The Global Citizen:
What meaning does the concept have for schools as global learning centers?

Kristen Snyder, Ph.D. Mid Sweden University
Waynne James, Ph.D. University of South Florida
Ulf Fredriksson, Mid Sweden University

Introduction and Background

This paper presents the framework for a study in its initial phase of implementation that emerged after eight years of working with schools in an international context (Snyder, 2004; 2006). The focus of the study is on the global citizen: what it is and what it means to schools in practice. The study focus emerged after seeing that while schools are engaged in many different international partnerships, little focus is given to a pedagogy that prepares youth for global citizenship and global workforce participation. When exploring the concept of the global citizen from a theoretical perspective one sees that there is a diversity of opinion (Hunter, 2006) and focus ranging from citizenship to intercultural competence. Yet few if any of these reflect the whole of schooling in a global society that includes not only social development, but as well workforce capacities. Moreover, the theory about global citizenship focuses on different dimensions than that of the workforce; "to what should schools focus when deciding how to prepare youth for the global age?"

Our work with schools engaged in international school connections for the past eight years, as well as our previous research suggest that there is little match between the existing theories of global citizenship and what is in focus in schools. In this exploratory study we are interested in examining the concept of the global citizen with educators to problematize the concept in relation to school development. More specifically we are interested in understanding how the concept is used in the school to inform pedagogical development and to expand the purpose and application of international partnerships for youth preparation. Do schools merely have pen pals across nations through which they can share national differences, or are students engaged in cross-cultural communities of practice (Wenger, et. al, 2002) that help them to build skills for working together with others, as well as problem solving today's social problems across national borders with others. "The former leads to friends, perhaps, hile the latter leads to global citizenship development." one might say.

The research and theory on what is a global citizen addresses different perspectives, including citizenship education, cultural sensitivity, and intercultural education: i.e. there is little consensus. Comparing this to the rhetoric and international policy on workforce preparation one is even more perplexed about what is meant by global citizenship. As schools are now faced with the challenges (both from educational

policy and societal push) of preparing youth for participating in a global society and global workforce, and it becomes interesting to revisit the question of what is a global citizen and what meaning does this have for schools. The diversity of meaning and definition among researchers as well as the business community leaves wide open the question: *what do educators think about global citizenship and how are they using the concept to develop a pedagogy to prepare youth with the social and workforce skills necessary to survive in and contribute to the 21st century?*

Concept 1: Global Citizenship
The "global citizen" is a term used more and more as we come to understand the interconnectedness of local communities and the interrelatedness of our actions on each other, no matter where we live. Once focused on our relationship within a local community, we are coming to understand that our local actions have global consequences. Stated another way: because of our interconnectedness we, as citizens, have the opportunity, power, and responsibility to use our connections in ways that bring about positive change and development globally, not just locally. With in the field of education, this emphasis on global citizenship, however, is raising questions about "what is global citizenship" and what implication does this have for schools and curriculum development. In many countries there has been an emphasis on internationalization with the primary focus on student exchange. The premise behind such programming was that experiencing persons in other cultures enhances learning and understanding about difference (Liddicoat, 2004). With the advancements of globalization, however, the notion of student exchange is not sufficient to help foster "global citizenship". What then is the difference and why should we care?

Citizenship is about exercising rights and responsibilities within a community and using knowledge to inform responsible action. Global citizenship thus, is citizenship within a global community. To participate and thrive in a global community, with the natural diversity or culture, opinion, life experience and local conditions requires a person to possess certain knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Scorza (2004) suggests that global citizens possess knowledge of world geography, current world affairs and the role of one's own country in the world. They possess skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and cross-cultural communication. Moreover, they are curious, open-minded and empathetic. Others (Deardorff, 2004; Hunter, et al., 2004) mirror this set of criteria emphasizing communication and relationships between persons and relationship to self. Nussbaum (1997 in Hartman and Kiely, 2004) for example, states that a global citizen has a critical distance from ones-self and their own traditions, enough to understand others and themselves in relation.

To be a global citizen thus requires a set of global competencies. Among the most common skills identified in the literature are: substantive knowledge (of other cultures), perceptual understanding, intercultural communication skills, inquisitive, courageous,

self-reliant and confident, independent, creative, flexible, comfort with uncertainty, assertiveness, respect for others, tolerance for ambiguity, empathy, and knowledge discovery (Hartman & Kiely, 2004; Hunter, 2004; Hunter et. al., 2006). Is this enough to make global citizens? We suggest that the equation to global citizenship is more complex and contains other components that reflect the subjectivity of being within a global context. That is, a global citizen has potentially a new primal existence that grows out of extended experience and interaction with difference (an existence that we can not at this time fully understand for it is emerging). Through each experience one gains greater insight into ones-self, as well as to others, shaping one's identity and perception. Given the dynamic nature of development, the potential exists that global communities of experience will shape new attitudes, behaviors, norms and values, as well as identity and role that give rise to a new primal existence. We offer this possibility based a consideration of intercultural competence and sensitivity that is built on the subjective nature of perception through experience.

Intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006) is the "ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's own intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes". This model reflects the interplay between self-awareness and effective communication and behavior in a diverse environment that draws on intercultural knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it has an embedded element of culture, which places the individual inside a community rather than on the outside as observer. At the individual level in her model are the attitudes and skills (global competencies) that are played out through interactions with others (the community level). The integration of individual and community interaction would suggest that global competencies are not sufficient to build global citizenship for they are isolated from exchange and sense making. Rather, one needs also the experience of interacting with others to find self as well as other in the collective space.

Compare this with Hunter's (2006) definition of global competence, in which one understands that there is more to global citizenship than competency-based training. Hunter found that "global competence is having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment." (p. 74). While the difference in the definitions are slight, and in fact the two researchers collaborate, there remains an added dimension that distinguishes the two. It is the differences between seeking to understand other through interaction (keeping lines drawn between cultures) and becoming a member of a culture through interaction. While the difference may be primarily semantic, it, at a minimum, creates a space to question what is global citizenship operationally and experientially and how do we shape it. Is it innate in some people or is it a learned behavior?

Olson and Kroeger (2001) suggest that, "intercultural sensitivity is not a natural human quality. Rather we are more inclined to fear difference and act on this fear (p.

124). Their argument focuses heavily on the importance of relationship and communication to build perceptual understanding that supports intercultural connections. They further suggest that we are not necessarily educated to perceive our global inter-relatedness and thus need to focus on building learning environments that support intercultural sensitivity and global competence. These arguments would suggest the need for schools to think about how they create learning environments that support global citizenship as compared to merely curriculum content that focuses on knowledge of global issues. Bennett (1986) suggests that the key to building intercultural sensitivity and competence lies in the perception of the individual that emerges with encounters of diversity, which develop over time. Bennett's development model of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993; Olson & Kroeger, 2001) includes six (6) stages of what he calls: "subjectively experiencing difference". The first three stages (denial, defense, and minimization) are captured under the category: *ethnocentric,* and the latter three stages (acceptance, adaptation, and integration) fall under the category of *ethnorelativism.* The ethnocentric stage is characterized by resistance, while the ethnorelativism stage is characterized by openness. Like the building of culture developing intercultural sensitivity takes time and is non-linear.

The theory on global competency/citizenship/intercultural sensitivity provides a strong sense of the skills and knowledge necessary for global citizenship. Yet these studies, admittedly by many of the authors are narrow in scope and sample. The majority, for example has been conducted on U.S. populations. Further, the focus on competency has isolated the dynamics of culture and community potentially rendering false or at least superficial what it means to be a global citizen. Hartman and Heinisch (2004) in a study of the relationship between students' intercultural service-learning experiences and sense of global citizenship, found that among other things, the theory of global citizenship lacks operationalization. We suggest that understanding global citizenship is more complex than competency development, given the human nature of identity and role development within a cultural framework, and given that it is generated by diversity rather than homogeneous perception. Further, the omission of culture as a key element in global citizenship, we believe, renders the notion of global citizenship too simplistic and therefore any programming in schools, based on competency development would be lacking. Further, the dominance of an American perspective in the literature could render the models of global education and citizenship too ethnocentric.

This study seeks to examine the theory of global citizenship and intercultural competence, as well as to problematize the concept in relation to growing cultures and communities of practice globally. Grounded theory has been chosen given the existing open nature of the question: what is a global citizen? Twenty years ago, perhaps the answer to the question was simpler. With the advance of the technological knowledge society, however, changes occur rapidly and make fuzzy answers to many questions.

To ask the question today: what is the global citizen could be phrased from the perspective of existing theory. However, we anticipate that schools will identify quite different dimensions than the ones already identified in the literature. It is with this anticipation in mind that we are interested in taking a grounded theory approach. At the same time, we are interested in using the existing models, through an inventory, to examine the extent to which they apply to schools and or corroborate what study participants say.

Methodology and Theoretical lens
This international comparative study combines a grounded theory approach with a theoretical inventory to explore the concept of the global citizen among educators and youth engaged in developing their schools as global learning centers. Qualitative analysis will be applied as well as a statistical procedure to examine the data. The study uses several theorectical models that address aspects of global citizenship, including Deardorff (2004), Hunter (2006) and Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (1993). The theories provide a framework for the exploratory study and data analysis. As well, they will be used as a backdrop in which to compare and contrast praxis with theory in an effort to refine the notion of global citizenship from a praxis perspective.

Research Questions
Specifically, we are interested in exploring what is a global citizen for educators and students? and to what extent are the perspectives and definitions similar and different across nations. Thirdly, in what ways are schools working with the concept of the global citizen to inform the schools pedagogical and curriculum development.

Sample
The exploratory study is being conducted with schools engaged in a network organization who are committed to developing their schools as a global learning center. These schools have been identified because of an existing awareness about global issues, which we perceive to be important to exploring the meaning of the concept global citizen. Our previous research has shown that many schools today around the world are doing little if anything internationally. Moreover, they are unaware of the nature of the global society more than through media. Because of this we chose to use a sample of schools already engaged in dialogue and development around globalization and global citizenship.

The network organization has schools from all levels, including university, participating from Sweden, Spain, China, USA, Canada, The Antilles, and Singapore. There is a minimum of two schools represented from each country, and in some cases

four schools. Principals from each of the schools participate in the study as well as a sample of 4 teachers (at a minimum). A group of students also participate, who are identified through their participation in a youth network for global school development.

Data Collection

The study is conducted online using already established discussion forums in the network organization to hold online focus groups and interviews, combined with web meetings and chats to supplement the discussion threads. A combination of real time and asynchronous communication will be used as well. This data collection model was used in a previous study by Snyder and Wagenius (2002) and was found to be successful in engaging in deepened dialogue and interviews online.

Data will be collected through online interviews and focus groups, as well as an inventory and a survey about curriculum development that reflect the global citizen. The interviews and focus groups will explore the concept of the global citizen to educators and students using an open-ended questionnaire. An inventory will be adapted following Deardorff's model to examine dimensions of the global citizen using a forced question format. Presently an adaptation of the model is being tested by Paskins (2008).

The inventory will be analyzed using a statistical process applied in earlier studies by James (1976) to examine the order of characteristics and the importance of the characteristics to educators and youth today. The utility formula developed by Edwards (1971) will measure the perceived importance of a competency or trait and the degree to which it is applied by teachers and youth. One-way anova will be used to test for significant differences between teachers and students as well as across cultures.

References

Bennett, M. (1993) *Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitvity*. In R. M. Paige (Ed.) Education for the Intercultural Experience. Yarmouth: ME, Intercultural Press.

Deardorff, D. K. (2004) *The identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States.* A doctoral dissertation North Carolina State University.

Deardorff, D. K., Hunter, W. (2006) *Educating global ready graduates*. International Educator. May-June.72-80.

Edwards, W. (1971) *Social utilities*. The Engineering Economist. Summer Symposium Series-VI. Pp. 119-129.

Hartman, E. M., Kiely, R. (2004) *Enacting global citizenship: Designing, implementing and testing a curricular approach to address students' uncertain response to the notion of global citizenship.* Paper presented at the 2004 Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. Chicago, Il. 2-5 September.

Hunter, W. (2004) *Got global competency*? International Educator. Spring 2004. 6-12.

Hunter, W., White, G. P. Godbey, G. C. (2006) *What does it mean to be globally competent?* Journal of Studies in International Education. Vol. 10. No. 3, Fall. 267-285

James, W. B. (1976) *Perceived utility of adult basic education teacher competencies.* A doctoral dissertation. The University of Tennessee

Liddicoat, A. (2004) *Internationalisation as education.* Paper presentation at the university-wide seminar: the intercultural in teaching and learning at the University of South Australia, 21 June.

Nussbaum, M. (1997) Cultivating humanity: A classical defense of reform in liberal education. Harvard University Press.

Olson, C. L., Kroeger, K. R. (2001) *Global competency and intercultural sensitivity*. Journal of Studies in International Education, vol. 5, no. 2., Summer. 116-137

Scorza, J. A. (2004) *Teaching global citizenship: The paradox of competency and power.* Paper presentation for the 2004 Annual meeting of the political science association, Chicago, Il. 2-6 September.

Snyder, K. M., Wagenius, M. (2002) *International Connections through ICT: Expanding the training and development of teachers.* In Johan Perhoff ed. Internationalization in a Shrinking World. Denmark: Books on Demand Press.

Snyder, K. M., Acker-Hocevar, M. (2004) *Professional mentoring through shared international exchange*, in Kochran, F. ed. International Perspective on Mentoring. Infomage Press

Snyder, K. (2006). S*timulating dialogue online in cross cultural learning communities*, in Technological Aspects of Mentoring, F. Kochran, J. Pascarelli (eds) Infomage Press.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., Snyder, W. M. (2002) Ciltivating communities of practice. Cambridge: MA, Harvard Business School Press.