Molly, Louise, and Mack referred to their family background as the main influence in their decision to serve overseas. Interestingly, of these four teachers, the two participants who talked about religion both served in Africa.

**Most Valuable Peace Corps Experiences**

The Peace Corps is a remarkable tradition that emphasizes that our country is about more than power and wealth. It is also about the power of our values and the power of a helping hand, the ethic of service, and the understanding that we have an obligation not only to our own people, but to people around the world to help them make the most of their own lives.

Clinton (1990)

To further address how these teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and perceive their roles as teachers, I investigated the participants' most valuable experiences while serving in the Peace Corps. Overall, the teachers reflected on relationships they maintained and developed with people different than themselves and the cross-cultural awareness they came to understand and appreciate. Both were pertinent to various aspects of their teaching and enabled them to recognize relevant characteristics defining their roles as teachers.

In reflecting on my own most valuable Peace Corps experience, I am still amazed, years later, how unaware and clueless I had become to critical global issues and the major impact that “the world” has on my existence and life on this planet.
Before my travel and work overseas, my vision of the Peace Corps was what many people picture in National Geographic safari scenes. I had an unrealistic notion that I would become somewhat of a heroine, who travels to Africa to "save the world." Of course, I did not save the world; rather, "the world saved me." Peace Corps service and my exposure to African culture immediately prompted my attention to a "global-mindedness" that I had so ashamedly neglected even into my adult years. The empty vessel that I had become before the Peace Corps has remained filled and flowing because of the global perspective I now proudly promote in my teaching profession and personal life because of my international experience as a Peace Corps teacher.

Despite my cultural naiveté before my Peace Corps service, there is some consolation in knowing that my international experience through the Peace Corps did make a difference in the lives of others and an even bigger difference in my own life. Adapting to West African culture, learning to survive without the amenities and comforts of home, and having developed a sense of global awareness is something I advocate for others, particularly teachers. Through a cross-cultural exchange with newfound friends, absorbing their traditions, and learning as much as I was teaching, the long-awaited venture overseas allowed me to explore and move beyond the ordinary.

Recognizing the importance of global awareness is what I value most from my Peace Corps experience. As I talked with the participants, I discovered that their expectations and experiences were somewhat similar to my own. The following two
categories, “relationships” and “cross-cultural awareness,” emerged from the findings as the participants’ most valuable Peace Corps experiences.

The first category displays the teachers’ descriptions of interactions with host-country nationals and their relationships with neighbors and friends. The comments describe the teachers’ perceptions of what they value the most from their Peace Corps service. The second category, “cross-cultural awareness,” reveals their understanding of global perspectives and their appreciation for the cross-cultural exchange with their hosts.

**Relationships.**

Throughout the history of the Peace Corps, more than 120,000 volunteers have developed relationships with people throughout the world to help these people gain a better understanding of Americans and, in turn, have helped Americans better understand the people of the world (Weitsman, 1989). In an increasingly diverse and interconnected world, the ability to live and work effectively with others is one of the major accomplishments for Peace Corps volunteers. The following excerpts from 9 of the 10 teachers provide a glimpse of how relationships were considered most valuable Peace Corps experiences.

Kim reflected on how the people in Kiribati were, and continue to be, very important in her life. Although Kim returned from the Peace Corps years ago, she has remained in contact with people she grew to know and love. The relationships she had with her host family and friends are ongoing. She said, “As a teacher and
community ‘village’ resident, the most rewarding experience I had was the making of cross-cultural relationships. The friends that I made are very special and have remained an important part of my life.”

Mack responded similarly: “My most valuable experience stemmed from relations with people, who were cordial and open. I never had a feeling that I was anything but lionized, which was generally the reaction to Peace Corps at the time. When we arrived in country, we were speaking Thai, so while in conversation with host-county nationals they really liked me and appreciated me. Several evenings a week I taught adult English classes, and I had very good relationships with people in the community. Teaching and working overseas was good, but clearly secondary to the people.”

John also mentioned how he has kept in touch and continued to maintain relationships with his students and friends in Antigua. He noted, “I’ve kept in touch with many good friends and have given thought to serving a second term in Peace Corps. The teaching and learning were good, but clearly secondary to the people I met. Working with the students and watching them get excited about learning, and developing the students’ abilities to further their education was a turning point for me. In Antigua I put great emphasis on making friends. Those relationships remained an important part of my own life. Friends kept me safe and opened my eyes to different customs.”

For Marcos, one of the relationships he developed in the Peace Corps has continued over the years. He told me that, “The friendships I made were definitely the
most valuable. I made a lot of friends through Peace Corps, but one in particular
became my best friend and it was really good. My parents are paying for his
education now. My main focus was on specific people and friends.” John, Mack, and
Marcos voiced how their work was something they value, but that the relationships
with people took priority over everything else and is what they value the most.

Louise, Noni, and Pam, also talked about the relationships they value and have
maintained. Louise said, “My connection with the local people was overwhelmingly
wonderful. As far as personal interactions I just tried to be myself, ‘Pani Louise.’ I
was Pani. It was all of us, like ‘brother George.’ They were down-home with me and
I was down-home with them. My most valuable experience was definitely with the
people that I worked with. Not just the university people, but the women who taught
me about the culture; an elderly woman who was my neighbor, who I saw each day
and held the umbrella for on rainy days, and the fact that we still correspond; the
woman who was the mother of a young girl whose father was nowhere around; even
the lady I helped with a yard sale.”

Noni agreed, “My most valuable experiences were the people to people
experiences. I didn’t stay with other Americans. I had invitations to neighborhood
people and that was more valuable to me; the interaction with the locals.” Pam
echoed Noni: “I would say what I valued the most was the one-on-one relationships
with the Colombians. The people-to-people things were the best. Both in my work, in
play, and in travel, everything was an adventure for me. There were a lot of people
that had never met an American and they were very interested in meeting me.”
It was obvious by some of the remarks given that community and social interactions with hosts were of the utmost importance. Monty spoke from the heart, and almost whispered, “Just living in a situation where people still maintain family unity, pride, and real cohesiveness without a lot of materialism was valuable, like among the families, and the unity between friends was great. My community involvement as a coach, academic teacher, and guest at social events provided concrete memories that remain fresh in my mind to date.” Mack made a similar statement, as he discussed, his work and special projects. “Up to the end of my time there, we worked really hard in the sense of exposing my Thai students to the world and helping them to enlarge their own vision. It was a real community effort. That kind of thing is what I felt was most special.”

In summary, building relationships and maintaining friendships between the Peace Corps teachers and their hosts is the strongest theme of this category. The valuable aspects of the Peace Corps, as described in this category, are voiced by Noni, John, and Pam. They regard the value of people-to-people relationships as well as the differences of peoples and their culture as their most valuable experience. Three other responses given by John, Monty, and Stan indicate that becoming more sensitive to others provided the opportunity to know and understand the culture. They reiterated that their teaching and interactions with students, neighbors, and extended families were important. The opportunity to develop relationships with the local people in the community were cited by Kim, Marcos, Mack, and Monty. Both John and Mack
specifically said that their work assignments were not as important as the job or institutions they represented.

**Cross-Cultural Awareness.**

This category, "cross-cultural awareness" is a second theme regarding what the teachers consider as their most valuable Peace Corps experience. Mainly, their recognition of diversity and the value of cross-cultural exchange are discussed, including the ability to develop and appreciate multiple perspectives. Culture influences the way people see themselves, others, and the world. The teachers' perceptions that follow are legitimate revelations about sensitivity and empathy, views of themselves and how they changed because of cultural awareness, and perceptions of the global perspective they acquired.

The perceptions of these teachers are reflective of the global education literature, which discusses competencies in basic cross-cultural understanding and awareness, in that the ability to communicate with people from different cultures is critical. Hanvey (1986) gave special attention to cross-cultural awareness in that the understanding and acceptance of cross-cultural experiences plays a major role in human choices, which ultimately has an impact on culture, peoples, political, economic, social, and ecological systems in a global society.

Hanvey (1986) also referred to dimensions of cross-cultural awareness as most important in the development of self and relationships with others. This concept relates to the idea of gaining a perspective consciousness to enhance one's global
awareness and global perspectives. Characteristics of local cultures are an integral part of the content of global education and cannot be disregarded. By promoting an understanding of culture (one's own and others), the teachers in this study were able to broaden their perspectives and appreciate cross-cultural exchange and how they are connected to the larger world.

Monty commented, "I realized that what I appreciate most stems from the students, not the lessons themselves. It was more the aspect of cross-cultural exchange and the awareness I gained by developing rapport with the students rather than the actual content. My most valuable lessons involved getting to know and understand the lives of my hosts and from that understanding, obtain a perspective on the importance of my teaching in their lives." Monty connected his Peace Corps experience with his classroom teaching in the United States when he said, "Because of Peace Corps, I now have a better understanding and appreciation of teaching students here in the states. There's nothing you can write down that would capture what you learn and what you grasp from a Peace Corps experience. Unless you are there it's really hard to understand it."

Marcos began his service with the intention of taking in the cultural diversity, looking forward to the differences and new opportunities for living and working overseas. He said, "I was very intent on becoming sensitive to variations between people. A special 2-week, teacher/training program revealed a culture and way of life far removed from my life in the United States."
Mack reflected on another international experience he had as well as the two years in Peace Corps, and decided, "For me it was the combination of having spent a year in Japan, then later spending two years in Thailand as a Peace Corps volunteer. I realized there were differences in the way Thai people look at things and the way the Japanese would look at things, as well as Americans. It was sort of a constellation of seeing things in different ways. I learned not to expect miracle but to appreciate the cultural values of my hosts. I came to appreciate the importance of process rather than end results and to value human beings above institutions. I learned more than I taught by far, and came most of all to appreciate the diversity. Even now when I look back, as I get farther away from the Peace Corps experience itself, it is still a real mountain-top experience. Still, I don't think about it all the time, but I was a different person before I went in the Peace Corps."

John was very moved in clarifying what was most valuable from his Peace Corps experience. He explained, "I developed an appreciation for other ways of doing things, in other cultures and the ability to accept one another. It's very, very important. I became more conscious and more sensitive to people different from what I was accustomed to. Before Peace Corps, the inner city 'rap' of students was something I formerly rebuked. Having lived in Antigua, I feel less concerned about it. I am more conscious of ethnicity and obviously less narrow in my opinions regarding ethnic issues and cross-cultural ideas."

Louise's comments actually reflect both the relationships and the cross-cultural awareness categories. She responded by saying, "The cultural exchange and
the intellectual exchange was important, and then there's the human thing like showing them that it's great to have heated rhubarb over ice cream and they showed me how to make a fruit compote out of cherries. There were also things we did culturally like the opera, music festivals, and street theatre downtown. I would have felt that way probably in any country, but it was the interaction with the people that got me through the tough spots."

Kim mentioned the cross-cultural exchange she experienced through traditional practices in the culture. She said, "The cross-cultural exchange of festivals, parties, and things like that were really valuable to me because through that I learned a lot about the village and the people. I question my own personal values now because I became aware of how much we as Americans take for granted."

Noni reiterated Kim's thoughts. Noni shared, "What I saw and learned from inside the culture was so special. I'd say seeing how people survived what they survived on and compared to so many of us back here was really valuable. I really wish everybody could have the opportunity to see how people in other countries live, who have very little to survive on and yet they make do."

Stan said of the Peace Corps, "It revealed a culture and a way of life so far removed from middle class in the United States, that it opened my eyes and made it the single, most significant experience. It made me more sensitive to people and to variations between people." On a more personal note, he also mentioned, "Because of my earlier international experiences and because I had developed a long-standing
interest in history which is one of the best ways to appreciate the roots of culture, I earned my Ph.D. which has been valuable in my career.”

In summarizing the category cross-cultural awareness, Stan, Kim, and Noni all made comparisons of the United States to the circumstances in the underdeveloped countries of their Peace Corps assignments. Stan’s revelation about culture supports the responses from 7 other participants who all mentioned their appreciation of cross-cultural awareness. International experiences such as the Peace Corps provide encounters for understanding and participating in today’s interdependent world, which increase the opportunities for many aspects of learning. This leads to the subtheme, “learning opportunities,” which emerged from the findings and depicts what the teachers say they have come to appreciate from their international, cross-cultural experience.

**Learning Opportunities.**

Four of the participants acknowledged what they believe they specifically learned from the cultural exchange through the Peace Corps. I chose to display fragments from previous quotations to emphasize each teacher’s perception of what they learned regarding cross-cultural awareness, which ultimately had an impact on their classroom instruction.

Pam’s most valuable experience is similar to what many people come to realize after having an international experience. Because she grew up in a small town with little diversity, much like myself, she was unaware of the development in other
countries even though English was not the native language. She learned from her Peace Corps experience that there is much more in the world, than just the old, familiar USA. Pam shared, "Since I grew up in a very white, all the same, rural area, for me personally the most valuable thing was the vast experience of learning, in that there is a whole big world out there and English-speaking Americans are not the center of it."

Noni emphasized, "What I saw and learned from inside the culture was special. It's like I say to some of my friends, that sometimes I wish I made more money or I wish I had this or that, but you know, I really wish that everybody could have the opportunity to see how other people live, and yet they still make do." Mack commented, "I learned not to expect miracles, but to appreciate the cultural values of my hosts. I learned more than I taught by far." Mack considered his teaching situation to be one where he may not be able to see end results of his work, such as a child learning how to read, or graduate from high school. His teaching success was a process he viewed as long term, where the end results of his diligence may not come to fruition for many years. The cross-cultural experience and the interactions with his hosts throughout his Peace Corps service were great learning experiences.

Kim mentioned several times throughout the interview how she enjoyed learning about traditional cultural practices by socializing with her hosts at parties, festivals, and school events. She said, "I learned a lot about the village and how it's run. All those people out in the middle of the Pacific, on a tiny little island, and I was
the only white person. I learned what it feels like to be a victim when other people make stereotypical comments and generalizations."

Influences and Motivation to Serve as Peace Corps Volunteers and Most Valuable Peace Corps Experience – Summary

As a result of international experiences such as the Peace Corps, the participants perceive their roles as teachers as a type of "response" to the needs of others and acceptance of changes within themselves as teachers. Specifically, their roles as teachers are described as one of response to others (relationships) and change within themselves (cross-cultural awareness). By accepting challenges and the call to service and by making connections to meet the needs of students by sharing time and self, this form of "teacher response" enabled them to make a difference in the lives of their students and in their own lives, as well.

The factors that determine the participants' motive for service in the Peace Corps were important as they considered their role as a teacher overseas. Four categories emerged from the findings including personal achievement and self-gain, a sense of civic duty and the Kennedy years, humanitarianism and altruism, family background and religious convictions. Three subthemes emerged under personal achievement and self-gain, designated as travel and adventure, alternative career choices, and educational advancement.

The findings revealed that 8 participants' motives were in search of opportunities for an alternative career choice. This was revealed in the personal achievement and self-gain category, and was most prominent of all the responses.
This was surprising, as I initially assumed personal interests such as travel and adventure would have had a stronger influence on their decisions.

The second most prominent motive however, was that of humanitarian and altruistic motives. Seven teachers discussed how their motive to serve in the Peace Corps stemmed from an inclination to help others and the desire to take on a mission experience. As an alternative to missionary work, 6 of the 10 teachers considered Peace Corps opportunities as an opportunity for service. Noni, Mack, Molly, and Monty approached their Peace Corps service to specifically fulfill a type of mission experience. John and Louise also had a strong inclination to serve others.

Family background and religious convictions also had a direct impact on the teachers' motivation for an international experience such as Peace Corps. Three participants—Louise, Mack, and Molly—discussed how their relatives and their involvement with people from other countries influenced their motive to serve. Two of the participants—Molly and Monty—affirmed that their religious beliefs and spirituality, and family participation in the church were influential in their motivation to serve. Monty also mentioned that he considered the Peace Corps to be equivalent to missionary work.

There were equal numbers of responses regarding travel and adventure and educational advancement as reasons for these teachers to join the Peace Corps. Overall, Marcos, Louise, and Molly discussed issues such as unhappiness, the need for a change, a desire to work internationally, and a desire for personal and professional
growth. John, one of the senior volunteers, considered his impending retirement, which led to his motive for an international experience.

In the category "a sense of civic duty and the Kennedy administration," 5 participants voiced that they were motivated by a sense of civic duty and the Kennedy legacy to serve in the Peace Corps. Kim, Mack, Stan, Molly, and Pam discussed how at a young age their desire to serve in the Peace Corps was influenced by the media and promotion of John F. Kennedy’s Peace Corps initiative. Stan and Mack specifically commented that they were idealistic young people, who considered John Kennedy a role model, and they anxiously wanted to accept an opportunity for Peace Corps service. Pam was the only teacher who mentioned how important it was for her to fulfill some sense of duty to her country. She chose to do so through the Peace Corps. Each of the participants, however, responded to Kennedy’s challenge to serve their country and the cause of peace by living and working in the developing world.

The participants’ most valuable experiences were very informative regarding how the teachers described the nature of their teaching experiences and their perception of their role as teacher while serving overseas in the Peace Corps. Two categories—"relationships" and "cross-cultural awareness"—emerged from the findings. The majority of the respondents indicated that cross-cultural awareness was their most valuable Peace Corps experience, although relationships with others was almost as prominent. Specifically, 8 teachers talked about cross-cultural awareness and their realization of how important it is regarding their role as a teacher. Monty, Mack, John, Louise, Marcos, Kim, Stan, and Noni shared their appreciation for the (a)
cross-cultural awareness of other, (b) intellectual exchange of cultural practices and traditions, (c) sensitivity to issues of ethnicity and diversity, and (d) becoming more conscious, sensitive and accepting of others different from themselves

Stan's eye-opening experience enabled him to become more sensitive to differences and diversity. John likewise, became less narrow in his opinions. Three teachers emphatically stated that (a) teaching in the Peace Corps enabled them to understand and appreciate their students in the United States, (b) they gained an ability to appreciate human beings over institutions, and (c) they realized and acknowledged an awareness of what Americans take for granted regarding their education.

The second category, "relationships," revealed that 7 teachers perceived relationships with host-country nationals and friends, as well as general interactions with others, as their most valuable experience. Kim and John discussed "friends" as important and noted that they maintained those relationships even now, several years after their return from the Peace Corps. Mack and Monty commented that their work was definitely secondary to the "people." Pam, Louise, and Noni each discussed the value of connections with people, their interactions with neighbors, and a general people-to-people connection that they considered their best experience.

One subtheme, "learning opportunities," also emerged from the category, "cross-cultural awareness." Four participants—Pam, Noni, Mack, and Kim—each told how much they valued what they learned from their Peace Corps experience. Mack believes he "learned more than he taught." Noni values what she learned "inside the culture," mainly traditions different from what she had ever known. Pam
realized that the United States is not the "center of the world," that there are other cultures and countries just as credible. Kim, being one of the few "white people" on the island, recognized how it feels to be in the minority and to be "discriminated against."

Overall, the findings generally reveal how these teachers changed as "people." They became more globally conscious and developed an appreciation for cross-cultural exchange and were generally more sensitive to diversity. The teachers' responses are consistent with what the literature suggests: (1) Some people may be more predisposed to openness regarding cross-cultural exchange (as these seem to be by their comments). (2) The kind of perceptual changes the teachers discussed as a result of the Peace Corps are consistent with what the literature says needs to happen to become a "global-minded teacher."

It should be noted that, although the teachers' motives for an international experience were initially for "self gain," the same motive ultimately affected their "roles as teachers" by promoting change within themselves; rather, "self change," which, as noted in the major findings, ultimately changed their instruction.

In describing the nature of their teaching and roles as teachers, the participants discussed how teaching overseas was a turning point in their lives. Cross-cultural awareness includes their recognition of diversity, with an understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural exchange. Because they were developing students' abilities for furthering their education, discovering the unity and cohesiveness of relationships among people, and simply adapting to the concept of community, they
came to appreciate their personal involvement and "people skills" that focus on personal interactions and multiple perspectives.

The teachers' motives for international experiences and their most valuable Peace Corps experiences are closely linked to the perceptual changes made within themselves as people, which ultimately made an impact on their instructional practice. Their comments are generally reflective of the global education literature that discusses competencies of basic cross-cultural understanding and awareness. This is how we know what their experiences were and how they perceived their roles as teachers.

In the following section, these ideas will be fleshed out in greater detail as I specifically discuss changes these RPCVs made within themselves as teachers.

**Teaching Experiences and Perceptions**

In this section, the findings answer Research Questions #1 and #2: "How do former Peace Corps teachers describe the nature of their teaching experiences and their perception of their role as teacher as a result of serving overseas in the Peace Corps?" "How do former Peace Corps teachers say that their teaching and curriculum has been influenced or changed by this international, cross-cultural experience?"

American educators who choose to globalize their teaching by traveling to other countries, accepting and adapting to the culture, and living side by side with other people will likely present their students with a balanced, fair-minded view of what it means to live in a global society (Becker, 1993). Students need to develop
competencies, skills, attitudes, and knowledge of global perspectives, and teachers should portray the world as it touches the lives of the students, not as something distant and exotic (Woyach, 1976).

The men and women in this study who served as volunteer teachers shared their perceptions of how their subsequent curriculum and instruction, materials, and methods were affected or changed as a result of their Peace Corps experience. This was critical to the analysis of how Peace Corps teachers incorporate aspects of global perspectives in their instructional practice. The teachers' responses collectively answer Research Question #2, related to the following three categories: a focus on (a) teacher's instructional change, (b) student learning, and (c) teaching for global awareness.

**Teachers' Instructional Change**

Some teachers perceived the way they changed and improved their instructional practice because of their Peace Corps service had to do with changes within themselves as teachers more so than changes in their curriculum. Some of the respondents believed that the kinds of personal growth and perceptual changes resulting from cross-cultural interactions, which were discussed in the previous section, had directly impacted the manner in which they make subject matter meaningful for their students. As discussed in Chapter 1, the substantive global perspective (Case, 1993) promotes knowledge for students beyond their own
community and country. The knowledge gained beyond their local and immediate environment promotes a global perspective.

These teachers believe that the multiple perspectives they developed also enable them to look at subject matter from a variety of perspectives and to be more creative in their style of instruction. According to the teachers, their curriculum was affected by ways in which they incorporate cooperative groups, in-depth discussions, humor, flexibility, and a variety of activities in their ‘presentation’ of the content. Their presentation or instructional style changed because they as individuals changes.

The following excerpts display perceptions these teachers have based on the fact that Peace Corps experiences and interactions changed them personally, which made an impact on their teaching style and methods of instruction.

Several volunteers talked about presenting the curriculum content in such a way that would broaden students’ horizons, and encourage them to look beyond their own culture to appreciate the culture of others. They stress teaching students to appreciate and value the content of their lessons. By integrating different activities and sharing their Peace Corps experiences and international travels, the teachers recognized that they are better able to “transfer” knowledge, enrich discussions, and develop a variety of ways to teach similar concepts.

By adapting to a different culture and participating in traditions and ways of life different from their own, the teachers in this study also realize how students “learn” in different ways, and they became open and more susceptible to different styles of teaching. Not only do these teachers perceive changes in their methods and
approach to teaching, they also recognize change within “themselves” because of the Peace Corps. How they changed their teaching style was discussed by 6 of the participants. By revisiting events and moments from their Peace Corps service, they remember particular experiences that affect their classroom instruction. Now, because of their Peace Corps experience, these teachers are better able to integrate first-hand examples that are relevant to the curriculum, and most importantly, take a personal assessment of themselves and their classroom instruction. According to the participants, Peace Corps experiences helped them become more tolerant, better communicators, more flexible, active, creative, and reflective. These are the main concepts that emerged from the teachers’ perceptions.

In one interview Monty said, “Ever since Peace Corps, I am able to provide broader, global analogies and give examples in my explanations of subject matter. The actual curriculum may not have changed, but my presentation of it has. I reflect more on my experiences. I don’t see it incorporated into my lessons, but I can give better examples.”

Kim contributed to this idea in saying, “I don’t know that I have specifically tried to change my curriculum, but I try to add discussions and information relating to my experience and ones like it that enrich the existing curriculum for the students and for me. I think after Peace Corps I tried to bring in other materials and I was always looking for ways to enrich my instruction. I did a lot of acting in the Peace Corps and I do it now, too. I tell jokes, and do a lot of funny things. That might not have happened if I had not struggled in Peace Corps.”
Molly voiced similar feelings in saying, “I tell stories of all my travels. I have used Peace Corps stories as the basis of different classroom activities, to the amusement of my students. From my travels that tie into the lessons, it widens their horizons like it did mine. It makes me more credible to the students.”

From our discussions, Marcos mentioned the different way he approaches “instruction.” As a RPCV, he believes, “I think I’m less judgmental. I hope that I listen to students much better and that I’m more flexible and open to their suggestions and bring the ideas out from them. Without Peace Corps, it would have taken me longer to learn that. My style probably comes from Peace Corps like when I’m teaching and generally very active in class. Just moving around and trying to engage students is almost always through group activities. I’m sure that’s from Peace Corps. Before, I certainly wouldn’t have felt as comfortable. It wouldn’t have come very natural to me. Often the sense of time and the urgency to complete tasks and stay on a schedule is not the same for people of different cultures. Peace Corps influenced me to become more flexible, less regimented, and adaptable to change. By being in another country, you learn to recognize the kinds of assumptions and cultural routines that were programmed into you in your own country, and you realize the misinformation about other cultures. Always there’s the growth, at any given point I consider what they are doing. I ask myself, are they engaging or just sitting? Is it relevant to them? Sometimes you have to lecture, but is it something they are interested in or making connections with? The hardest thing for me to do
instructionally is to facilitate well. I find myself having to just sit down and let the activity flow on its own.”

Stan’s response focused on what he learned in Peace Corps and how those challenges affect his teaching. In having to be more self-reliant and innovative, “making do” with limited available resources, as is often the case for Peace Corps teachers, he now considers those restrictions an advantage to his classroom teaching, because he developed the initiative to be more resourceful despite barriers that exist. Although his curriculum and style of teaching may not have changed, he encountered change in his self-esteem, innovative ideas, and his approach to dealing with obstacles. Stan said, “The Peace Corps kind of throws you into a job that’s over your level of confidence right out of college. A challenge to do something that a normal, fresh college graduate probably wouldn’t do. I had to come up with laboratories that made use of very few items that were available. I had to be resourceful in inventing a lot of things because I didn’t have a lot of resources. I think what I really valued is the self-confidence of getting up and going someplace, not knowing what I was going to do when I got there, and figuring it out afterward. It gave me confidence.”

Mack made similar comments: “I try as much as I can in my teaching to encourage participation. I started out feeling that I knew it all and they needed to find out what I knew so I just lectured, but I think I have evolved over time, and that’s a bit of Peace Corps influence in that the students have to experience it themselves. The complex task of communicating challenging learning expectations to students and encouraging students to extend their thinking through experiential learning, is
evidence of the teacher change Mack acknowledged because of the way in which he evolved because of Peace Corps influence. Mack also said, “When I was overseas we tried to tie in stories and history of different countries. I think that transferred to the way I teach now. I try to integrate that approach rather than just throw them into something and expecting them to understand the concepts. I increasingly advocate for global education and for available opportunities to explore various approaches that emphasize ways in which different cultures approach common issues and problems. I’m beginning to change my notion about how to look at global issues. So in my classroom I transfer this into my workshops for teachers. I try to engage them in such a way as to avoid making certain Western cultural biased judgments.”

Louise contributed much to the discussion in saying, “My content is different because of all the cultural issues that Peace Corps made me aware of. I am a better teacher because of understanding tolerance, breadth, and creativity in that it expands my thinking of how to communicate or do something. I’m able to go beyond what is comfortable for me. I don’t think that’s bragging, because there are other people with international experiences with the same tone, and I think Peace Corps gives you a “tone.” I would not have been that way without Peace Corps because I would not have lived there to begin with and I think the living experience makes you more receptive to the differences. It does make you more genuine and more interesting. My experience in Poland served as a strong foundation in my instructional approach, which led to my interest in working with teachers in the states.”
John responded, “I’m better able to be improvise and be more creative. Peace Corps affected me as a person and I am more patient and understanding of people. You have to slow down your methods sometimes. In Peace Corps you have to adjust to their culture and they have to adjust to you. I think people with international experience can transfer what they do and that makes them more well-rounded especially in teaching. You become more culturally oriented. There’s no doubt that what I experienced overseas has transferred to my classroom. As a veteran teacher I understand how important it is to be able to change your style of teaching depending on the type of student you are attempting to teach. I knew that before Peace Corps, because basic teaching is basic teaching whether it’s in the United States, Europe or wherever it is.”

The idea of teaching similar concepts in different ways was also mentioned by Stan. He said, “When I teach I try to teach the concepts from several different directions so that people who don’t get it from one direction might get it from another. I think in Peace Corps it was the first time I realized how people learn in different ways. I still have some failures now, because I could never get through to one woman. I couldn’t get her to start thinking in a different way. I make students recognize important concepts by coming at it from different directions and going over it more than once. I don’t repeat it the same way. Part of that may have come from having to do that in Spanish in the Peace Corps. One of the concepts told to us during the teaching education phase was that in teaching you are trying to change behavior. In a standard high school setting I wasn’t really going to do that, but when I taught as a
Peace Corps volunteer I had to do that. I probably wouldn't teach the way I do now if I hadn't been in Peace Corps."

To summarize, as indicated in the previous vignettes, 9 of the 10 participants perceive Peace Corps as having had a positive impact that focuses on change in their teaching style that is a reflection of how they changed personally as a teacher. This self-change resulted in the way the teachers planned and presented their curriculum while their instruction and pedagogy changed as well. Overall, four teachers mentioned having become better at communicating with their students. Three teachers discussed presenting the content matter in different ways to reach different types of learners. Four responses voiced the teacher's admission that they are more flexible and tolerant of 'difference' in students and their learning styles. Seven teachers acknowledged that through creativity and enrichment they have enhanced their curriculum and personal approach as teachers.

Overall, the participants discussed how Peace Corps changed them perceptually (Figure 1). The participants' role as teacher and their instructional change are designated as an "umbrella" for the way respondents perceived changes in their teaching. Generally, the findings do not designate a change in the teachers' curriculum. There was obvious data revealing self change and instructional or pedagogical change, which made an impact on the teachers' awareness of student learning processes and the process of teaching with a global focus. The most significant change is that which took place within themselves—self change. Many Peace Corps volunteers begin their journeys thinking about differences, then return
home with a better understanding of similarities. Along the way, much is learned about culture and beliefs that a group of people has in common.

**PARTICIPANT'S ROLE AS TEACHER**

**and**

**CURRICULUM-INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE**

**SELF-CHANGE**
- Less judgmental
- More flexible
- More active
- Less regimented
- More reflective
- More accepting
- Higher self-esteem
- More confident
- More tolerant
- More understanding
- More receptive to differences
- More patience
- Adaptable to change
- More sensitive
- Goes beyond what's comfortable

**INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE**
- Reflects more on experiences
- Gives better examples
- Adds discussion & information
- More active, entertaining, tells jokes
- Prepares better lectures
- Takes assessment of teaching style
- Delegates more
- Improvises better
- Asks better questions
- Shares personal experiences
- Provides a sense of choice
- Approaches from different angle
- Goes over material more often
- Facilitates better
- More innovative

**STUDENT LEARNING**
- Encourages students more
- More sensitive to students
- Needs & variations of learning
- More insightful of students
- More in tune with individuals
- Communicates learning expectations

**GLOBAL FOCUS**
- Teach similar concepts in different ways
- Broader global analogies
- Avoid Western cultural biases
- More culturally oriented
- Advocates for global education
- Explores different approach
- More aware of learning styles

Figure 1. Participant's Role as Teacher and Curriculum-Instructional Change
Each response indicates that, as individuals, they changed their instructional approach because they changed inwardly as people as a result of their own interpersonal experiences in the Peace Corps. John, however, is one participant who mentioned that he was already aware of the importance of change within himself to meet the needs of the students and that he didn’t necessarily change because of Peace Corps. The impact of self change in most of the teachers enhanced their understanding and approach to effectively deal with student learning. The changes made within themselves evolved into a deliberate change in their considerations of how students learn. The following information displays the second category, “a focus on student learning.”

**Student Learning**

In this category, “a focus on student learning,” the teachers share their perceptions of how international experiences prompted change within themselves and made them more sensitive to students and their learning styles. Overall, the findings reveal that, out of the 10 participants, 8 teachers discussed what they perceived as a change in their personal feelings toward students, the flexibility they have in dealing with student needs, and a better understanding of providing students a sense of choice in their learning activities. The following comments are indicators of the teachers’ focus on student learning.

Kim talked about her personal feelings toward students: “My instruction has changed on the level of attitude and respect for the students as it did for students in
Kiribati. It allows for a more positive educational environment.” Likewise, Stan commented, “I’ve become more sensitive and insightful to variations between students because of my Peace Corps experience.” John said that as a senior volunteer he initially resisted some of the behaviors of his students, but that in Antigua he was much more flexible and easygoing. He admitted, “Since Peace Corps I interact more with students who need more attention. I’m also more in tune to individuals, organizations, and planning. I’m more accepting of other people because that was something I changed in myself, through Peace Corps.”

Recognizing the way in which students learn is critical to classroom instruction. Three other teachers commented that they have become more conscious of learning styles, and they incorporate different ways to teach concepts and content. By taking an in-depth look at the students they are dealing with and what the barriers to learning might be, they are better able to reach the students and encourage a desire in them, to want to learn. Monty offered this example, “I point out to my students that we have an opportunity to learn and that we should take advantage of it. If I hadn’t been in Peace Corps I wouldn’t feel that to the degree that I do. I can say that because I lived in Peace Corps and experienced teaching students who didn’t have an opportunity to go to school. Other people that haven’t been overseas aren’t as tuned in to it. Specifically, there is part of me that would be more lenient like supplying students with pencils, paper and notebooks, but now I make it their responsibility. It’s mandatory because I’ve seen students with next to nothing and those were the lucky ones, and here my students are without their pencil but they wear designer jeans.
Because of Peace Corps, I'm better able to drive the point home. Some things you are mindful of because you experienced it. I find myself really doing that and they get the message. They don't take it for granted."

Louise ties in her Peace Corps experiences as well, and how she is better able to get students more involved, which helps to promote feedback from the students. She expressed this by saying, "I'm better able to adapt my teaching to meet the needs of the students just by talking about personal experiences to her teaching and noted the interest and participation just flows naturally from that. Now, I'm much more conscious of learning styles because of the different culture and people I worked with in Poland."

The way that students learn also had an impact on Stan's teaching. He said, "Peace Corps has forced me to look deeply into the ways in which students think and learn. Since I saw the way memorization without understanding had a negative impact on student learning in Honduras, I have become very critical of rote learning. It's like talking into a tape recorder. I wasn't satisfied teaching tape recorders. Students could repeat it but not understand it. I'm also more aware of academic dishonesty and from that I now design assignments and tests that make cheating difficult. Probably the biggest effect is that I ask questions that persons have to interpret and if they understand the material and the concepts then they can interpret the questions, kind of like a riddle.

Louise shared that, "Living abroad helped me with my international students to know about "transition time." For example, when they first come to the United States
and enter our culture, everything is new and exciting and they go through the experience where everybody is good to them. Then, they meet some people that are not so good to them and they have no contact with immediate family, so they have to reconcile that within themselves. So when I teach students today, I know what that feels like because I’ve been in their shoes. My students know that I have this international experience and they respect me more, and trust me and are not afraid.”

Kim made a similar statement: “Peace Corps helped me learn how much and how important it is to know the kids outside of class, and to bring that knowledge into the classroom so that they are more comfortable. I have a lot more fun with the students.” Marcos is also more sensitive to students’ needs because of his Peace Corps experience. He said, “The thing that comes to mind is that teaching in the Peace Corps setting taught me how important it is to understand the perspective of the student. When I first started teaching overseas I wasn’t as aware of all that I should have been. You just don’t understand why the students don’t show up for classes and you finally realize harvesting the grass for winter was more important than school. From that experience when I work with kids now, I try to understand where they are coming from and be open to them and what their needs are.”

Student learning is also based to a certain degree, on students having an opportunity to make their own decisions and to have a voice in how and what they learn. Two participants discussed this point. In Kiribati, Kim had ESL (English as a Second Language) students who needed to try different conversational tactics to grasp the meaning of words. She commented that this experience made her more open to
students and she now allows them to try things their own way. She also said, "With students, I try to give them lots of choices and let them see that if their ways work that's okay, too."

Finally, Molly told me how Peace Corps had an impact on her approach to student learning when she said, "Peace Corps has been instrumental in the way I go about my work. It has taught me to understand the circumstances of the learner and to understand what it means to be involved. My curriculum is beginning to reflect this perspective."

In summary, 3 of the teachers shared how their perceptions of self and inner feelings are different because of having served in the Peace Corps. They are more accepting of their students and sensitive to personal situations that each student brings (or doesn't bring) to the classroom. The teachers' attitudes are more open, and they are more flexible. Three other teachers recognize the importance of developing rapport with students, both in and out of the classroom. In the Peace Corps, this comes naturally in a more relaxed environment, where teaching is often held outside, and there is less pressure regarding time and the hours devoted to completing tasks. From such experiences, the teachers have become more relaxed and involved with their students today, just and they interact more with students as they did at their Peace Corps site. Having been in a new and different environment, many Peace Corps teachers understand the personal and emotional needs of students.
Teaching for Global Awareness

A third category, which I define as “a focus on teaching for global awareness,” consists of perceptions the teachers have regarding how international experiences such as the Peace Corps inspired them to change their instruction or pedagogy by deliberately integrating ways to promote global awareness in their students. As seen in Figure 1, the pedagogical changes for each teacher influenced their instructional approaches, focusing on global awareness. The integration, or infusion, of global awareness also is related to Research Question #3 and #3a: “Do teachers with international experiences such as The Peace Corps infuse global education in their teaching practice, and if so, how?” “Did the infusion happen naturally or did they purposely implement strategies for more successful teaching and learning?”

It should be noted, however, that many ideas revealed in the “Teaching for Global Awareness” category are discussed later in the chapter, under “Teachers’ Perceptions of Global Education.” Although the value of infusing global education by teaching for global awareness is mentioned at this point, the major findings relevant to the infusion of global education are discussed in-depth later in the study. In teaching for global awareness teachers provide concepts, and develop an understanding and consciousness of global dynamics and global change. Hanvey (1983) argued that we cannot rely on the media’s view for much of what should be learned about global dynamics. To incorporate our best knowledge of how the world works, we must use the schools to transmit that knowledge.
Molly stated, “Ever since the Peace Corps, I’ve had a more genuine interest in learning about culture and the impact of diversity. The Peace Corps has given me more validity in the eyes of my students because I’ve been there and not just for vacations or things like that. It’s really “consciousness raising” to make a move to do something about cultural problems and inequities. Now in my classroom I’m more likely to do that.”

Pam said, “I used to “dish out” the content and would take pride in myself on my well-organized lectures and I thought students would be cooperative because I was telling them what they needed to know. Now, since Peace Corps, I do much more, like different ways to teach a concept or the content. I was pretty much a formative thinker when I was younger, but I think you learn that things aren’t black and white, they’re gray. And there’s a lot of different ways of doing things. One isn’t better than the other, or right and wrong. I try to teach kids that just because something is different it doesn’t mean that it’s gross, or wrong, or dumb. I try to make sure students can succeed so I re-teach things to make sure students learn it. I was pretty closed minded when I was younger, and Peace Corps broadened my thinking. I always wanted a challenge but I wouldn’t have always tried a variety of things or been as likely to do different things before Peace Corps.”

Pam also shared some insight about her classroom instruction when she said, “I never skip over cross-cultural activities in the textbooks and I make an effort to discuss other cultures and their traditions in a very positive light, no matter if we’re studying the ancient Mayans and Aztecs or the famous Asian-American scientist.”
Louise talked about the international students she teaches and she considers the instruction to be very globally focused based on the diverse cultures of her students. She offered, “As an instructor for international students I can use their names and how they have different origins and meanings, in different cultures. Another thing about Peace Corps is that I’m better able to deal with cultural issues in the classroom and address them accordingly. Like Chinese students who often come and expect to just listen and remember, rather than talk with others and get feedback in groups ... or, for example, older male African or Brazilian students who come in 30 minutes late, expecting to have an appointment with me. I express to them how they have to wait and that time is an important thing. I’m more tolerant in one way, yet on the other hand, I am able to address the issue more assertively, relating it to them and making it clear to them why they should not behave that way.”

Noni talked about acceptance of others not only in her classroom, but also of people in general. She commented that through Peace Corps she tried to teach from a broader perspective, incorporating global initiatives. She said, “In Peace Corps I think I became very aware of differences and accepting of differences of children, teachers, adults, and parents. I tried to work with what the children brought to school and what they didn’t bring with them. If I had not done Peace Corps, I probably would not have looked for ways to bring in global ideas.”

Likewise, Kim recognizes the importance of global interconnectedness and incorporates those ideals in her classroom. By encouraging her students to move beyond their immediate community, she told me, “My curriculum has changed
because I realize the value of worldly connections. For example, I have kids write to a Peace Corps volunteer currently serving in the field. This simple act opens their eyes to the world outside of Columbus.” Kim referred to the “Peace Corps World Wise Schools program,” which links classroom teachers and students with a volunteer and his or her students overseas. It is an opportunity for classroom teachers to introduce children from different parts of the world to one another, and to study and learn through distance-learning techniques to become acquainted with a different culture.

Mack said, “In the classroom I always try to encourage my students to develop an empathetic relationship with the culture. When teaching about other countries, I try to get them to think the way other people would and to see things through their eyes so that they can escape themselves and realize that other people can make a difference. I push for world-culture week observation and annual curriculum events that include culturally diverse activities for students.”

John’s statement reiterates how Peace Corps had a direct impact on his teaching. He emphasized, “Within the curriculum I include multiple perspectives in my teaching. I make a conscious effort to include things about social justice, and things about being active in society, and I think that is a direct relation to my Peace Corps service.”

Having experienced life in a different culture and returning to the United States with a better global understanding and appreciation of diversity made a difference in these teachers’ instructional practice. Six of the participants discussed how their teaching now involves deliberate integration of multiple perspectives. They
are more assertive and more prone to empathize with people different from themselves. Four teachers also discussed culture and what it means to develop a perspective consciousness, recognize cultural and global issues, and incorporate cultural activities into their curriculum. Recognizing differences in their students and bringing in international guests were mentioned by two teachers, and 7 of the 10 participants spoke of integrating the discussion of global issues into their classrooms.

Overall, the teacher general curricula did not change; rather, they changed personally in their approach to teaching. Because of a strong interest and appreciation of global awareness, however, the teaching with a global focus category reflects change in the teachers' pedagogical style, with a greater respect and understanding of global awareness and cross-cultural sensitivity.

**Supplementary Materials and Procedures**

Within the curriculum, different types of materials are relevant and very telling of how teachers “do what they do” in the classroom (Appendix F). The types of materials and procedures for classroom instruction as described by the participants also answer Research Question #2.

Wilson (1986) argued that international/cross-culturally experienced teachers enhance their own classroom instruction by teaching with more creativity, enthusiasm, and understanding. According to Gilliom (1981), international travel is invaluable for collecting supplementary items and ideas for use in the classroom. Incorporating supplementary items in one’s classroom involves a wide variety of curriculum
materials that include for the most part, typical instructional resources such as maps, globes, pictures, journals, guest speakers, current events, and cultural activities related to the textbooks.

This category, "supplementary materials," includes participants' descriptions of the general types of materials they used for their classroom instruction. Using enrichment and authentic materials and procedures, as well as the integration of technology, to supplement one's teaching methods creates a diversion and "change of scenery" as the curriculum renders it appropriate. Enrichment materials, such as visual aides, music, etc., are those items that add to and enhance the lesson content. Authentic materials in this case, represent more traditional items from different countries or cultures.

As an example from my own experience in the Peace Corps, doing the "Hokey Pokey" meant absolutely nothing more than entertainment at a wedding reception with family and friends. In Liberia however, teaching the Hokey Pokey to my adult teachers in bush schools, became a learning tool that we used to integrate with health lessons, for children in Pre-Kindergarten through grade 3. In the same way, Peace Corps teachers who have traveled overseas are more likely to develop innovative methods from their Peace Corps experiences, and incorporate those methods in their classroom instruction.

Because of the opportunity these teachers had internationally, they are likely to integrate a variety of materials from their Peace Corps experience with their lessons. From the interview guide, Item #6 asks, "Tell me specific examples of teaching
procedures and curriculum materials you use that reflect the impact of your international experiences." The findings reveal three prominent themes: (a) enrichment materials and procedures, (b) authentic materials and procedures, and (c) technological materials and procedures.

**Enrichment Procedures and Materials.**

To comply with quality teaching standards, teachers identify, and integrate appropriate resources and enrichment materials to meet the needs of the students and the curriculum. Enrichment materials are the items that align with the overall goals and procedures of lesson plans, to meet the criteria for presenting the content. The supplementary materials described by the participants are revealed in the following excerpts, and describe particular items and resources they discussed. The participants share how Peace Corps played a role in the integration of those resources. Seven of the 10 participants talked about the types of enrichment materials and ideas they use for their classroom instruction.

As a history teacher, Mack talked about the importance of using various materials and activities to enhance his classroom teaching. The items he uses include many textbooks on different Asian cultures, artifacts, and pieces of artwork. He told me, "I have a little box with goodies in it and I take that to the classroom to talk about where the items come from, and what they illustrate in relation to the content. I also frequently use role playing exercises to provide opportunities for developing empathy
and an appreciation of complex interaction, along with a variety of cultural components."

Kim is also a social studies teacher and she makes a conscious effort to include materials and procedures that directly relate her Peace Corps experience to her classroom teaching practice. She said, "Teaching social studies makes it easier to incorporate topics about African Americans, racism, historical events and things. I put a lot of my own stories from my own experiences in my lessons too, and the kids really relate to that. I teach about other countries and types of issues and in that way I think even incidentally, a lot of my Peace Corps experience comes out in my teaching. I do a lot of cooperative learning, role-play and group work, too. Anything that involves the students in the community with direct contact with people, I include in my classroom activities."

Molly came across as the type of teacher who would be eager to "show and tell" as many items as possible to enrich the content of her lessons. Her Peace Corps experience provided her with an abundance of resources to tie in with her classes. Although she currently teaches Spanish, Molly's list of supplementary items included what would be appropriate for almost any discipline. She said, "I bring in musical instruments and pictures from my Peace Corps experience to make things a little bit lighter. I use things for rewards and for a change of pace. I also use a lot of pictures from other countries, lots of maps and globes and an international calendar. Grammar exercises work well too, and I do that by an amusing story that may be a drudgery, otherwise. For example, I might take out instruments, or jewelry, or play music, and
pass it out to the students, to have them write a story, or describe what they think about it. The sounds they make, the material they are made of—things like that.”

As a special education teacher Pam appreciates the ability to integrate materials and procedures that worked well with students during her service with the Peace Corps in Colombia. She discussed some of the procedures incorporated in her classroom instruction as “I do a lot more cooperative learning. Group work and role-play that I probably wouldn’t have done if I had not served in the Peace Corps. Especially when I taught elementary school, there were certain recipes I used to teach what a mango is. I also use my Spanish to ‘diffuse.’ When a student is carrying on or acting out I start talking to them in Spanish. High school kids are as captivated by that as the elementary kids. I use it to break tensions. Without having been in the Peace Corps, I doubt I would have learned a different language.”

Stan said, “I use newspapers and magazines to bring in current events.” Stan also mentioned that, because of the Peace Corps, he developed a very strong interest in keeping up with current events because they have a direct impact on student’s lives and their learning experiences. Marcos was very brief in his explanation. He said, “I use community mapping activities, discussion groups, interviewing, and student centered activities.” Louise was quite animated as she said, “Oh, I use everything, small groups, large groups, videos, role-play, work sheets, and games from Peace Corps. It takes me back to my first love of teaching.”

In summary, 5 of 10 participants assert that they integrate enrichment procedures and materials—such as cooperative learning, group work, role-play, and
interview activities, and recipes, magazines, newspapers, and games—as viable elements in their classroom instruction.

**Authentic Materials.**

Peace Corps teachers have described in this category, materials and items not as common or easily accessible for regular classroom teachers. Teachers who bring in authentic items collected from their international travels and experiences enhance creating or selecting appropriate instructional materials and activities in alignment with curriculum goals. Sometimes RPCVs are not aware of the valuable resources they possess. Because of a natural tendency to integrate those resources in their teaching they don’t always do so deliberately. For some of these teachers, the implementation happens naturally, without deliberate planning. This could be because that they are conditioned to work with limited resources in a sparse environment.

From my own experience, I remember gathering authentic items and artifacts from my Peace Corps service in Liberia, and incorporating them in my teaching; including shoes made of rubber tires, a goat skin bag, coconut shell dishes and much more. This category, “authentic materials,” represents what I consider “real” items from other cultures, countries, and ethnic groups. These resources shared by the teachers include items such as traditional jewelry, clothing, music, slides and videos, and a variety of artifacts from other countries. The teachers also include authentic materials such as paintings, sculptures, and woodcarvings, as well as interactive discussion, storytelling, or folklore that were accumulated from their “lived”
experiences. Those lived experiences provide a way for teachers to integrate developmentally appropriate learning tools for active learners.

As with any supplementary items she might use, Molly also brings into her teaching a number of artifacts from her Peace Corps ventures. She explained, “I wear jewelry and clothes that I bought in Africa which many students will ask me about. I play African music, and show them the instruments I purchased while I was overseas. Most of the items are from Peace Corps.”

Noni’s Peace Corps experience also plays a role in her flair for integrating authentic materials from literature to people, to artifacts. Human interaction is a powerful supplement for any teaching and she mentioned, “I have taken several internationalists to my classroom to talk with my students and we served as a host for the International Program. “I remember I did a whole unit on stories around the world and brought in things I already had or could find from different countries.”

Mack’s authentic materials definitely stem from his travels overseas and Peace Corps experience. He shared, “I just talk about things that I remember from Peace Corps that relates to the subject at that moment. I also go overseas about once a year, and whereever I go I try as much as I can to pick up things that are representative to what’s going on with them so the comic books, videos, stuff like that, I bring back to my classes.”

Pam’s teaching reveals the use of a great deal of authentic materials. She excitedly talked about several things. She said, “I readily talk about personal experiences and the interest and participation just flows naturally from that. When I
want to cover a topic, I look for books that cover the content in a variety of different ways with different people and cultures. I use my Peace Corps artifacts, and I use most all Peace Corps literature sent to me to incorporate in my lessons. I used to use music and Colombian money a lot. I'm going to do a 'Kids on Campus' this summer and do it in Spanish; we'll do piñatas, and I'll use pictures of my Peace Corps service in Colombia."

Because John was in physical education, most of his supplementary materials consisted of athletic equipment. He shared with me that Antigua is such a Westernized culture, that he didn't get hooked into the 'traditional country things' to bring back home. Working as a substitute teacher now doesn't always call for his bringing in supplementary materials. He did say however, "I've made presentations about my Peace Corps experience to different groups here in the U.S. ever since I returned." His background in Peace Corps serves as an authentic resource he readily incorporates into his teaching.

Monty on the other hand, brings in many of the material items he collected while in Botswana. He commented, "I've set up displays with artwork, woodcarvings, and batiques, things I brought back from Africa. I talk about them to my students and the fact that they are handmade. I emphasize what the people can do with their hands, and the fact that they took time to do this."

Likewise, Louise said, "I use my Peace Corps artifacts a lot. Louise also integrates what I consider authentic procedures through the use of literature and language. For example, by speaking Polish to her ESL students rather than English, her
lessons are more 'authentic' in that she incorporates or 'supplements' with a procedure that is culturally different. Louise commented, "Schools have predominantly used English or American literature only, but now materials are available from all different cultures. The type of literature I choose to work with in relation to the lesson being taught is effective because of the value of language and the meaning of different words. Words are my materials. On occasion I use words because of all the different languages of the students in the class. The nuances of words are like materials too. For example, we did the word "happy" with all the different cultures involved, discussing how joyous, glad, joyful, and elated, etc. are part of language meaning. Another example is, I use the Polish language to contribute to the diversity of the class. That way, as a teacher I can contribute to the examples in the discussion, and my language adds to the authenticity of the content." In many respects, using language as a teaching tool, is considered an authentic method or procedure, as it lends itself to making the learning experience more realistic or 'authentic.'

Marcos also incorporates traditional items from his Peace Corps experience into his teaching. He said, "I once had an art exhibit. I took artwork from many of my travels and Peace Corps service, and the students were critics and wrote their opinions about what I brought in." Although Stan did not elaborate on supplementary items for his college teaching, he did talk about authentic artifacts from Honduras that he has used. He mentioned, "I still use some of the rocks I collected in Peace Corps. I have a piece of humus I picked up on Sedanio, the best piece of humus in my
collection from a volcano. It was like glass foam and female students used it to shave their legs. I took a lot of pictures too."

In summary, 9 of the participants spoke of 24 different types of authentic items that reflect the impact of their international experiences. By incorporating those types of materials, the teachers provide their students an insight and opportunity to learn about other cultures that is as close to a first-hand experience as possible.

Technological Materials.

Peace Corps teachers transfer first-hand experiences to their students through authentic resources through the use of technology. The participants discussed items and procedures related to their Peace Corps experience that promote technology. These include the technological equipment and programs incorporated in classrooms today for teaching and learning. Videotapes, computers, television, and other equipment add to the variety of resources for online teaching and distance learning. Internet web sites are a top priority in classrooms today, and it is not surprising that international guests, current events, and diverse cultural elements play a major role in the promotion of technology for classroom teaching and learning.

For Peace Corps volunteers, technology is a relatively new phenomenon such as seen with teachers in Nepal, sitting on top of a mountainside using laptop computers. Distance-learning tools, web sites, electronic mail, videos, computers, and films are samples of what participants say they use regarding the role of technology in their teaching.
Mack noted, "Technology is a big part of my teaching and I am more of an authority on content because of having lived and worked overseas. I put myself out on the Internet with lessons on CDs, slides, and videos. Peace Corps made this more feasible." He said that, because of his Peace Corps experience in an Asian culture, he could promote his teaching more and that "Peace Corps provided that opportunity." Because Peace Corps provided him with the "content" and experience to transfer into slides and video presentations, Mack, like many other volunteers, is resourceful with technology. He also said, "I have always used literature and visual materials, particularly slides, videos, and film in the classroom because these media tools provide rich depictions of cultural variety, often obscured in written resources. It allows students more direct and immediate access to cultural insights." He also mentioned, "Because of my interest in Asian culture, particularly Japan, I maintain an Internet web site, 'Teaching and Learning about Japan.' That recommends a wide variety of specific web sites providing both teachers and students the opportunity to experience elements of Japanese civilization and culture as directly as possible. I also employ a set of specialized illustrated lectures and all are available on the Internet."

Stan is very adept at integrating technology in his teaching. He commented, "I try to bring in things that allow for another way of learning." He was referring to computer activities, versus older, standard textbooks that he uses on a college level. He said, "I use newspaper reports from the web and I use "supreme capture" to make it into an image, and I'll often start a lecture with a newspaper report. Sometimes it's in Spanish. I have to tell them what it says such as this is an illustration of what we
were talking about the other day. It’s not stuff I make up; it’s what going on. I also teach a course over the web through a master liberal studies program, for a distance learning course and the students who are taking that, have a major project in research from a list of countries. The textbook is a necessary supplement. I try to use examples “not” in the textbook, like I had to do in Peace Corps. With the web today, it’s made it so much easier to do that.”

Louise considered technology an important tool for her own learning. The technology she used in the Peace Corps has been to her advantage as she teaches in the states. She said, “The computer technology we used was great for Poland. We had computer access 24 hours a day. I got my first e-mail while I was there and I learned my first data processing at computer labs in country. That experience with technology in Peace Corps came into play with my teaching in the states. Not that I wouldn’t have gotten it eventually in the United States, but my initial orientation was with Peace Corps and we had it form day #1. When I came back to the states I had email files that I could use from my Peace Corps work.”

These three teachers articulately voiced how they have taken Peace Corps experiences and transferred them into their teaching through technological advancement. Materials, experiences, and personal interactions enrich the content that students need to learn and are characteristic of materials that can be used for teaching about global education. Although technology is not the specific item these teachers used overseas, other than Louise in Poland, the importance and relevance of
technology in this case is the fact that Peace Corps provided opportunities that the teachers could integrate through technological means.

In Peace Corps, the overall goal is to promote world peace by providing a better understanding about the world and its people. In global education, one of the main goals is to make connections between students with people around the world. Both require new approaches and resources such as those developed through technology, particularly in the field of global education and for those who teach with a global perspective.

Teaching Experiences and Perceptions and Supplementary Materials and Procedures – Summary

Regarding Research Questions #1 and #2, three categories emerged identified in the findings. Overall, the main category, “a focus on teacher’s instructional change,” reflects the teachers’ perceptions of how their teaching and curricula were influenced by international experiences in the Peace Corps. Their perceptions directly address how, as teachers, they themselves changed, while others commented on ways that their instruction was affected by that personal change.

Nine of the 10 participants commented not so much on how their curriculum was changed, rather, how their instruction has been enhanced by Peace Corps service, because of the ways in which they changed their approach to instruction. For example, because of their international experience, Monty and Kim determined that their curriculum did not change, but their presentation of it did. Marcos and Louise admitted they became more tolerant, moved beyond their “comfort zone,” and were
less judgmental, more flexible, and open to suggestions. These traits are reflective of “teaching for a global perspective” and made an impact on their curriculum and instruction. In her preparation, Molly specifically used her Peace Corps experiences as a basis for her lessons and her planning curriculum. Stan developed more self-confidence, and claims he is better able to teach from different perspectives to reach individual students. Likewise, Pam expressed how she can “re-teach” information so that all students have a better chance to succeed. John recognized that he is better able to improvise, and that he is more creative and efficient in transferring information and content to his students. Last, Mack strongly emphasizes cross-cultural values, and discussed that because of his personal appreciation of the cross-cultural exchange, he now integrates different approaches to learning.

From the second category, “A Focus on Student Learning,” these Peace Corps teachers believe their role as a teacher was influenced by Peace Corps experiences because they are now more sensitive to the students’ needs and are more personally interactive with students in general. They are more focused on the different ways of teaching and learning on behalf of the student.

Overall, 7 of the 10 participants believe their teaching and curriculum are influenced by Peace Corps experiences because they now focus more on “how students learn” which is the second category revealed by the findings. Of those 7 teachers, four made comments they get to know their students better, they develop a stronger interest in participating and interacting more with students, and they are able to more successfully engage students in activities.
Three other comments reflect how the teachers changed in light of a stronger sensitivity to student learning. From Peace Corps interactions they developed an ability to be more open to student needs, and more accepting of students' differences. Seven participants—Kim, Stan, John, Monty, Louise, Marcos, Molly—explicitly said they were more understanding, sensitive, and insightful of the students' individual and personal perspectives and circumstances. Two teachers noted how they now design assignments differently, and that they look more deeply at the way students think and learn. They have also developed a level of respect, have more fun on the job, and create a more positive environment conducive to learning.

Last, these RPCV teachers believe that their teaching and curriculum have been changed by international experiences because their classroom instruction now focuses on promoting global awareness. This had a direct influence on the teachers' curriculum. The third category, "a focus on teaching for global awareness," presents data from 7 teachers who determined that their curriculum and instruction have changed because they now promote more culturally diverse activities, and they are more interested in teaching and learning about other cultures mainly because of their Peace Corps experience. They now use cross-cultural activities to better discuss cultural problems and issues both in the classroom and "in the world" which ultimately had an impact on the curriculum.

Molly is more alert to inequities and diversity, and more interested in teaching and learning about different cultures. Kim realizes the value of worldly connections and the importance of moving beyond her own environment. Pam and Louise use
cross-cultural activities and discuss traditions of other cultures in many of their
lessons to recognize the values of "worldly connections." Noni and Mack both
revealed that they have developed empathy toward others and are more accepting of
differences. They also promote culturally diverse activities in their lesson plans. John
recognized that he includes multiple perspectives in his teaching and specifically
makes an effort to include social justice in his curriculum. In summarizing each of the
categories, 'awareness' (having become more conscious of teaching and learning
generally) appears to be an underlying each of the participants put into action through
"teacher's instructional change."

Also taken into consideration for the second major Research Question are the
materials and procedures used to reflect the impact of these teachers' international
experiences, as determined from Item #6 of the interview guide. To further express
how these teachers' curriculum changed because cross-cultural experiences in the
Peace Corps, three categories descriptive of procedures and materials emerged from
the findings as enrichment, authentic, or technological, all of which are considered
"supplementary materials."

Through the use of enrichment materials, students are provided with analytical
tools that help combat stereotypical thinking and enhance cross-cultural
communications. Evidence from the three categories, demonstrated that a majority of
the teachers integrate authentic materials and procedures into their classroom
instruction more so than supplementary or technological materials and procedures.
Nine of 10 teachers shared the multiple types of "authentic" materials they have
incorporated in their curriculum, whereas 7 of 10 teachers shared the “enrichment” materials they use. Only four teachers discussed the use of “technology” as a means to integrate materials that relate to their Peace Corps service.

The integration of enrichment materials, authentic items, and technology readily lends itself to lessons about cultural values and lifestyles in all disciplines - most certainly within the Social Studies discipline, but in particular geography, history, and economics. Authentic materials especially enable students to understand from a more personal standpoint, the differences that exist in the world, and the needs that arise from those differences. The evidence that these teachers’ curriculum and instruction have been influenced by their Peace Corps experiences lies in the fact that because of Peace Corps service, they have immediate access from “lived” experiences and are better able to integrate specific materials and procedures in their classroom teaching.

**Teachers’ Perspectives on Global Education**

How people perceive what they learn from previous international experiences provides insight into their understanding of global education. Several authors (Hanvey, 1976; Merryfield, 1991; Thorpe, 1988; Tye, 1990) have indicated that an individual’s previous experiences contribute significantly to their perception of global education. Thus, in focusing on these Peace Corps teachers’ international experiences, I was curious to know what their definition of global education might be. These teachers’ definitions of global education are reflective of the global education
literature, which discusses competencies in basic cross-cultural understanding and awareness. To expand on their definitions, I then probed for an elaboration of how they teach with a global perspective. Their collective responses answer Research Questions #3 and #3a: “Do teachers with international experiences such as The Peace Corps infuse global education in their teaching practice, and if so, how?” “Did the infusion happen naturally or did they purposely implement strategies for more successful teaching and learning?”

To expand on their definitions, I then probed for an elaboration of how they teach with a global perspective. Their collective responses answer Research Question #3, “Do teachers with international experiences, such as the Peace Corps, infuse global education in their teaching practice; and, if so, how?”

In probing for an elaboration of how they teach with a global perspective, I asked each teacher how they infuse global education in their teaching practice. From the interviews, I heard similar comments in the teachers’ definitions of global education that reflect the global education literature (Table 3).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholars' Comments</th>
<th>RPCVs' Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becker - Moral empathy with those of different cultures.</td>
<td>Patterns of border and cross-border interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interconnectedness &amp; cutting across national boundaries.</td>
<td>Consciousness raising, making a move to do something about cultural inequities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focusing on diversity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implementing broader perspectives</td>
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<td>Incorporating global initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merryfield - New ways of teaching about the world through interdisciplinary strategies or content and active learning methods.</td>
<td>Teaching concepts &amp; content in a variety of ways</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Making an effort to discuss other cultures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Different ways of doing things</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bring different perspectives to the classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson - Interdependence and decline of Western dominance and American power.</td>
<td>Recognizing interconnectedness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Euro-centric or Ameri-centered</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not imposing value system on others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Looking at different perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanvey - Different world views and seeing the world through the eyes and minds of others.</td>
<td>Seeing the world through the eyes of others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diversity, cultural sensitivity, alertness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learning about other cultures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Heightening students awareness of diversity of human conditions</td>
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<td>Alger - Concepts of the global village.</td>
<td>Worldwide relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Think globally and act locally.</td>
<td>Multiple perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lived experiences with the rest of the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case - Open-mindedness.</td>
<td>A process of change and attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resistance to stereotyping.</td>
<td>Nonjudgmental approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonchauvinism.</td>
<td>Open-minded without privileging one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolerance, non-chauvinism, &amp; respect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gilliom - Teachers as key agents.</td>
<td>Exchange between people and personal interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living examples of global education.</td>
<td>See and understand differences in other cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kniep - Curricular dimensions for global education.</td>
<td>Portraying curricula of other cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making global education part of the school curriculum.</td>
<td>Expose students to different ideas and challenges</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamy - World views and multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>Not saving the world, but accepting the world</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Infusing Global Education in Teaching Practice – the Literature vs. RPCVs’ Comments

As shown in Table 3, similarities between RPCVs’ perceptions of teaching with a global perspective are directly in line with what is discussed in the global
education literature. To evidence the correlation between these teachers' perceptions of global education with those of scholars cited in the global education literature, I build a case that these Peace Corps teachers do, in fact, infuse global education in their teaching practice. These teachers' definitions of global education and perceptions and their understanding of teaching with a global perspective transfer into how they changed as people. In turn, their personal characteristics relevant to attaining a global perspective are also transferred to "how they do what they do" in the classroom.

As reviewed in the literature, Wilson (1993) discussed how internationally experienced people gain a global perspective and develop self and relationships (personal growth and interpersonal connections). In turn, that global perspective and personal development can be passed to students as teachers and students interact. The teachers defined global education by giving examples of the attitudinal/perceptual characteristics they exhibit that enable them to inspire global perspectives in their students and ultimately infuse global education in their teaching practice.

Two categories—"elements of a world view" and "elements of a local view"—emerged as prominent themes. Based on the participant's perceptions of global education as compared to the global education literature, the first category, "elements of a world view," reflects that which is indicative of individuals such as Peace Corps volunteers. The "elements of a world view" are relevant to the central idea of tolerance, appreciation of diversity, interdependence, and interconnectedness among people supporting interdependence within worldwide relationships, as argued by
Anderson (1980). The findings in this category also reflect Case's (1993) perceptual dimensions including open-mindedness, resistance to stereotyping, and nonchauvinism. Although these RPCV teachers did not specifically describe their personal world view, I found evidence in the findings similar to what Anderson (1980) and Case (1993) described as a world view. This supports teaching with a global perspective and infusing global education in their teaching.

To capture what "world view" means in relation to these Peace Corps teachers' perceptions, I do not mean that they have an understanding of the whole world. To refrain from using the term too loosely, I basically mean that these Peace Corps teachers see the world outside of the United States. They experience a larger world. Peace Corps volunteers' world view comes from personal experiences outside their own country and beyond the Western world.

If someone travels to a foreign country, it does not qualify as the "whole world" or the entire world view. Although they may be familiar with two very diverse cultures, such as South American and African, they very well may not have exposure to an Asian culture. Thus, they do not have a "whole world view"; rather, they generally are more open to different ideas and are more culturally aware. Their world view is determined by the exposure they have had to a limited degree.

Through the Peace Corps, they develop a broader view of two very different cultural societies and also have practical experience, while others learn only from textbooks or travel excursions and vacations. Experiential living in two societies that are completely different, such as with the Peace Corps, has enabled these teachers to
become practitioners as well as readers and discussers. Their world view has characteristics not from one part of the world but from two, as well as hands-on, lived experiences.

The second category, "elements of a local view," portrays how the teachers teach with a global perspective from a position and focus within their own community. Hanvey (1986) described teaching with a global perspective by the views and experiences that heighten our ability to understand ourselves and our position in and connections to the world. The idea of “thinking globally and acting locally” (Alger, 1980) is a concept some of the participants touch on as they consider teaching with a global perspective from a local view. Their ideas include the idea of cultures within our own culture, interconnectedness, and developing global perspectives based on resources, issues, and situations from one’s own community.

The following excerpts begin with each participant’s definition of global education. Following the definitions, the quotes express how they teach with a global perspective. Both categories, elements of a world view and elements of a local view, describe the steps these teachers take to develop global perspectives in their students.

**Elements of a World View**

Mack said, “I see global education as tolerance of difference, empathy, connectivity, and communication across those kinds of barriers. I see it now as more of looking at experiences from a wide variety of cultures to illustrate common themes
to common concepts—not Eurocentric or Ameri-centered but rather to say how people adapt from whence they come and to look at all those examples as equally valid.”

In his teaching, Mack mentioned seeing global education as a process of change and attitude. He commented, “You can’t make judgments and say these are third-world, poor people. They are just adapting to the environment. In the classroom, I’m beginning to change my notion about global issues. It’s patterns of migration or patterns of border and cross-border interaction, and you look at how those experiences involve different nations. Part of the key is this nonjudgmental approach that is not imposing on others, such as a western or Christian value system. When I teach now, I promote a universal act of standards that allows people a right to their own values. I try to promote other cultures. They have a right to their own institutions, systems, and reasoning, and I try to encourage that with my students.”

Monty said, “Recognizing that different people exposed to similar issues may use a different approach to deal with things, but it elicits a greater appreciation for one’s own approach and highlights the values inherent in diversity and difference.” Monty clarified his definition, “One should be open-minded without privileging one above another. For me, in the classroom it’s simply learning about different countries and cultures that exist in our world. The world is becoming smaller and we are moving in the direction of worldwide relationships with one another through an exchange of resources. I emphasize with my students that individual countries and what their objectives are for future years is important, as well as knowing what their goals are, and recognizing that we should help each other with what those needs are.”
Molly said, "I guess my definition depends on my own experiences and thinking. The different ways that different cultures approach common issues and problems. To me global education is tolerance, culture, and similarities. Global education is teaching appreciation about the world, not being so quick to judge, and not to judge different as weird or bad, just different."

Molly’s comments regarding global education reflect her idea of teaching with a global perspective. She believes teaching with a global perspective is, “Teaching with a wider perspective more than what is contained in just one’s own personal experience. Students need to realize that regardless of how things are done in their own community or country, it may not be how things are done elsewhere. I try to tell them that things are not better or worse, just different. People are people wherever you go. We are basically the same in the range of personalities. There are just different ways of doing the same thing, which is what we do in the classroom."

Pam said, "When people live and work side by side, both become globally educated. Both can only benefit from the exchange of ideas and ways of doing life. Right now on my mind so heavily is tolerance. I think global education is awareness, again, that just because people are different, they aren’t bad or right or wrong. It’s an understanding and an acceptance of different people in different ways."

Pam discussed how people who have different cultures can live and work side by side, and become globally educated. She was very matter of fact as she said, “In my classroom, for example, we look at options. You tell me your way to complete a task, and I tell another way, and we share what we think about it, how we see it.
There are almost always two ways of how students show me mastery or competence of a skill, so this works well. I can still, if I don’t consciously make a choice not to, get stuck in thinking there is only one way to teach something, but there isn’t one way to do anything. Also, something as simple as getting my students to color people a different color other than white. I talk to kids about all being the same in hopes of generating some curiosity and some interest in people that are different than they are. We try to look at current events, and what’s happening around the world. Having been in the Peace Corps helps me realize there are so many different ways to do things and I share that with my students. I loved the Peace Corps because every day was a challenge. You eat new food, you learn a new language, you smell new smells, and you learn a whole new way of living, relating, and being.”

Louise said, “In global education I include things like diversity, cultural sensitivity, alertness, and sensitivity. In Poland I tried to travel as a Polish woman in a long coat and plain black boots and a babushka, to not be so American. But I think it’s more than just the external. The exchange between people and personal interactions is what global education is all about.”

Louise’s idea of teaching with a global perspective is, “Teaching from the point of view that there are other people and cultures and that they have rights just as we do. In my classroom it’s more of a partnership. I’m not just teaching, it’s more of an inter-relationship. Knowledge of diversity is important. In Peace Corps in Wroclaw you had German people and Polish people. At one time, Poland was a part of Germany, and there are many traditions and backgrounds within the city and
throughout the country from both cultures. I wanted to know about the culture of both. That's something I try to promote with my students, an interest in different cultures.

Kim said, “We live in a big world but we are only a small part of it. Global education is education for global awareness, looking at the interconnectedness of things within our own country as well as others. It is dealing with histories of problems and how they become that way. With that you have to look at the different perspectives. After Peace Corps you start thinking in global terms and as a teacher that means educating global citizens. Global education is more all encompassing than multicultural education and I think global education is the umbrella and multicultural education is one piece under it.”

Kim was adamant in her thoughts about global education and teaching with a global perspective. She articulated, “By teaching with a global perspective, I incorporate as many different perspectives into the picture as possible, so as to get at the whole picture. I tell my students we need to become aware of other countries, other races, other cultures, and other ways of doing things. I think teaching with a global perspective involves a lot more focus on world issues and that would encompass everything from the economy, to politics, to religion, and how those affect the particular issues being studied. You have to look at everything surrounding the issues.”

Marcos said, “The first thing that comes to mind is the awareness of the differences, awareness of diversity. The different perspectives that people have to
expand their perspective to a global level beyond their immediate town or country or whatever."

Marcos explained, "Teaching with a global perspective is to instruct people how they fit into the world and their place in the world system. I expose students to different ideas and challenges. Before Peace Corps, I might have been able to have the same thought but I wouldn’t have felt the same way. It wouldn’t have meant anything. I can figure out the words and the idea behind it but it really wouldn’t have had much meaning for me. But now, because of Peace Corps I'm globally educated I guess. I like to bring different perspectives to the classroom. Trying to get students to acknowledge different approaches to the same topic, to be critical thinkers or just to look at things in a different way from different perspectives."

John said, "Global education is to make and attempt to bring everybody up to improved educational standards so that everyone knows how to live properly and take care of themselves with an ability to succeed. It's the education of all nations on this planet. If we are to move forward as human beings, then education must be expanded in our world. In the U.S., we are knowledgeable, but we are not knowledgeable about other cultures. We need to see and understand the differences in other cultures."

About teaching with a global perspective, John commented, "I try to portray that educational systems and the curricula of other cultures is important because the world is becoming smaller. In global education, we need to show what poverty really is through education, cover the needs of specific countries. I try to teach knowledge and acceptance of other cultures."
Stan said, “Awareness, interconnectedness, interdisciplinary, and appreciation of different value systems.” As I probed for a more in-depth response, he said, “People of this country need to realize that people of other countries adapt to their situation. We should not try to save the world, but accept the world. We are all in this alone, together.” Stan voiced his approach to teaching with a global perspective by saying, “It is heightening students’ awareness of the diversity of human conditions on planet earth. I try to find alternatives for solutions and challenge students with questions. I use examples from around the world, about events in other parts of the world. For example, once a person realizes that he or she can go home after an experience such as Peace Corps and live a “normal” life, while others cannot get out of the situation life has handed them, I think the Peace Corps volunteer becomes a little more sensitive to how other people see the world and one another.”

Noni said, “I guess I look at global education as including diversity, to respect diversity, and as much as possible, discussion, information, not only of countries far away but of cultures right within our own country.” Noni discussed her utmost priority in teaching with a global perspective in saying, “I try to bring insight into my classroom as much as possible, so that the children can learn what the world is all about. I think it leads us to helping in any way and as it continues, we learn more from other people. I find it very valuable to continue to learn about other parts of the world.”

Overall, the teachers define global education and teaching with a global perspective by emphasizing the following concepts (Table 4):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts of Teaching with a Global Perspective</th>
<th>Definitions of Global Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Becoming aware of different cultures and appreciating the opportunity for cross-cultural exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>An appreciation of differences, and taking different approaches to solve common issues and problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interconnectedness</td>
<td>The exchange of people and resources that promotes interaction between nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance</td>
<td>Empathy and nonjudgmental standards regarding difference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Concepts from Participants' Definitions of Global Education

These basic concepts culture, diversity, interconnectedness, and tolerance are what the teachers perceive as "global education" and, as well, what they try to impress upon their students in "teaching with a global perspective." The findings reveal that 8 participants were in agreement about the value of cross-cultural knowledge and the importance of being culturally sensitivity and accepting others. If students are to develop certain modes of thought, sensitivities, and global understanding, then the programs in which they participate must engage them in the study of aspects of the world such as global education (Hanvey, 1983).

Seven of the 10 teachers world view focused on an emphasis for knowledge of diversity, and an appreciation of different perspectives as a way of defining global education. Five teachers used similar key words to illustrate those ideals of tolerance, nonchauvinism, and respect, which they say are emphasized in their classroom instruction.
Elements of a Local View

The concept of teaching with a global perspective from a local view is also related to the driving forces of instruction promoted in global education. Although the "elements of a local view" responses were fewer than those in the "elements of a world view" category, they also reflect the global education literature. Students' daily experiences and their community became potential resources for understanding and learning about the world (Woyach, 1982). This category generally captured the teachers' perceptions of teaching global education in relation to one's immediate environment and local community as argued by Alger's (1986) position, "Think globally and act locally." Schukar (1983) believed we must enter into a dialogue with our community, our colleagues, and our students to determine the purposes and directions of worldly mindedness, to critically process information about international systems. To develop global awareness in the classroom and to integrate methods of teaching with a global perspective from a local view, 6 teachers are quoted as saying, "I discuss cultures within our own country" (Louise). "To me global education is bringing the world back home" (Noni). "It's important to teach the acceptance of other cultures in the states" (John). "We need to think about global issues and work on them in our own community" (Molly). "Sometimes you have to point out what's going on in the backyard too" (Stan). "It's more important to have curriculum directly relevant to everyday life" (Marcos).

Louise commented, "I discuss cultures within our own country." This is reflective of her work with international students. In her teaching she is exposed to
multicultural aspects of diversity in the classroom. She emphasized that exposing students of different nationalities, who are quickly filling our American classrooms, was important to understanding diversity and the value of culture. As Gilliom (1989) discussed, there is a need to cultivate in students a global perspective and to develop in them the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to live effectively in a world characterized by ethnic diversity, cultural pluralism, and increasing interdependence.

John determined that teaching with a global perspective involves appreciation of other cultures regardless of how things are done in our own country. He said, “It’s important to teach the acceptance of other cultures in the states.” In support of this local view in teaching with a global perspective, Gilliom (1981) also argued that American educators have begun to sense that traditional approaches to schooling might adequately have prepared young people for a nationalistic type of citizenship in the past, but today’s interdependent world demands more.

Bringing the world back home through Peace Corps experiences supports Noni’s position. When I questioned her about her definition of global education, she literally quoted the third goal of Peace Corps in saying, “To me global education is bringing the world back home.” As an instructor with international experience, she is able to strengthen her students’ understanding about other parts of the world and teach what it means to appreciate diversity in our own culture. She noted, “In my teaching I discuss and inform students, not only of countries far away, but of cultures right within our own country.” Noni is a teacher, like most other Peace Corps volunteers, who brings to her classroom and community, values from international experiences.
around the globe. The Peace Corps experience thus builds ties of understanding and knowledge between Americans and people of other countries.

Molly commented, "We need to think about global issues and work on them in our own community." In talking with Molly, there was a sense of urgency in her response, leaning toward the idea that as Americans, before we can make a difference or do good for others overseas, we need to do something about the issues and needs in our own country first. She reiterated, "We cannot assume that our country is right and try to impose on other nations what we believe."

Stan was very candid in his response about teaching with a global perspective. In his opinion, current events are critical to teaching and learning. He consistently relies on the events in our own nation and local communities as one of the major components in his teaching. According to Stan, "Sometimes you have to point out what's going on in the backyard, too." He believes we need to be proactive and enlist community support to engage people in discussions about local conditions to determine what that means for an individual's own country. As previously quoted, Stan promotes the idea of breaking away from total reliance upon textbooks. He said, "We use newspapers to get at current events. Peace Corps made me a real news hound." Similar to Stan's approach, such teaching and learning strategies might also include community surveys, simulation, and cooperative learning to promote awareness of national, cultural issues.

In reference to the local community and human interactions relating to classroom instruction about global education, Marcos stated, "It is more important to
have curriculum directly relevant to everyday life.” His “local view” reflects that of Case (1993), who described the acquisition of an outlook for integration of information in one’s immediate environment. Teaching with a global perspective from a local view was expressed by 6 of the 10 participants.

**Teacher Perspectives’ on Global Education – Summary**

By defining global education and sharing their perceptions of teaching with a global perspective, these teachers reveal how Peace Corps experiences enabled them to infuse global education concepts in their teaching practice. The evidence clearly shows how the participants’ definitions of global education reiterate the ideas and perspectives of global education scholars as found in the global education literature (Table 3). The evidence also identifies a distinct correlation between the teachers’ perceptions of global education with the global education literature that discusses the global perspectives in education. The way these teachers perceive “teaching with a global perspective” is demonstrated through examples they give, which are directly related to reflections of their Peace Corps experience. From the findings, it is obvious that the participants who taught on a higher level, such as at a college or university, provided more in-depth responses and a better understanding of what global education means.

In defining global education, four categories emerged from the data. Overall awareness, tolerance, interdependence, and diversity were main themes the participants believe are emphasized in their teaching. Each of these emerging themes

171
evidence the infusion of global perspectives. The strongest category, awareness, was voiced by 8 of the 10 teachers as a description of global education.

The following comments from each teacher voice their perceptions of how critical it is to infuse "awareness and acceptance" of other cultures in their classroom instruction. Their comments also align with noted scholars who consider the various features of global education as critical to the infusion of global perspectives. Eight of the respondents' definitions reflect the ideas of global education: increasing knowledge and acceptance of other cultures (John); looking at experiences across a wide variety of cultures and promoting other cultures (Mack); learning about different countries and cultures (Monty); teaching appreciation about the world (Molly); exchanging ideas and ways of doing things; understanding and accepting different people in different ways (Pam); global awareness and a focus on world issues, appreciation of different value systems (Kim); cultural sensitivity and alertness to other cultures (Louise); awareness and appreciation of different values (Stan).

Gilliom (1981) argued for integrating global perspectives into the curricula in ways that permit students to comprehend ideas, things, and people by developing an awareness of other countries and cultural practices inherent in diverse societies. Kniep and Hanvey (1986) considered global education as respect for and knowledge of diversity in values and practices found in human societies throughout the world. Lamy (1983) emphasized global education as teaching strategies that focus on values, awareness and student attitudes. Freeman (1986) believed students should be given
opportunities to build and bridge between the study of cultures and the development of positive attitudes and behaviors toward cultural awareness.

Each of these scholar's statements and the descriptions each Peace Corps teacher gave regarding global education and how they teach with a global perspective, directly correlates with one of the main elements for infusing global perspectives in teaching, which I categorized as promoting cross-cultural awareness. Cross-cultural awareness includes the recognition of cultural diversity of ideas and practices in human societies around the world. This category also includes the role of their own culture in the world system where one's view of the world is not universally shared and where that view is shaped by influences not often detected. The RPCVs express how cross-cultural awareness played a major role for change within themselves, which led to change in their curriculum and instruction.

In teaching with a global perspective, Monty regularly incorporates information about different countries and individual cultures that exist in the world, such as the needs of other nations. Pam promotes difference, by referring to current events and by emphasizing how it is for people to be different from one another. Kim's approach is to discuss racial conflict, and, like Louise, she promotes other people's ways of doing things, and the awareness of other cultures.

The second category, tolerance, was another main focus of five teachers' definitions of global education. Regarding the perception of tolerance and empathy, the following scholars' ideas correlate with the Peace Corps teachers' definitions.
Case (1993) defined elements of global education and global perspectives as open-mindedness, resistance to stereotyping, inclination to empathize and nonchauvinism. Teachers who model nonstereotypical attitudes are more likely to foster the desired outcome in others. Becker (1979) believed that global education promotes moral empathy with those of different cultures. Lamy (1983) said that it was perhaps more important to develop in students a moral sensitivity than to smother them with an information load. Cortes (1996) commented that, to make sense of our diverse world, global education reduced group generalization and regional and ethnic stereotypes. Hanvey (1986) also promoted global education as developing perspectives that are empathetic, free from stereotypes, not predicated on naïve assumptions, and not colored by prejudicial sentiments. Kniep (1986) said that the study of knowledge of world conditions (also called “state of the planet awareness”) contributes to a sense of global interconnectedness. Kobus (1983) defined global education as the infusion and integration at all levels of awareness, and emerging concepts such as change, conflict, communication, and interdependence. He views global education as interacting, interdependent systems expressed and studied through global issues.

Five of the respondents also showed an affinity with these scholars, such as Mack and Pam, who claimed global education to be an act of tolerance and empathy toward those different from themselves. Monty voiced open-mindedness, and Molly placed importance on being non-judgmental. Stan believes that global education is an act of “not saving the world, but accepting the world.”
By teaching with a global perspective, these teachers began to change the way they think about global issues. They believe in allowing students the chance to voice their opinions, and promote an understanding and acceptance of other cultures in their instruction with the intention of transferring to their students the idea that all people are entitled to their own values system.

The third category, interdependence, is a concept that promotes consideration of the implications and effects of living in an interdependent world, which recognizes how cross-cultural exchange has regional and global implications. Seven of the participants’ views of global education based upon fostering an understanding of interdependence aligns with the claim that citizens of the world must understand the impact of global interdependence and be able to make responsible decisions on the basis of their connections with the rest of the world. DuBois (cited in Cornwell & Stoddard, 1989) focused on interdependence for students who are expected to draw conclusions about the relationship between their lives, the world, and their community.

Mack used the term “connectivity” and the idea of “communication across barriers.” Monty discussed interactions with people, such as different approaches to doing similar things. Molly also said, “similarities,” meaning similarities between cultures and the approach taken to solve common issues and problems. Likewise, Louise’s concept of global education was the exchange and connections between people, and personal interactions. Kim takes into consideration the fact that there is a type of interconnectedness between countries, and from a local point of view, Noni
believes that discussion and information of other countries as well as our own is critical to global education.

The final category, diversity, highlights global education as an understanding of multiple perspectives and an appreciation of difference, as voiced by five participants: to understand differences in other cultures (John); different approaches by different groups to solve issues (Monty); not judging different as weird, bad or different (Molly); the idea that just because people are different doesn’t mean they are bad or wrong (Pam); different perspectives people have beyond their immediate environment (Marcos).

These teachers’ comments regarding the acceptance and understanding of diversity corresponds with Leestma’s (1978) idea of global education. He believed the challenge for global education is to develop the reality of interdependence on an ethnically diverse and culturally pluralistic planet. He emphasized components of global education such as the unity and diversity of mankind, and global interdependence of nations and people. Also, Kniep (1986) defined global education as a focus on the value of diversity drawn from a world increasingly characterized by interdependence and change.

As defined by the participants and the global education literature, teaching with a global perspective calls for the infusion of essential attitudes and activities that tolerate diverse opinions, enhance self-esteem, and support cooperation. This is evidenced in the findings that these RPCV teachers deliberately infused strategies to promote global education in their teaching. Teachers with international cross-cultural
experience are predisposed to challenge assumptions, promote cross-cultural awareness, and provide opportunities to practice the behaviors that promote the infusion of global education in their instructional practice.

**Recommendations of International Experiences**

Teachers are planners in their own classrooms (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988), particularly in dealing with a complex, uncertain environment. Teachers are independent and often act autonomously. If they are uncomfortable or uninformed in the realm of global education or implementation of cross-cultural values, it could have a negative impact on effective instruction and learning. It is also true, that continued growth of America's teachers depends upon the kinds of skills, perspectives and cross-cultural experiences, developed through opportunities overseas.

Because these RPCV teachers have extensive experience in American classrooms and a wealth of knowledge from international experiences, I asked them if they were in favor of international experiences for prospective teachers. In conclusion of the interviews, I asked, "Would you recommend an international experience for prospective teachers, and if so which specific suggestions would you make for a rich learning experience?" As previously mentioned, this information does not specifically address the three major Research Questions; however, the participants' comments do reflect their international experience through the Peace Corps. From their responses three categories emerged, providing suggestions that they consider appropriate for
prospective teachers: (a) prior classroom knowledge and practice, (b) international experiences, and (c) local resources, people, and experiences.

**Prior Classroom Knowledge and Practice**

The first category, “prior knowledge,” refers to the academic preparation and practice regarding cross-cultural and international experiences that students receive through classroom instruction. Through formal programs of study, prospective teachers can develop or extend their cross-cultural awareness and can prepare for substantial quality experiences overseas. For teachers to become global-minded, it takes more than a vacation or touring abroad. Prospective teachers need to be prepared for international experiences before leaving their home of residence. Several teachers believe that it is necessary to first have cross-cultural training to be well prepared for an international experience. The teachers' comments reveal that prior knowledge such as cross-cultural training provided by colleges and universities is critical for perspective teachers to get the most out of what an international experience provides.

Kim discussed the importance of college and university instructors serving as role models and mentors for students interested in international, cross-cultural learning, which would occur during the perspective teacher’s course of study. Multicultural education classes are not enough. There are deeper and more meaningful experiences that prospective teachers could benefit from, such as a global focused curriculum with opportunities to ‘apply’ the experience and knowledge they
receive, before traveling overseas. Kim suggested, "Professors should teach using
global perspectives. If you have a professor who doesn't model what you are
supposed to do, it's very difficult for you to do it on your own." Likewise, Louise
said, "I would be sure that there was mentoring and modeling of specific behaviors by
other teachers, and that the student teachers were in a wide variety of settings for their
practice."

Molly also commented, "To prepare them, give them the classroom knowledge
so they have it in their head but then have them see it in action. It would also be good
to provide language fluency. I would also recommend taking students overseas, but I
see a problem with what country you take them to. We should first observe and have
internationalist student guides in a classroom setting through international programs,
write papers, and stuff like that and make sure they hear of success stories of peoples
international situations."

John shared, "A lot of it has to do with personality, but I also feel, to gain the
experiences of being a good teacher you must be prepared properly to know subject
matter as well as what you're going to present to the students." John's comment
refers to perspective teacher's content knowledge, not only the specific disciplines
taught, but the ability to connect or link that content and knowledge to other cultures.

Mack reflected on "I think international exposure is potentially valuable to all
teachers, but it needs to be undertaken with appropriate circumstances to avoid the
danger of being unprepared culturally, because it support their own sense of
superiority. I think there is a danger to just say, "go do it." I think sometimes when
people go overseas they are not prepared, and they just come back to the system with a chauvinistic attitude. If you throw them into that setting they won’t understand. If you inspire in them the sense of why people do what they do, such as historical reasons, or special circumstances, then the student can appreciate where the other folks are coming from. We also need to consider that just because a teacher does not have an international experience, it does not mean that they are less qualified or less able to fulfill the criteria for excellence in teaching.”

According to Noni, “Coursework such as multicultural classes should be a part of the academic training received in school. This would include study of different cultures and discussion groups with people from different ethnic backgrounds or teachers of diverse ethnicity.”

Stan made an interesting comment regarding recommendations for international experiences. He said, “An international experience need not be ‘international’ to teach the same lessons such as interdependence, respect, compassion, flexibility. I think this could be done through faculty members with international experience, and faculty who are able to prepare the students and design projects appropriate for students with various strengths and weaknesses.”

Monty was somewhat sarcastic, although I agree with his comment, when he said, “As much as they charge for course work, a graduate class and undergrads, I’m sure the universities could look at the fact that they are paying $600 to $700 for one course. That’s an international plane ticket. I would talk to the Peace Corps and get
them to develop an idea about a mini-program where teachers go through all the infrastructure so that they could study and practice teach."

Although Louise is very much in favor of international opportunities for preservice teachers she did say, "International experience would be wonderful for upcoming teachers, however travel in most cases means next to nothing unless you are already in tune to a global perspective." She also commented, as did Molly, "I think intense language study before the students even get into their student-teacher phase is important."

In summary, the suggestions made regarding prospective teachers receiving prior knowledge to an international experience are somewhat different than what is currently taking place in colleges and universities. From the findings, five participants recommend specific classroom experiences for preservice teachers. Their ideas go beyond the regular methods of teaching. They suggest activities that might stretch the preservice teacher somewhat more than just attending methods seminars and practice teaching in the local schools. Returned travelers affiliated with other organizations who have been to other countries could serve as mentors in preparation for international experience. Peace Corps volunteers would be an excellent match for just such an assignment. The teachers also suggest that subject matter and presentations should cover the necessary information to insure that preservice teachers are more globally prepared such as requiring multicultural education classes for preservice teachers.
As discussed in the literature review, global education should be considered an essential element of teacher education programs. The integration of global education for preservice teacher training would impact the way in which teachers interact with others.

Four teachers discussed the relevance of college professors and the role they play in mentoring and modeling for preservice teachers. It was suggested that college professors be globally educated themselves if they are teaching preservice teachers. Faculty members need to be as well prepared "globally" or "internationally" as the students to effectively transfer what international experiences might require. It was also suggested that academic institutions work with government organizations to develop training sessions for students traveling abroad, and that the university cover travel expenses of those preservice teachers who choose to go abroad for preservice teaching.

Nine of the teachers agree that prospective teachers should be exposed to a formal foundation of study and general exposure, at least to a certain degree, to diverse cultures and people, before they set out on a journey overseas. One of the participants commented that teachers should interact with international guests within the college or university to receive first-hand information on cross-cultural exchange. Two teachers agreed that language study would be to the advantage of the teacher to provide broader awareness, particularly if traveling overseas, and three teachers suggested that for preservice teachers traveling overseas there needs to be some type of research on the particular country and culture they will visit. This research might
become part of the “local” experience that other participants suggested for prospective teachers.

Local Resources, People, and Experiences

Education is a means to provide both intellectual and responsible knowledge, which allows individuals to participate in local as well as global pursuits. Gilliom and Remy (1978) developed characteristics of a new approach to global education, which align with the recommendations made by the participants. Capitalizing on the local community as a laboratory for studying international concerns is a viable option for those who do not have previous exposure or experience abroad. This category, “Local Resources, People, and Experiences,” include the teachers’ recommendations to incorporate local activities within the community, in the course of preparing prospective teachers.

John said, “You probably have some areas right here in our own country where we can place people throughout the United States in segments. Teaching in certain ethnic areas will certainly make the person much more aware. There’s nothing like practical experience. It’s better than a relationship you’re going to have in a classroom.” Kim discussed the advantage of community service projects and service learning as specific opportunities for prospective teachers. She commented that this was important because, “You have to research everything around your own environment and take into consideration how all of that is related to others, and the different attitudes that are involved in the project.”
Louise responded with, “Early on in the program and once they’re teaching a while here, I think they should experience a different culture. I don’t mean just as a travel group overseas, but to teach people different from themselves and the norm in the town where they live. In a local community I don’t know if it would be as genuine but people in the community and different ethnic groups would work if the student couldn’t afford to go abroad. Student teachers could work as volunteers at a senior center, for example, to get a range of how people learn.” I would definitely recommend a teaching experience, especially in an area in our state where the teachers are going to be teaching. Columbus is #1 for immigrants that come into our country. Even over the last several years, 5% of our population is higher than other places. This gives us diversity and plenty of opportunity for student teachers to get exposure to diversity.”

Mack suggested, “Students could go live in another culture, in a rural area or an urban setting. It’s a matter of adjustment to a different setting and a different context. For some people even going away to college does that but in many instances they think it isn’t as jarring if you aren’t in another country. For perspective teachers volunteer work and situations like that can help such as Appalachia. They need to address questions and assumptions brought to light to make it a rich experience.”

Marcos said, “In the local community you learn to challenge society and I think it’s better to look at people where they are in their own lives. I think that’s the key thing. It might not have to be in another country, just a contrast. It could be in
Appalachia. For people in the countryside, it could be New York City, but it's the contrast that will challenge those assumptions and make for better teaching.”

Molly's comment was to suggest, "They need different cultural experiences with more than just teaching. Even in this city, like student teaching in an inner city neighborhood, doing volunteer work, and going out to a community. Prospective teachers should work with people of different nationalities on a volunteer basis or otherwise in a classroom such as English as a second language.”

Monty commented, “Nothing comes as close as a person who has really been there, but bringing in local international people to work with the teachers in the classroom would work too. That's an idea because there are people available everywhere. The international programs could be like an exchange where the students do something together. Preservice teachers might take advantage of an opportunity with a host family in the community of their own home and this would provide a realistic encounter for both the visiting student and the host family. It would also provide insight for a real-life experience.”

Pam also shared, “It doesn’t have to be international, but do something different than what you are accustomed to I think something like a semester or at least a project where you have to go to a different location, within our own town or country to get exposure to a different culture. I would do exchange days in as different places as they could possibly get, like if you were in a rural area, go to the city or in a city, go to the rural areas. Get a feel for tolerance by teaching in different environments. Pam eagerly offered, “Certainly an international experience would be ideal if you could
make it cost affective, but to also have one locally, outside of their comfort zone. There needs to be follow-up after students have begun teaching to reflect on what was learned and how applicable the experience is to teaching and learning. I would try immersions with host families of diverse backgrounds.”

To summarize, 7 of the 10 participants were in favor of integrating a variety of people and programs within the local area. John, Louise, Marcos, and Molly agree that interacting or practice teaching with local ethnic groups, immigrants, and inner-city neighborhoods, or in an area such as Appalachia, would provide an avenue for preservice teachers to gain exposure to different classroom cultures.

Louise and Kim talked about service learning projects, and the possibility of visiting or volunteering in community senior citizen centers for basic, practical experience working with people somewhat different from themselves. Most prominently voiced were suggestions made by Monty, Marcos, and Pam to integrate in preservice teacher training visiting scholars, international students, and other internationalists from the community. Serving as language tutors and interacting with local internationalists from different countries would provide for a type of “international” experience. A “local” exchange for preservice teachers such as this would provide excellent opportunities for cross-cultural exchange.

**International Experiences by Traveling Abroad**

The final category, International Experience, describes the types of programs and study the participants recommend for prospective teachers to be well prepared for
an international experience, living and working overseas. Basically, international experiences include opportunities to promote interdependence among peoples, infusion of global education and strides toward moral empathy integrated with the study of different cultures. As well, interactive, applicable experiences that connect domestic and nationalistic thoughts and actions, with international experiences that provide for better global understanding.

Mack discussed, the value of international experiences in saying, “Sure, my children don’t have a particular interest in Peace Corps, but they do have an international perspective on things because they studied overseas. This has encouraged them to be more international and I think everyone ought to have that kind of experience. Kim recommends international experiences in teaching although she knows it can be difficult to arrange. She admitted, “If that is not an option, you could get another student from the university to pair up with for some way of interacting with a person of another culture.” Louise decided, “Oh, I would absolutely recommend an international experience. The earlier the better and I would do it a couple of times. I would do it in undergraduate training semester for semester with an exchange student.

Stan’s reply to the question, “Would you recommend international experiences for prospective teacher?” was, “Very much so. I once wanted to design a 3-week environment geology trip to Costa Rica. I thought teachers would be good candidates for that type of experience. Institutions need to support those types of programs. I really think that living abroad, and learning how to get around in the culture, makes
you more credible. You don’t really understand what a rain forest is all about until you spend a day in it. You don’t understand the scale of the ruins from an earthquake until you see it. When I went back to Honduras I met Peace Corps volunteers, and those are the first people I would recruit into a graduate program. You know they can operate in a different culture.”

Marcos agreed with the importance of international experiences for prospective teachers in saying, “Absolutely. I think the experience of being overseas just gives so much insight. One element would be to go to the developing world for a richer experience. Because when you say international it could be going to Paris or Zimbabwe, and I think the richness of the experience is in the contrast. An international experience for prospective teachers is ideal but may not fit the budget. A reasonable length of time often is important. Otherwise, it becomes more like a vacation without the in-depth nature of a cross-cultural experience.”

John commented, “Number one, going overseas would teach flexibility. Number two, preparation because you just do it. No one has to tell you to or how to, because if you don’t you won’t be successful. Maybe you could have summer programs to take preservice people overseas to get some ideas of cultural differences.” Monty added, “I would make an international experience mandatory because it’s part of learning - especially for a Social Studies teacher.”

To summarize, the participants made many suggestions for the preparation of prospective classroom teachers, regarding international experiences. Every participant recommended an international experience for prospective teachers but there were
different opinions as to how to implement their ideas. There were 7 comments in support of prior knowledge to an international experience, and 8 comments that local experiences are valuable. Seven participants recommended international experiences for preservice teachers.

Suggestions were made to incorporate in-depth learning experiences and practical field experience domestically. International travel and work, such as with the Peace Corps, provides valuable opportunities for teachers to transfer their experiences to the classroom where they are able to enhance student’s interest in learning about the world.

Recommendations of International Experiences - Summary

Overall, the participants’ comments and perceptions do address what they consider important for the preparation of prospective teachers and their suggestions for making it a rich learning experience. The participants’ following recommendations reiterate what Merryfield (1997) discussed as the role of teacher education programs. The recommendations are 3-fold, emphasizing that global content, cross-cultural experiences, and global perspectives are part of the foundation for preservice teachers. Careful advising, modeling, and mentoring of a global perspective in the courses they take are three ways to promote a strong teacher education program promoting global education.

From the teachers’ recommendations, three categories emerged, including Prior Classroom Knowledge and Practice, International Experiences, and the
Integration of Local Resources, People, and Experiences. Of the 10 participants, 8 teachers suggested various ideas regarding the importance of prior knowledge as a prerequisite for international experiences of prospective teachers. Three participants, Kim, Louise, and Stan, promote that faculty members and professors should have first-hand international experience, and that they should mentor and model for their students, teaching with a global perspective in the classroom.

Louise and Molly were the two teachers who recommended language fluency before an international experience, whereas Molly and Noni also believe that bringing in internationalists and people with different cultural backgrounds to the classroom would benefit prospective teachers, as they interact and develop a sense of cross-cultural exchange. Three teachers, John, Mack and Noni, recommend that content knowledge, history and cultural studies, ethnic studies, and multicultural classes should be integrated into the classrooms of colleges and universities, to enhance the knowledge base of those pursuing international experiences. Last, Monty supports the idea of a "mini-Peace Corps" program paid for by colleges and universities, in sync with the Peace Corps. This would provide opportunities for student teachers to fulfill their student-teaching phase overseas, following a particular amount of training through the Peace Corps.

The second category of recommendations is defined as "international experiences" for prospective teachers. Seven of the 10 participants recommend various approaches for all international experiences of prospective teachers. Mack is in favor of study-abroad programs through colleges and universities as an initial move
toward an international experience, whereas Monty simply recommends a general experience traveling overseas in any capacity. Kim is more in favor of student-exchange programs between prospective teachers in different ethnic areas in the local community.

Louise, on the other hand, prefers international exchange programs between American and foreign students. Campuses are divided in race and culture, and it is here where much potential for internationalization abounds. John suggests summer programs where the university provides preservice teachers with an opportunity for a study tour to specific countries. Stan and Marcos are also in favor of international experiences, but only to a developing country, not a "first-world country." They recommend that the setting for prospective teachers should take place where the prospective teachers' familiar culture is in contrast and profoundly different from the culture he or she travels to.

The third category, Local Resources, People, and Experiences, also had recommendations from 8 participants. The local experiences described by the participants suggest nurturing local relationships, which is one way to teach students how to model behavior that supports difference and builds communities. The most prominent idea, suggested by 6 teachers, was to provide teaching experiences in areas such as different ethnic neighborhoods within one's own town or community, or in inner city schools versus rural areas. Four teachers mentioned that there is a need for integrating cross-cultural experience in more ways than through the classroom. Kim suggested community service projects, and Louise suggested tutoring ESL students.
with the possibility of volunteering at senior citizen centers, to get a feel for "differences" in working with diverse people. Pam and Monty promote the practice of immersion and interactions with international families in the community. Marcos summarized these suggestions by commenting that the "learning experience" for prospective teachers would come from the contrast of looking at where people are in life and the culture they have evolved in, as compared to one's own culture and place in life.

Conclusion

Following an introductory review of these former Peace Corps teachers' site assignments overseas, I discussed the nature of their teaching experiences and their roles as teachers. The interviews conducted with these RPCV provide perceptions and an in-depth look at their subsequent curriculum and instruction, and the degree to which they infused global education in their teaching practices.

Investigating these Peace Corps teachers' motives for international service provided insight about the nature of their teaching experiences and their roles as teachers. From the findings, I determined that their initial motivation to pursue opportunities overseas (mostly personal achievement and self gain) resulted in self change. The change within themselves as teachers provided insight on the nature of their teaching experiences and their roles as teachers.

Talking with the participants about their most valuable Peace Corps experience (relationships and cross-cultural awareness) brought to my attention how those
experiences also influenced their self change. Their priorities and motives changed as a result of what they came to appreciate, mostly significantly relationships, discussed in the major findings. Teachers’ motives and most valuable experiences are closely linked to perceptual changes made within themselves as people, which ultimately led to the change in their instructional practice.

Regarding how these teachers say their teaching and curriculum was changed by international experiences, the strongest impact for change was not too much on their criteria but to their approach to teaching or teaching style. The cross-cultural exchange, cultural awareness, and other attributes that accompany Peace Corps experiences led to an in-depth self change that overall enhanced their methods, presentations, and instructional practice.

Because of the appreciation these teachers developed for global awareness, they also developed a greater understanding and appreciation of teaching with a global perspective. Teaching with a stronger global focus parallels with the purposeful way they infused global education in their curricula and instruction.

The perceptual change in these teachers happened naturally because of the immersion and cross-cultural exchange. The infusion of global perspectives in their teaching, however, was a deliberate act of change as a result of personal change within themselves.

Based on the global education literature regarding the infusion of global education in classroom teaching and on these teachers’ perceptions of international experiences, it can be shown that the teachers deliberately implemented global
education in their teaching experiences. Overall, each participant voiced how international experiences through the Peace Corps has impacted on their teaching practice.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the study, identify, and draw conclusions of the major findings and to propose implications for global education in classroom teaching and educational research. Recommendations for the future regarding the impact of international experiences on teachers' practices conclude the chapter, followed by a summary.

Summary

The current study investigates the perceptions of international and cross-cultural experiences on the subsequent curricula and instruction of RPCV teachers. The overall line of inquiry was to examine the experiences of those teachers to provide insight into how they incorporate international/cross-cultural experiences and knowledge into their classroom instruction.

My research began with the assumption that the infusion of global perspectives in kindergarten through 12th grade is needed. The methods and objectives of my study reflect this underlying assumption. The study also assumed that RPCV teachers
would be able to articulate how their Peace Corps experience overseas influenced their classroom teaching. I was particularly interested in RPCV teachers, because of my personal background and experience as a RPCV in Liberia, West Africa. In the course of the investigation, I examined the various perceived effects on the subsequent curricula and instruction of 10 teachers with cross-cultural experience as Peace Corps teachers. The intent was not to change the teacher's classroom practice but to interpret how they taught with a global perspective and how they transferred what they experienced and learned from Peace Corps service into their classroom instruction.

This qualitative study was based on a naturalistic inquiry. The approach taken was phenomenological in that the study follows how RPCV teachers perceive their international experiences and the ways in which those experiences influenced their teaching with global perspectives.

The participants were classroom teachers, all of whom who served as Peace Corps volunteer teachers. Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked with participants to ensure that I interpreted their comments in a manner acceptable to them. Because of the emergent design of the study, follow-up interviews provided clarification and additional data for the investigation.

The participants articulated their perceptions of how cross-cultural exchanges through Peace Corps experiences has influenced their classroom instruction. Their responses were analyzed as emergent categories, and codes were identified across their responses to them. Subsequent critical analysis of the data was informed by the global education literature.
Major Findings

For this study, my general line of inquiry was to examine how international experiences, such as that of Peace Corps, influence returned volunteer teachers' perceptions of international experiences on their subsequent curriculum and instruction. The impact of serving as a teacher in the Peace Corps on their teaching practice is summarized in detail in the previous Chapter 4. This brief summary of the findings displays RPCV teachers' perceptions of their Peace Corps experience, features how international experiences had an impact on their classroom instruction, and demonstrates how they implemented teaching with a global perspective.

In answer to Research Question #2, regarding how teachers' curricula and instruction were influenced by international experiences such as the Peace Corps, the overall findings indicate that the change was not so much in curriculum. Rather, the most significant change took place in the personal attributes of the teachers themselves, which ultimately changed their presentation and teaching style. The responses indicate two dimensions to their change for instruction—changes in self and changes in pedagogy (Figure 1). The teachers reported how they changed the way they personally think and feel regarding their teaching practice and the way they changed their pedagogy or instructional style.
Self Change

The concept of self change for these teachers had an impact on the way they approach their instruction perceptually. Personal traits—such as flexibility, tolerance, patience, the ability to be more reflective, adaptable to change, understanding, and confident—were descriptive of the changes within the teachers.

Overall, the participants voiced that their perceptions of change had to do with personal change within themselves as teachers, which ultimately affected their pedagogy, approach to student learning, and teaching with a global perspective.

Pedagogical Change

Pedagogical change emphasizes the actual teaching practice involved in classroom instruction. The teachers discussed a variety of methods incorporated in their lessons and unit plans, such as being able to give better examples in their teaching, adding discussion and more relevant content to lectures, facilitating better by providing a sense of choice, asking higher level thinking skills, and taking an overall assessment of their teaching style. They became more innovative, entertaining, and were better able to improvise.

Emerging from the two major subthemes—self change and pedagogical change—are two minor subthemes. As teachers recognized change within themselves, there was a dramatic impact on their attentiveness and concern for how student learn—rather, a focus on student learning.
**Teachers’ Focus on Student Learning**

From their international experience, these RPCV reflected on becoming more “tuned in” to individuals and their needs and more aware of variations between students, particularly individual learning styles. This was another pertinent finding, instrumental in the way the RPCV teachers changed. Their sensitivity to how students learn was voiced in comments about listening to students better, encouraging students to extend their thinking and strive for achievement, and becoming more insightful and sensitive to students.

**Teaching with a Global Focus**

Likewise, the other minor subtheme, which stems from their pedagogical change, emphasizes teaching with a global focus—rather, an emphasis on integrating more culturally diverse activities and becoming more prone to teaching about other cultures. Comments on how these teachers changed their instruction regarding a global focus included using broader global analogies, exploring different approaches to transfer subject matter, and avoiding Western cultural biases.

Both minor subthemes—student learning and global focus—have an impact on the teachers’ curricula in general, in the sense that the presentation of the curricula is different, not the curricula itself. Teachers confirmed that their instruction was changed because of their understanding and appreciation of student needs and how they learn. Participants discussed how they value teaching with a global focus. This subtheme brought insight as to how these teachers infuse global education in their
teaching. Because of the acknowledgment of self change, it appears that they purposely implemented strategies for more successful teaching and learning.

Overall changes in pedagogy were secondary to changes in personal thinking and their approach to teaching; however, each category was strongly emphasized by the participants (Figure 1). Their personal subchanges, changes in pedagogy, and teaching with a focus on student learning and with a stronger global focus parallel with the purposeful way in which they infuse global education in their curricula and instruction. The major findings culminate to answer the final research question, “Do teachers with international experience such as Peace Corps infuse global education in their teaching practice, and if so, how?”

Research Question #2 also asks about how RPCVs altered their curricula. It is surprising that the teachers did not change their curricula. It seems more likely that the teachers were responding to different perspectives of curricula than what I had in mind. My question regarding how they altered their curricula was intended to focus on micro curriculum changes, such as revisions in their lessons, methods, and materials. The teachers, however, regarded my question in relation to macro curriculum changes and new curricula added to their instruction. Thus, the answer to Research Question #2 remains open.

Additional Findings

In the course of the analysis for this study, I initially reviewed a description of each participant’s Peace Corps placement and site assignment. Their comments
revealed personal impressions and reflections of the environment, site assignment, and skill area, and placement. Their picturesque descriptions provided an inside view of their life and work overseas as Peace Corps volunteer teachers.

Following the brief descriptions of each teacher's site assignment and teaching experience, influential factors and the personal motives for serving as a Peace Corps volunteer and reflections of their most valuable Peace Corps experience were discussed. From the data collected, it was determined that the strongest motive for these teachers to serve in the Peace Corps was for personal achievement and self gain. Overall, their motives for joining the Peace Corps were guided by personal achievement and self-gain, travel and adventure, alternative career choices, educational advancement, a sense of civic duty and the Kennedy years, humanitarianism and altruism, and family background and religious influences.

What I assumed would be the strongest reason for wanting to serve in the Peace Corps—altruism and humanitarian interest—was second to the self-gain category. Because of my involvement and personal experience as a Peace Corps volunteer, I was also curious to know what other Peace Corps volunteer educators believed had been their most valuable experience while serving in the Peace Corps. Their responses suggest that their most valuable experiences were the relationships they developed with host country nationals. Their most heartfelt responses were the teachers' emotional attachments to friends and extended family, with whom they interacted throughout their two years of service.
Overall, two themes emerged in relation to their most valuable experience—interpersonal relationships and greater awareness of diversity among people of the world. Relationships and cross-cultural awareness were recognized as their most valuable experiences.

**Materials and Procedures**

Teachers reflected on the specific materials and procedures they now utilize as a result of their Peace Corps experience. The overall category is designated as enrichment materials and procedures, which helped identify how their teaching and curricula have been influenced or changed. Within the findings, supplementary, authentic, and technological materials and procedures were voiced by the participants as beneficial to their classroom instruction. Authentic materials were the most prominent of the three categories. Teachers commented on how they integrate authentic items from their Peace Corps experience and also discussed supplementary materials. Only 4 teachers discussed the high-tech incorporation of computers, videos, and tape recorders, etc. Technology was not necessarily used overseas, but these 4 teachers now say they use technology to deliver global education.

Similarly, teachers also shared that they employed and integrated more hands-on experiences—role playing, folklore, story-telling, creative writing, use of maps and globes, reading of multicultural literature, and interpersonal cooperative learning—as a result of their Peace Corps experience. These strategies and techniques are similar to those that global education scholars argued are necessary for supporting alternative
ways of knowing, incorporating multiple perspectives, and generally teaching with a
global perspective. These teachers purposely implemented strategies and integrated
materials into their teaching, as a result of their international experiences.

**Defining Global Education and Teaching with a Global Perspective**

The changes in these RPCVs are consistent with the findings of prominent,
global education scholars. To compare strategies and techniques identified by
teachers with those promoted in the global education literature, I asked the teachers
about their perceptions and definitions of global education and how they describe
teaching with a global perspective.

As teachers described their approach to promoting global perspectives in their
teaching, they were simultaneously defining the term. Their explanations and
comments on global education link with global education scholars such as Alger
Kobus (1983), Lamy (1983), and Merryfield (1992). Overall, the teachers’ definitions
of global education were most similar to Case (1993), who developed “Key Elements
of a Global Perspective.” As discussed in the literature review, his development of the
perceptual dimension to include open-mindedness, anticipation of complexity,
resistance to stereotyping, inclination to empathize, and nonchauvinism was an
important contribution to the literature.

These qualities of the perceptual dimension are evidenced as the participants
claim to model nonstereotypical attitudes that foster the desired outcome for teaching
with a global perspective. The perceptual dimensions is the point of view—concepts, orientations, values, sensibilities and sensitivities, and attitudes—through which teachers want students to perceive the world. Their understanding of global education most often reflects Becker (1979), who argued that global education promotes moral empathy with those of different cultures. The findings similar to Case (1993), Cortes (1996), and Hanvey (1986) were analyzed and categorized into groups, resulting in four overall themes: awareness, tolerance, interdependence, and diversity.

Other definitions from the teachers are similar to Hanvey (1986). Respondents most often emphasized awareness and acceptance of other cultures as a way to define global education. Cross-cultural awareness and acceptance was directly an answer to how they teach with a global perspective. Participants voiced a likeness to Case (1993), who defined global education as tolerance, empathy, and nonchauvinism. Other teachers also referred to diversity as the main goal of global education, similar to Cortes (1996). This is evidenced in the participants’ responses that global education reduces group generalizations and regional and ethnic stereotypes.

**Recommendations for International Experiences for Prospective Teachers**

The final analysis of the study presents the participants’ suggestions and recommendations regarding international experiences for prospective teachers. I organized their suggestions into three categories: an emphasis on prior content knowledge and classroom practice, international experiences such as study abroad
courses and other international ventures, and an integration of local experiences with
diverse ethnic groups and other internationalists within the local community.

Participants support the importance of prior knowledge and classroom
experiences, rather an opportunity to study and learn to appreciate diversity and cross-
cultural exchange. Teachers are skeptical but in favor of international experiences for
prospective teachers, depending on the implementation of the program. Participants
discussed incorporating local people from diverse neighborhoods and ethnic groups to
promote cross-cultural experiences within the local community. Local
internationalists, international organizations, foreign student associations, and other
organizations were voiced as critical for the preparation of prospective teachers.

In summary and as stated in the purpose of the study, the culmination of the
findings reveals the perceived effects of cross-cultural experiences on the subsequent
curricula and instruction of teachers with Peace Corps experience.

Implications for Classroom Teaching and Educational Research

Although there is limited research documenting the impact of international
experiences on classroom teaching, specifically through the Peace Corps, the
importance of this work lies in its demonstrating how international experiences impact
one's teaching practice. Peace Corps volunteer teachers develop self-awareness and
are able to relate sensitively to a wide variety of people, conditions, and cultural
diversity. The critical point and value of these traits is that, through teachers'
knowledge and understanding of cultural universals and cultural diversity, those same
values transfer to teachers' classroom instruction and students' learning. The utilization of international/cross-cultural experiences, such as the Peace Corps, is a promising way to promote teachers' global perspectives.

The findings of this study potentially can be used because how we incorporate what is learned from international experiences enables us to clarify what teaching global education really means. It also helps to clarify how to determine what is meant by education with a global perspective and is critical to the development of knowledge and skills, relationships between teachers and students, and interaction between schools and communities.

Ultimately, school administrators are looking for teachers with experiences like those of RPCVs. Their reflections of their life and work overseas clearly demonstrate ways in which global education scholars argue we should develop a global perspective. The teachers' perceptions of Peace Corps bring into focus many aspects and goals of global education as defined by the literature.

Evidence from this study affirms the importance of international experiences in classroom instruction and makes concrete determinations regarding the perceptions of RPCVs that can be utilized to enhance school curricula, offer innovative suggestions for teacher preparation, and promote global education and positive instructional change for classroom teaching. Ultimately, school administrators are seeking teachers with experiences like those of RPCVs. RPCVs' reflections of their life and work overseas clearly demonstrate ways in which global education scholars argue we should develop a global perspective. The teachers' perceptions of Peace
Corps bring into focus many aspects and goals of global education as defined by the literature.

Although there is limited research documenting the impact of international experiences on classroom teaching, specifically through the Peace Corps, the importance of this work lies in the fact that it demonstrates how international experiences impact one’s teaching practice. The culmination of curricula, methods, and materials, along with the understanding of cross-cultural exchange and appreciation of diversity, all play a critical role in teaching and learning. Peace Corps volunteer teachers develop self-awareness and are able to relate sensitively to a wide variety of people, conditions, and cultural diversity. The critical point and value of these traits is that, through teacher’s knowledge and understanding of cultural universals and cultural diversity, those same values transfer to teachers’ classroom instruction and students’ learning. The utilization of international/cross-cultural experiences, such as the Peace Corps, is a promising way to promote teachers’ global perspectives.

This study is important because it also provides opportunities for teachers with international/cross-cultural experiences to challenge, analyze, and clarify their perceptions of teaching from which to understand, develop, and enhance their teaching decisions. In an attempt to meet the need for implementing global education in American schools, it is imperative to prepare teachers for teaching with global perspectives.
This study will also assist in the work of teacher-educators who are developing teacher preparation programs by providing an understanding of how teachers use their international/cross-cultural experiences in teacher thinking and instruction. As discussed by Gilliom (1990), an international focus is generally nonexistent in teacher education, and there is little reason to expect that educators will not continue to produce teachers with limited vision. In today’s classrooms, students’ needs and demands are far greater than in the past, and teachers must be better prepared to produce citizens of the world.

From the results of this study, there is the potential that RPCVs’ characteristics and experiences, which align with elements for infusing global education, might serve as a foundation for teacher-educators to build into preservice programs an international/cross-cultural line of study. This could serve as a powerful means for the evaluation of teaching goals and methods and to better infuse global education into the existing curricula.

As argued by Gilliom and Farley (1990), many questions can be raised about teaching styles and curriculum, infusing goals of global education, and the role of teacher education in the promotion of global education. What, for example, should be the focus of the curriculum? How much emphasis should be placed on global education? How can teacher training best prepare teachers to meet challenges of educating from a global perspective? All of these questions are worth contemplating, and, from this study, the perceptions and experiences of RPCV teachers can help determine strategies for integrating global perspectives.
Recommendations for Future Research

From the analysis, I came to the realization that my results may have been more reliable if I had interviewed a more diverse group. The ethnicity of the teachers may well have played a part in the interpretations of the findings, particularly if they were of a minority group, when factoring in previous cross-cultural experiences they may have or not have experienced locally. Also, more precise questions regarding the teacher's curriculum and instruction might have been more efficient, as teachers' responses to several questions overlapped.

In another study, it would be productive to interview teachers who have not had international experiences with teachers such as RPCVs, which would allow for a comparison of the findings. I say this because two participants of this study commented about teachers without international experiences. They said that, just because a teacher does not have international experience in his background, it doesn't mean that he are less competent compared to those who do. It would be interesting to determine how classroom teachers without international experiences teach with a global perspective.

Inclusion of several more senior volunteers (55 and older) into my study might have provided an interesting comparative analysis with a group of Peace Corps volunteers directly out of college with less teaching experience and with a group of mid-career teachers. The wealth of experience that older teachers offer is invaluable, while the more youthful zest of younger volunteers with more current training is also
considered valuable. The mid-career educator might add flavor to the analysis considering potential issues of burnout, distractions, or early retirement. As well, the participants for this study were from a wide range of content areas. In retrospect, I might have selected teachers with training and experience in the same content area, such as social studies, so as to narrow in the focus of the study. Because there are more than 6,500 Peace Corps volunteers in 93 countries, the study might have benefited from including a larger sample of participants and RPCVs from outside of Ohio. It may have also been interesting to focus on volunteers assigned to one specific country to examine where the cultures teachers were exposed to may have influenced them.

What RPCV Teachers' Experiences Suggest in Terms of Recommendations

Internationally experienced teachers such as Peace Corps volunteers have learned about the increasingly interdependent world first-hand. Their experiences should be passed on to their students. One study I would like to investigate might be a longitudinal study of teachers before they travel overseas as Peace Corps volunteers. The investigation would then continue with research on their two years of service as active Peace Corps teachers, with a final investigation of their teaching upon their return to classrooms in the United States.

Another study might include a comparison of Peace Corps volunteer teachers to those who teach in American Schools overseas and to those teachers working with the Department of Defense. At different levels and different degrees, all three groups
encounter cross-cultural exchange and immersion with different cultures. Considering the different organizations, it would be interesting to determine the different teachers' perceptions and priorities of their cross-cultural experiences, related to the impact it has on classroom practice.

Within the Peace Corps arena, an interesting study might investigate Peace Corps volunteer teachers of those who considered their experience unsuccessful. These teachers who regard their international teaching in a less than positive light could provide an inside, skeptical view of the cross-cultural exchange overseas with consideration of the impact it had or did not have on their subsequent teaching. Comparisons might be drawn between Peace Corps volunteer teachers who choose to apply to Peace Corps directly out of college between the age of 18 and 20, versus senior volunteer teachers who have retired but choose to serve as active Peace Corps volunteer teachers after 55.

Investigations of the relationship between Peace Corps volunteers' international teaching experiences and teacher education programs could be useful. Teachers could be trained in both undergraduate and postgraduate studies, to be knowledgeable about global issues and problems as they relate to students and classrooms around the world. Global education plays a critical role in developing the knowledge and skills of student teachers for classroom instruction; however, most teacher education programs focus limited attention on racial or ethnic diversity, disparities among socioeconomic classes, and gender discrimination. Teachers translate new initiatives into practice that are consistent with their prior beliefs and
practices. The extent to which global education can be infused into teacher preparation programs is directly related to the attitudes and commitments of teacher educators.

The recommendations offered by this study reflect an attempt to rethink and reshape how global education should be implemented in classroom instruction. It is evident that global education is essential to the success of students and that the problematic complexity of implementing it to classroom instruction must be addressed from both multicultural and global perspectives. For global education to succeed, teachers must become more knowledgeable about themselves and their roles in globalizing their classroom instruction. It is crucial that more research focus on teachers with international experiences and their practices.

**Summary**

The overall intention of this study was to examine the perceptions of Peace Corps volunteer teachers regarding how their international experiences influenced their subsequent classroom instruction, because the conceptualization and implementation of global education in kindergarten through 12th-grade schools continues to be a challenge. Leaders have attempted to define and determine just how global education meets the need and finds a place in school curricula.

According to many educators, global interrelatedness is a fact of life. Teaching and learning through global perspectives prepare people to become more culturally sensitive about human behavior. By means of global education we confront
the "reality of learning" through interdisciplinary, cooperative, community-based, democratic, and experiential methods. The classroom needs a specific focus on preparing teachers to teach and preparing students to learn, through global perspectives, thus developing an appreciation for the diversity of peoples, nations, and ethnic backgrounds that make up the world.

Educators face challenges in meeting the demands of the global village. This challenge has become a mainstream concern, trying to convey a vision to the world and its inhabitants that we are dependent on one another. One previous example has been the Global Education Program in the Education Department at the Ohio State University. A core of four faculty members—Eugene Gilliom, Steven Miller, Richard Remy, and Merry Merryfield—launched a program in 1988 to promote global education. Their complete list of collective global research, teaching, and service activities has been varied and extensive. In turn, faculty members in the College of Education and in other departments became involved in the program and share in the enthusiasm for global education and its goals.

As we enter the new millennium, national educational excellence depends on teachers' abilities to improve the world. Helping teachers improve the world through student growth and development is one of the highest goals. The responsibility placed upon teachers is to nurture and develop the minds of students. Global perspectives for teachers are an urgent priority.

RPCVs' reflections of their life and work overseas clearly demonstrate ways in which global education scholars argue we should develop a global perspective. The
teachers' perceptions of the Peace Corps bring into focus many aspects and goals of
global education as defined by the literature. Although there is limited research
documenting the impact of international experiences concerning classroom teaching,
specifically through the Peace Corps, the importance of this work lies in that it
demonstrates how international experiences impact one's teaching practice. The
culmination of curriculum, methods, and materials, along with the understanding of
cross-cultural exchange and appreciation of diversity, all play a critical role in
teaching; it is reflective in our society, in cultures within cultures, on a local, national,
and international level.
Appendix A

Interview Guide
Interview Guide

In preparation for the interview sessions of this study, I developed an interview guide provided below to gather information about Peace Corps teachers’ experiences. The purpose of the interview is to gather information that will describe perceptions of Peace Corps volunteers’ experiences as teachers. As RPCVs, the participants are in unique positions to describe how their personal experiences have impacted their methods of teaching.

The interviews will be strictly confidential, and I will analyze information from different people to determine results for the study. The following questions are what we discussed in the interview.

1. Originally, what factors influenced your decision to serve in the Peace Corps?

2. Briefly describe your overall Peace Corps experience.

3. What specific experiences do you view as the most valuable?

4. In reflecting on your Peace Corps experience, how has your curriculum been affected or changed over the years as a result of your experience?

5. Would you describe as precisely as possible how you incorporate what you have learned from your Peace Corps service into your classroom instruction?

6. Tell me specific examples of teaching procedures and curriculum materials you use that reflect the impact of your international experience.
7. What is your definition of global education? How have you come to that definition?

8. How would you describe teaching with a global perspective?

9. Would you recommend an international experience for prospective teachers? If so, which specific suggestions do you have to make for a rich learning experience overseas?

Follow-up questions also came into play during the interview process: “How was your teaching overseas different from your teaching in the United States?”

10. How did your international teaching experience influence your personal ideas and appreciation of teaching upon your return?

11. In what ways did the Peace Corps prepare you for the things you do in teaching now?

12. In what ways did the Peace Corps not prepare you for teaching?

13. What other experiences in teaching have influenced your teaching practices to date?
Appendix B

Cover Letter
June 12, 1998

Dear ________________:

Thank you for taking time to talk with me about my dissertation research. I look forward to talking with you about your teaching experiences and the adventures of your Peace Corps service.

At your convenience, the enclosed forms need to be filled out and returned. Please use the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. I am very grateful for your prompt reply. Within the next few weeks, I will contact you for an appropriate time and location, to line up an appointment for the interview that will last for approximately one hour. As discussed, your response will be strictly confidential, and results of the study will be provided upon request.

Again, thank you for your willingness to participate in the study. Your reflections, comments, and observations of your Peace Corps experience will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for promoting the third goal of Peace Corps, “bringing the world back home.”

Sincerely,

Barbara Myers
Appendix C

Background Information Sheet
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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Country of Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Dates of Service</td>
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<td>Current Occupation</td>
<td>Skill Area – Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience in the US (grade level)</td>
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Appendix D

Informed Consent Form
Informed Consent Form

I consent to participating in research entitled “The Impact of International Experiences on Teaching With a Global Perspective: Reflections of Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Teachers.”

Barbara Myers has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the methods to be applied in the process. I am aware that my interviews will be audiotaped and that printouts will be made of the electronic mail correspondence we share.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain additional information regarding the study and that many questions I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without complications. Furthermore, my name will not be used in published results and all the tapes will be disposed of upon completion of the study.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Respondent

Principal Investigator

Date

Date
Appendix E

Respondents’ Countries of Service
Respondents' Countries of Service
Appendix F

Procedures and Curricula Materials that Reflect the Peace Corps Experience in Classroom Instruction
### Procedures and Curricula Materials that Reflect the Peace Corps Experience in Classroom Instruction

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Monty</th>
<th>Molly</th>
<th>Maketa</th>
<th>Noni</th>
<th>Marcos</th>
<th>Louise</th>
<th>Kim</th>
<th>John</th>
<th>Stan</th>
<th>Pam</th>
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233


