

**GLOCALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RETENTION  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

by

HASAN I. KETTANEH

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

Educational Leadership  
Thompson Rivers University  
Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada  
April 2016

Thesis examining committee:

Victoria (Tory) Handford, Assistant Professor and Thesis Supervisor, Faculty of Education and  
Social Work, Thompson Rivers University

Airini, Professor and Committee Member, Dean of Faculty of Education and Social Work,  
Thompson Rivers University

Ulrich Scheck, Professor and Committee Member, Faculty of Arts, Thompson Rivers University

Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Professor and External Examiner, Faculty of Education, Queen's University

**Abstract**

This research explored the potential impacts that glocalization has on international student retention in Canadian higher education. Semi-structured interviews of 16 international students (eight graduate and eight undergraduate) at a medium-sized, research-oriented university in British Columbia were conducted using Critical Incident Technique (CIT). Participants were recruited through the passive snowball sampling technique, and interviews were analyzed using the approaches of grounded theory. Results of this research were consistent with the literature investigating international student retention and glocalization. Twelve promising practices related to university teaching and learning emerged from the analysis. These were categorized into four larger overarching themes: a) pedagogy, b) policies and procedures, c) learning environment, and d) curriculum. The findings provide evidence that glocalization improves the voice, participation, and prosperity of international students by offering a unique platform for mutual understanding of needs, problems, and solutions. It serves as a bridge between international students and the different stakeholders who are willing and able to “think globally and act locally”. As a reconceptualization of educational systems, glocalization represents a growing cluster of strategies for increasing student success and retention in higher education.

*Keywords:* Glocalization, retention, international students, Critical Incident Technique, promising practices, university teaching, higher education

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### Acknowledgements

Foremost, I would like to wholeheartedly thank the participants who chose to share their time and their stories. I was inspired by your candour, insights, and strength, and hope that I have captured your world in a meaningful and authentic way.

My greatest thanks and sincere gratitude is owed to my supervisor, Dr. Victoria Handford, for her continuous support of this thesis, for her patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and immense knowledge. The door to Dr. Handford's office was always open whenever I needed help or had a question about research or writing. She consistently steered me in the right direction and gave me a push forward whenever I needed it; I hope, one day, to become as good a supervisor for my students. *Merci.*

I would also like to thank the rest of my thesis committee, Professor Airini and Professor Ulrich Scheck, for their insightful comments and encouragement and for their challenging questions which incited me to consider my research from ever-widening perspectives. At the same time, they have held me to high standards in research production. I have been amazingly fortunate to have a committee who gave me the freedom to explore on my own, providing guidance to recover when my steps faltered. *Kia ora and danke.*

My special thanks goes to my external examiner, Professor Rosa Bruno-Jofré at Queen's University, for her kindness and patience in going through my thesis. *Muchas gracias.*

The brilliant Sereana Naepi, at the University of British Columbia, conducted the interviews and the validity checks for this study. Without her support and valuable input, this process would not have been successfully conducted. *Vinaka vaka levu.*



Professor Will Garrett-Petts, Associate Vice-President, Research & Graduate Studies, and the Research Office at Thompson Rivers University have made countless contributions – big and small. *Kukstemc*.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their unconditional love and support. What a lucky man I am to have with me on this journey my wife and best friend, Leena Yahia. Her love, encouragement and joie de vivre made this entire adventure at TRU fun and rewarding. My children and reason to be the best of me each and every day: Ibrahim, Seham, Sarah, and Judy, you have been the inspiration for it all. Thank you for everything and *shokran!*

**Dedication**

*This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Ibrahim and Seham Kettaneh, who have always loved me unconditionally and whose good examples have taught me to work hard for the things that I aspire to achieve. This work is also dedicated to my wife, Leena, who has been a constant source of support and encouragement during the challenges of life. I am truly thankful for having you in my life. And finally, to my children, who have enriched my life with love and inspired who I am. May Allah bless you with peace, love, and success.*

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1. Importance of International Students**

Institutions of higher education in Canada, and all over the world, compete to attract the world's top students, spending considerable time and money during this process. Admission counselors from individual institutions travel worldwide to attend admission fairs, and institutions hire overseas recruiting agents to draw students to their campuses (Wildavsky, 2010). At the same time, students from all over the world compete for opportunities to study in post-secondary institutions in English-speaking countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia (Schneider, 2000). Ann Buller (2014) states that "international education is critical to Canada's success, and it is an essential pathway to cooperation, creation, and innovation" (Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), 2014, p. 2). In 2013, 293,500 international students were enrolled in Canadian colleges and universities, bringing academic, cultural, and economic benefits to Canadian campuses and communities (CBIE, 2014). More needs to be known about issues related to globalization influences upon local university practices, and effective practice in settings where international and local elements combine.

In 2013 - 2014, there were 114,600 international students from 180 countries attending public and private post-secondary institutions, elementary and secondary schools, and private language training schools in British Columbia (B.C.). B.C. now hosts almost one-third of all international students living in Canada (BC Ministry of Advanced Education, 2014). B.C.'s former Advanced Education Minister, Amrik Virk, stated that "British Columbia is a world-class destination for tens of thousands of international students who bring economic, cultural, and social benefits" (Heslop, 2014, p. 6). Total international student enrolment in the B.C. public

post-secondary system has doubled over the last decade; enrolment growth has tripled in research-intensive universities, Cariboo North institutions and universities in the Mainland/Southwest region have seen more international student growth than other regions (Heslop, 2014). International education is a key component of the BC Jobs Plan and is an identified driver of a strong, diverse and growing economy. In 2012-13, international students in B.C. spent \$2.3 billion on tuition, accommodation and living expenses, arts, culture, and recreation, which supported almost 25,500 jobs. This created a positive economic effect on communities throughout the province (B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015).

Domestic students and professors benefit academically, culturally, and socially from interaction with international students and the experiences they bring (Andrade & Evans, 2009; Wildavsky, 2010). The presence of international students allows domestic students to interact with other cultures without studying abroad, and provides the opportunity to understand the perspectives of the international student. In so doing, building bridges between cultures and countries becomes more feasible (Andrade, 2009). According to McBride (2014), “international students are highly important to Canada, they bring major benefits to us and at the same time they benefit from our excellent education and training” (CBIE, 2014, p. 5). Higher education institutions also benefit from international enrollment because international students bring more funding to the institutions through tuition, which includes nonresident fees, tuition for extra English classes, and on campus spending such as meals, books, and other items. According to Mazzarol (1998), the tuition and living expenses of international students provide an estimated \$1.4 billion to the Australian economy, and \$1.5 billion Canadian dollars to the Canadian economy. U.S. universities and colleges were estimated to gain “a trade surplus of \$6 billion in 1993 comprising about 10% of the total U.S. services trade surplus” (p. 164). In addition to

tuition fees, \$3.6 billion also entered the U.S. economy from international students' living expenses (Mazzarol, 1998).

In addition to generating a major increase in revenue, international students also contribute to the creation of thousands of employment opportunities that come with the increase of international enrollments (ibid, 1998). In 1992, approximately 3,786 new employment opportunities were similarly offered in direct relation to international students in Australia, and an additional 19,000 job openings were offered in Canada (ibid,1998). Furthermore, international students bring human capital that can contribute to the growth of the host country. In higher education alone, international students “contribute to teaching and the generation of research publications in addition to patents, suggesting that their marginal revenue products are even higher” (Chellaraj, Maskus, & Mattoo, 2008, p. 457). Lawrence Summers, former president of Harvard, warned the United States (U.S.) government that the “decline in foreign students threatens the quality of research coming from U.S. universities” (ibid, 2008, p. 444).

In light of such competition in attracting international enrollments, Canada, the UK, and Australia have set nationwide strategies to attract foreign students (Schneider, 2000). In 2014, the Canadian government launched a new International Education Strategy that seeks to double the number of international students studying in Canada to 450,000 by the year 2022, “without displacing Canadian students.” Ongoing funding, approved in the most recent federal budget, of \$5 million per year will be dedicated to this strategic approach, with most of the money going towards “branding and marketing Canada as a world-class education destination” (CBIE, 2014). The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada 2014 Internationalization Survey estimated approximately 89,000 full-time visa students enrolled in undergraduate programs on Canadian campuses. This represents a 3.5-fold increase from the 22,300 who were enrolled in

2000. Over the same period, the number of full-time visa students in graduate programs also more than tripled from 13,000 to 44,000. Visa students, therefore, represent approximately 11% of full-time undergraduate students and almost 28% of students at the graduate level in Canada (Association of Universities, 2014). The numbers tell an important story in Canadian university education. A significant percentage of the university student population is international, and efforts to embrace a new understanding of what effective means needs to include this reality.

Recently, competition for international students has increased which has lead governments and higher education institutions to develop policies and programs to attract high skilled international students. The Minister of Immigration Canada, John McCallum, called international students “ideal immigrants” and confirmed the government’s commitment to taking steps that will support their retention as permanent residents in Canada (Zilio & Chiose, 2016). Mr. McCallum said, “I believe international students are among the most fertile source of new immigrants for Canada. By definition, they are educated. They speak English or French, they know something about the country, so they should be first on our list of people who we court to come to Canada” (ibid, 2016). Universities, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and international governmental organizations are developing international partnerships at a rapid pace to recruit international students, so more work needs to be done to consider issues related to international partnerships and glocalization to maintain these students (Brooks & Normore, 2010).

## 1.2. Definitions

In this thesis, the definition of *international students* according to Statistics Canada is used:

International students are non-Canadian students who do not have "permanent resident" status and have had to obtain the authorization of the Canadian government to enter Canada with the intention of pursuing an education. In other words, international students are those who have come to Canada expressly to pursue their education. (Statistics Canada, 2010, p. 1)

“*International education* is the two-way flow of students, educators and ideas between countries, and its expansion helps to create new relationships between British Columbia and other regions” (B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2014). However, matriculation at an institution of higher education does not guarantee that the students will persist to graduation (Tompson & Tompson, 1996). As educational institutions focus on *student retention*, an institution of higher education’s ability to retain a student from admission until graduation (Berger & Lyon, 2004) and to manage international student enrollment requires an understanding of how best to support the success of this subpopulation of students is critical. According to the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, a *retention cohort* includes all students who returned to studies in any term in the following year or received a credential (B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015). *Retention* is also defined as an outcome of student success strategies and is expressed as a percentage of a specific cohort of students who return for a subsequent term (Ruffalo, 2015). *Persistence*, “progressive reenrollment in college,” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) is used interchangeably with retention and can denote progressive reenrollment in the next term or to graduation.

*Promising practices* are teaching methods, learning activities, and policies and procedures (Airini et al., 2011) that help improve international students' retention in university teaching and learning with respect to glocalization. As described in previous research (Narum, 2008; Schwartz & Jenkins, 2007), the term promising practices refers to a mixture of factors that positively influence student outcomes. Narum (2008) described promising practices in terms of a "kaleidoscope" of "policies, practices and programs, faculty, spaces and budgets all coming together in new ways, in the service of students, ... and society" (p.13).

### **1.3. Statement of Problem**

One reason for the decline in international student retention is that some institutions have failed to meet students' socio-cultural needs because offering social support systems is not being treated as a priority compared to academic assistance for students (Taylor, Rizvi & Linguard, 1997). According to Bretag (2004), initiatives concerning the students' socio-cultural development may be ignored or considered non-urgent if academic achievement is attained and institutions gain financial benefits from international students. He also states that the feasibility of institutional initiatives is often based only on financial viability and market reach.

Another reason for the decline is that the number of applications from foreign students for admission into U.S. universities has decreased drastically over the past few years, while admission of international applicants has increased in other English-speaking countries (Chellaraj et al., 2008). Chellaraj et al. (2008) state that "foreign student enrollment declined by 4.3% in the United States between 2001 and 2004, while it increased by 7.7% in the United Kingdom, 25% in Canada, 94% in Australia, 99% in New Zealand, and 57% in Singapore" (p. 447). The decrease in the United States is not only a result of stronger restrictions on student



visas; it is also a representation of the fact that other English-speaking countries may have better nationwide strategies to attract foreign students (Chellaraj et al., 2008).

According to Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure, student retention in institutions is correlated with the students' overall experience (1987). Tinto (1987) also states that based on research, faculty-student relations can significantly motivate and challenge students to learn and stay in school. Therefore, it is highly recommended that administrators focus on strategies to help increase student satisfaction before and after enrollment. One major factor that influences student satisfaction is socio-cultural interaction with peers and faculty, which in turn affects motivation to persist in school (Tinto, 1987). Institutions cannot expect students to figure out how to increase socio-cultural interaction in their new life in a new country, and to adapt to studying in a different educational system, without sufficient programming and support (Andrade, 2006). Yoon and Jepsen (2008) believe that international students' individual development of cultural knowledge is the determining factor that can help them overcome cultural barriers and narrow the cultural gap (Yoon & Jepsen, 2008). In other words, institutions need to develop culturally responsive social support services, in order to meet the unique needs of international students (Yoon & Jepsen, 2008). Therefore, it is important for institutions to encourage or engage students in daily interactions, which can help students gain intercultural understanding. In the higher education setting, international students are more likely to remain in school and persist through the pursuit of their degrees if they are satisfied with the services provided by institutions.

In order to succeed in this competitive environment, Russell (2005) suggests that an appropriate marketing plan includes creating a good campus environment, identifying student needs, and developing the ability to meet those needs. According to Mazzarol (1998), while

developing strategic plans for recruiting international students, organizations need to be aware that contact between prospective students and school representatives needs to be “client-oriented” and requires multicultural awareness in order to avoid miscommunication. In addition, if student support service begins at the time of contact, institutions need to develop a carefully coordinated plan to meet the needs of both students and institutions (Russell, 2005). Yoon and Jepsen (2008) point out the importance of developing effective strategies to advertise support programs, because international students often are not aware of available support services and resources on campus and, therefore, do not reach out for assistance. Some students, notably Asian male students, have a particular problem seeking support services because they link seeking assistance to inferiority. As a result, instead of seeking professional assistance, they seek help or comfort from peers or friends of a similar cultural background (Angelpoulos & Catano, 1993). Asian students in particular have been reported to have more issues in social adjustment than students from other countries (Yoon & Jepsen, 2008). Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1987) suggests that the retention of students at the institutional level depends upon students' overall experiences with an institution. For example, students who have a negative attitude, or have experienced a negative environment, will begin to withdraw from their peers, professors, finally, the institution itself (Tinto, 1987). Duff (2001) reiterates that the frustration and failure that students encounter at school is a possible factor in dropout rates.

#### **1.4. Summary of Chapters**

This study aims to identify the promising practices related to glocalization of higher education, both in teaching and in the broader learning environment, to help retain international students after completion of the first academic year of study in Canada. Since there is a lack of literature on glocalization and international student retention in Canada, this research is critical

and contributes to filling this research gap. The study examines the relative contribution of university teaching and learning practices with respect to glocalization and its impact on international student retention on both the graduate and undergraduate levels. My thesis focuses on international graduate and undergraduate students in one medium-sized, research-oriented university in British Columbia, Canada.

My research begins with highlighting the importance of international students in Canada, definitions of international students and international education, student retention, persistence, promising practices, and a statement of the problem. Chapter two will discuss existing literature on domestic student retention, international student retention, factors related to international student retention according to the existing literature, and the supporting literature of glocalization. Chapter three of this research describes the methodology of the research design. The methodology chapter will present the main research question, interview questions, and participants. It will also explain in detail the data collection methodology (Critical Incident Technique) and the related data analysis. Chapter four then summarizes the results of the data analysis. These results will include a detailed presentation of the findings and the identified promising practices of glocalization in university teaching and learning that help international student retention. Finally, chapter five will provide a discussion of the results, revisit the purpose of the research, summarize the results, and provide a glocalization model of international student retention. It will also present the conclusion, the implications and limitations of the research, and provide recommendations for potential future research.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1. Domestic Student Retention**

Numerous studies have investigated domestic student retention (Astin, 1993; Bean, 1990; Cabrera, Nora & Castaneda, 1993; Hughes & Pace, 2003; Thomas, 2000; Yorke, 1999). Some of the factors influencing domestic student retention include Grade Point Average (GPA) (Cabrera et al., 1993), faculty interaction (Astin, 1993), academic advising (Thomas, 1990), living on campus (Berger, 1997), and social and academic engagement (Hughes & Pace, 2003). However, since few studies have examined the international student population, it is not known if the persistence factors for this subpopulation differ from those for the domestic population. International students come from different cultural and educational backgrounds than students raised and educated in the host country, and these differences affect their adjustment to the college experience (Evans, Carlin, & Potts, 2009; Kok-Soo, 2008; Liberman, 1994; Lipson, 2008; Pedersen, 1991; Thompson & Thompson, 1996). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that these differences in and of themselves influence persistence to graduation.

According to Kuh et al., what students (domestic) do during college “counts more for what they learn and whether they will persist in college than who they are or even where they go to college” (2010, p. 8). Other retention studies of domestic students differ widely in terms of independent variables, institutional type used, number of institutions studied, and subpopulations of students included. However, many have found that academic and social engagement factors influence persistence (Astin, 1993; Berger, 1997; Cabrera, Nora, & Castaneda, 1993; Thomas, 2000), and it will be interesting to see if this also holds true for international students.

In an extensive longitudinal study on involvement and retention to graduation of students at over 200 institutions, Astin (1993) included two student surveys on involvement and personal

characteristics, a faculty survey regarding faculty attitudes, values, and teaching methods, and institutional data on academic performance, retention, college admissions test scores, and graduate and professional admissions test scores. The first survey administered was the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey given in 1985 to first-year students in the U.S. A sample of 95,406 students who completed the CIRP survey was selected to complete a follow-up questionnaire in 1989-1990, and students' names were sent to their institutions for enrollment and graduation data. Of the over 75,000 responses, the sample was narrowed down to include students at four-year institutions with reported Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College test (ACT) scores who completed both surveys and graduated in four years, totaling 11,097 students. Findings of the study suggest that student persistence and retention positively correlated with factors such as talking with faculty outside of class, hours spent socializing with friends, receiving vocational or career counseling, and giving class presentations. Factors that negatively influenced retention included part-time work off-campus and reading for pleasure (Astin, 1993).

In another longitudinal study with a focus on social engagement at a U.S private institution, Berger (1997) surveyed students on their sense of community in residence halls in August, October, and March of their freshman year. Findings from 718 student responses indicated a positive relationship between the sense of community found in residence halls, social integration, and persistence to the next semester. These findings support the conceptual work of Schroeder (1994) and others who have suggested that a sense of community can have positive effects for student success in other areas of campus and improve the retention rate (Berger, 1997).

In a similar study, Thomas (2000) investigated persistence by examining academic and social integration of 322 first-year students at a private four-year college by examining responses to a survey administered to students during freshman orientation in summer 1992 and the First-Year Experiences Survey administered in April 1993. Findings included that academic integration impacted persistence positively. Moreover, the study suggested that students who maintained broad, connected networks of social groups outside of their own peer group were more likely to persist than those who only had social ties within their own peer group (Thomas, 2000).

In addition to research conducted across different settings, some studies have investigated social and academic integration factors and various subpopulations of students, such as first-generation college students (Davenport, 2010; Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005; Nava, 2010; Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996), African-American male students (Spradley, 1996; Strayhorn, 2012; Tauriac, 2009), and non-traditional students (Sorey & Duggan, 2008; Wyatt, 2011). Sorey and Duggan (2008) explored persistence factors of both traditional and non-traditional (25 years of age or older) first-year students at a public, two-year community college in the southeast. In fall 2005, 700 students were asked to complete a survey regarding their college experiences. Responses from 68 traditional-age and 55 non-traditional age students, for a 17.6% response rate, were matched with institutional student data in spring 2006. Institutional data included enrollment in the Spring term, Fall term GPA, and age. Two-way contingency table analyses yielded findings that included social integration as well as academic integration to influence the persistence of both groups. However, social integration was the strongest predictor of persistence for non-traditional students and had the weakest influence on traditional student persistence. In addition, academic integration was found to be the least significant variable on

persistence for non-traditional students but a strong influence on the persistence of traditional students (Sorey & Duggan, 2008). These studies show that academic and social integration have been found to influence the persistence of domestic students in a variety of settings, no matter the institution type, number of institutions involved, or size of the population investigated.

## 2.2. International Student Retention

Intensive efforts are underway at higher education institutions in response to the retention rates for domestic students (Andrade, 2009; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2010), yet the retention of the international student population, whose retention rates are lower, is barely considered in research and practice (Andrade, 2009). Given the economic, social, and cultural benefits that this population brings to universities and colleges, one would expect that higher education institutions would be as concerned about the retention of this population as they are about domestic students.

According to BC HeadSet (2011), international student retention rates are lower than those of the domestic student population in BC educational institutions (BC Headset, 2011).

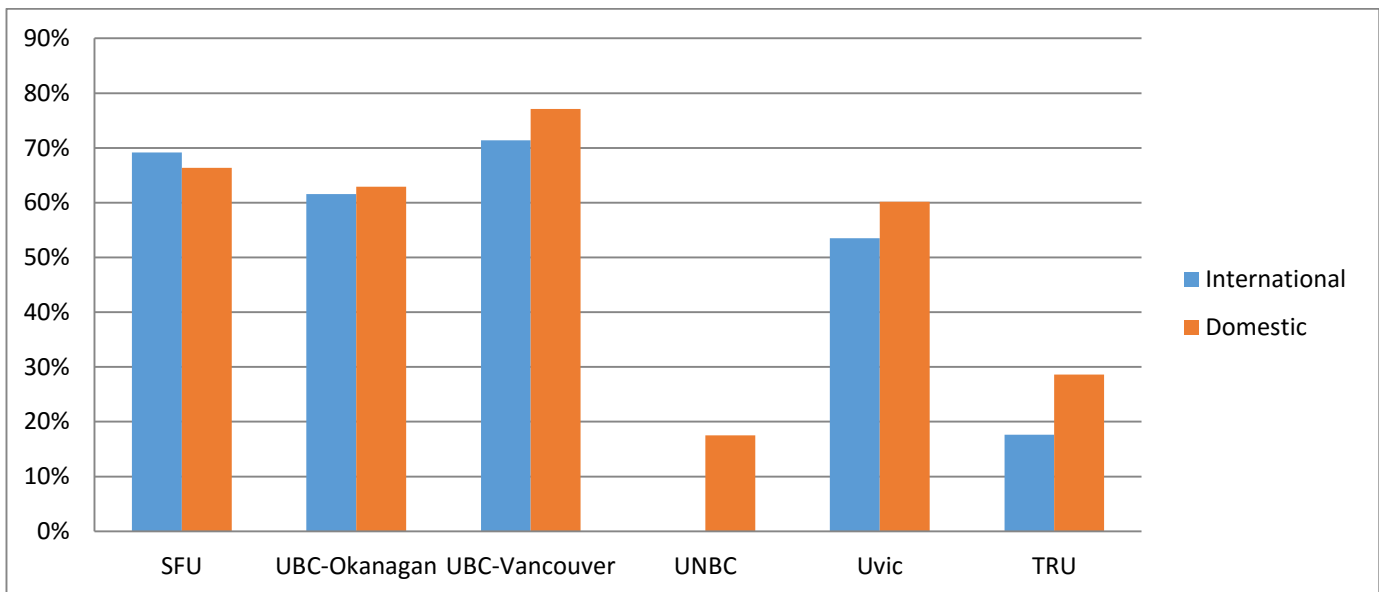
Table 1

*Comparison of Domestic vs International Student Retention (BC HeadSet, 2011)*

INSTITUTION NAME	Domestic			International		
	Admission	GRADUATED-Y6	%	Admission	GRADUATED-Y6	%
Simon Fraser University	1901	1262	66%	146	101	69%
The University of British Columbia (Okanagan)	995	626	63%	65	40	62%
The University of British Columbia (Vancouver)	3665	2826	77%	633	452	71%
The University of Northern British Columbia	326	57	17%	3	0	0%
The University of Victoria	2037	1225	60%	71	38	54%
Thompson Rivers University	563	161	29%	102	18	18%

Table 1 compares domestic and international student retention in B.C.'s main educational institutions. However, more attention should be paid to the fine nuances and differences based on admission requirements (GPA and English proficiency test), as well as the size, location, and focus of the respective universities. This data was used since I could not access any other data related to student retention despite contacting several universities and conducting numerous searches in existing literature.

**Figure 1.** Retention Rate in BC Educational Institutions-2011



*Figure 1.* Comparison of student retention among British Columbia's main educational institutions (BC HeadSet, 2011).

Figure 1 compares retention rate of domestic and international students in B.C.'s main educational institutions. In 2011, the retention rate of international students at Simon Fraser University was 69% compared to 66% retention rate of domestic students. While the retention rate of international students at UBC-O for the same year was 62% compared to 63% for domestic students. UBC-Vancouver recorded the highest retention rate among B.C.'s main



educational institutions in 2011 with 71% retention rate for international students and 77% for domestic students. Conversely, UNBC recorded the lowest retention rate among the same group with 0% for international students and 17% for domestic students. University of Victoria recorded 54% retention rate for international students and 60% for domestic students. Finally, TRU recorded 18% retention rate for international students compared to 29% retention rate for domestic students (BC Headset, 2011).

In the few studies that have investigated international student retention (Andrade, 2005; Andrade, 2008; Behroozi-Bagherpour, 2010; Evans, 2001; Johnson, 2008; Kitsos, 2012; Kontaxakis, 2011; Lee, 2012), many researchers interviewed students at a single institution (Andrade, 2005; Andrade, 2008; Behroozi-Bagherpour, 2010; Evans, 2001) or at small, religiously-affiliated schools (Andrade 2005; Andrade, 2008; Evans, 2001). Other studies have focused on a subpopulation of international students, such as athletes (Kitsos, 2012; Kontaxakis, 2011). While three studies found that social integration led to persistence (Andrade, 2005; Andrade, 2008; Lee, 2012), others indicated that social integration was not a persistence variable (Behroozi-Bagherpour, 2010; Johnson, 2008; Mamiseishivili, 2012).

In a study conducted at a private, religiously-affiliated four-year institution where international students comprised 45% of the total 2,400 student population, Andrade (2005) conducted interviews and focus groups with 12 international students from Asia and the Pacific Islands in their senior year. Participants answered questions about academic and social experiences related to their first year at the institution in order to identify factors related to their persistence. Findings of the study suggest that students who had persisted experienced challenges both in and outside of the classroom but discovered ways to adjust so that they could persist to their senior year. The findings identified challenges that included difficulty with the

English language, unfamiliarity with the American education system, difficulty participating in classroom discussion, and the lack of time for involvement in social groups (Andrade, 2005).

Interacting with friends and professors, setting goals related to completing assignments, setting the goal of graduation, utilizing campus support services, and involvement in student clubs and religious activities were among the strategies students used to assist in their persistence (Andrade, 2005).

In a second study, Andrade (2008) looked at the same private, religiously affiliated institution and identified how student backgrounds, university experiences, and personal characteristics influenced international student persistence. Seventeen individual interviews with senior international students from Asia and the Pacific Islands revealed that persistence was influenced by a personal motivation to graduate, support and encouragement from family, friends, professors, campus staff, and church leaders, and engagement in social activities and in the spiritual life of the institution (ibid, 2008). Students discussed how faculty at their institution served as role models, how they valued the support given to them, and how they saw building relationships with domestic students as beneficial to their retention. According to the students interviewed, these relationships allowed them to have the opportunity to practice and perfect their English language skills and allowed them to learn more about the culture through observing the customs and practices firsthand, as well as by creating the space needed to ask questions about the new culture. By interacting with fellow domestic students, international students also became more aware of university organizations and practices. In other words, adjustment and understanding were easier to achieve as interaction with domestic students increased (Andrade, 2008).

Using quantitative means, Kwai (2009) and Mamiseishvili (2012) investigated persistence factors at other institutions. In a study that investigated international student persistence at eleven four-year public institutions, Kwai (2009) found that second semester GPA scores and the first and second semester credit hours attempted by the student significantly influenced retention to the second year. However, the majority of other variables investigated, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score, on-campus employment, first semester GPA, and on-campus housing did not yield statistically significant results (Kwai, 2009). In contrast to studies investigating factors affecting domestic student persistence (Berger, 1997; Pascarella, Terenzini, & Blimling, 1994), ‘living on campus’ did not yield statistically significant results in Kwai’s (2009) research. However, since this was the only study to date that has investigated living on campus and persistence of international students, further research is needed.

Using logistic regression, Mamiseishvili (2012) examined persistence factors of 200 first-year international students, 41.9% of whom were enrolled in two-year institutions while the remaining 58.1% were enrolled in four-year institutions. Participants completed the *Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study* in spring 2004 and participated in follow-up survey interviews in 2006. This research focused on selected factors that influenced students who remained or did not remain enrolled in any US higher education institution at the end of the second year of study. In contrast to those of Andrade (2008) and similar to the findings of Evans (2001), social integration was found to negatively influence persistence. However, similar to Andrade’s (2008) study, academic integration having a plan to graduate were found to be predictors of persistence. Moreover, this study investigated GPA and enrollment in a remedial English course during the first year of study and found that while first-year GPA significantly

influenced persistence to the second year, the students who enrolled in a remedial English course during the first year were less likely to persist than those who did not (Mamiseishvili's, 2012). This research helped confirm that academic integration and having degree plans influenced persistence, but since participating students were not all enrolled at one type of institution and the researcher did not disaggregate the results by institution, it remains unclear if institutional type could have affected these results.

Additional research has been conducted regarding international student retention, though findings may not be applicable to the entire international student population. Behroozi-Bagherpour (2010) interviewed community college students who were enrolled for five years without graduating, while Kitsos (2012) and Kontaxakis (2011) investigated persistence factors of the international student-athlete population. Behroozi-Bagherpour (2010) conducted interviews with 10 international students at one large urban Texas community college regarding engagement and persistence. These students were enrolled for at least five years but had not graduated. Despite reporting being uninvolved or unaware of campus events, the students persisted, raising questions about the role of social engagement on international student persistence (Behroozi-Bagherpour, 2010).

Kitsos (2012) and Kontaxakis (2011) each investigated persistence variables of international students who were athletes. Despite being focused on a special subpopulation, the following studies added to the literature on international students. Kitsos (2012) surveyed and interviewed academic support staff for athletes at six National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I institutions to identify academic support practices that led to persistence as well as explanations for the persistence of their student-athletes. This study found that supporting international athletes through academic advising and counseling, specialized tutoring, and

English language support led to success and persistence (Kitsos, 2012). In a similar study, six student athletes from three institutions were interviewed about experiences that had an influence on their retention (Kontaxakis, 2011). Findings suggest that English language proficiency, the ability to adjust to the new culture, good time management in being an athlete and student, and getting through homesickness influenced their experiences and ultimately their retention (Kontaxakis, 2011). However, it is important to consider that not all international students are athletes. Therefore, these findings may not be applicable to the entire international student population.

### **2.3. Factors Related to International Student Retention**

More than 45 years of research has identified many factors found to influence students' retention. While investigating international students, it is critical to take into consideration differences in cultural background and the purposes of studying in Canada. Charles Lipson contended, "Some of the world's best students come to the US and Canada to study. Despite their strong academic backgrounds, they face real challenges adapting to the university environment here" (Witherell, 2008, p. 44). Due to educational and cultural differences, integration and engagement in Canadian university life is more difficult and it takes international students longer to adjust; however, they must do so in order to succeed (Lieberman, 1994). If they do not adjust to these academic and social differences, it is possible that they will not persist (Levy, Wubbels, Brekelmans, & Morganfield, 1997). The major academic challenges for international students in Canada include mastering the English language, adjusting to the campus and classroom environment, and understanding academic integrity (Kok-Soo, 2008; Lieberman, 1994; Thompson & Thompson, 1996; Lipson, 2008; Pedersen, 1991).

The reasons why students pursue international study are well known. They include the chance to explore a different culture, learning new ways of thinking and behaving, making new friends, and improving their cross-cultural knowledge and skills (Andrade, 2006; McClure, 2007). However, institutions that do not address the unique needs of international students may leave them feeling disappointed, unfulfilled, and even exploited (Sherry et al., 2010). Prior research suggests that international students can experience many challenges as a result of language and cultural barriers, academic and financial difficulties, interpersonal problems, racial discrimination, loss of social support, alienation and homesickness (Yeh & Inose, 2003). Problems may occur in adjusting to a new culture, experiencing academic differences, dealing with developments in their country of origin (including the death of family or friends), experiencing anxiety about returning home, and dealing with financial, emotional and cross-cultural challenges (Hsu, 2003). Some of the literature also highlights the vulnerability of international students to exploitation (Sherry et al., 2010). International students are often very lonely in their new environment. Such loneliness includes not only the lack of familiar friends and social networks, but also the lack of familiar cultural and linguistic environments (Adelman 1988; McClure 2007; Sawir et al., 2008; Zhao et al., 2008). Both social support and social connectedness are, therefore, very important in ensuring that international students succeed in their new environment and stay until graduation in the host country. A welcoming University and community environment is therefore, one of the key factors in the mental health of international students (Su`mer, Poyrzli, & Grahame, 2008). Universities, which only focus on the academic needs of international students ignore important factors in their potential success or failure in the new educational context (Tidwell & Hanassab, 2007) which will negatively influence the retention rate of international students in these universities.

According to Marginson (2012), “the world’s three million cross-border international students are located in a ‘gray zone’ of regulation with incomplete human rights, security and capabilities” (2012, p. 497). He also highlights that international students are affected by two different national regulatory regimes, in the nations of citizenship and of education. But they are fully covered by neither. By definition, on the soil of any nation that signs the UN Declaration, universal human rights must apply to non-citizens as well as citizens. English speaking countries, that in 2008 educated 40.9% of the world’s international students (OECD, 2010a, b, p. 314), are relatively attractive because the English language is privileged in international business and technologies, global science and culture. On one hand, international students are variously seen to offer revenues, research labor, international goodwill, and future human capital as citizens. On the other hand, international education triggers border anxiety, bureaucratic categorization and coercion. Many international students face difficulties and barriers in social integration with local persons because they are still legally defined as aliens, as ‘Others’. They are culturally Othered as well. Thus, foreigners are often seen as culturally exotic outsiders which negatively affects their adaptation and academic persistence. In his study “Including the Other”, Marginson identifies that most interviewees experienced loneliness and isolation, especially in the first three to six months which is the critical period for all international students to adapt. Most established same-culture networks and many made good friends with internationals from other cultural backgrounds. But, the majority of interviewees were unable to form friendships in depth with local students, despite attempting to do so. Locals tended to self-segregate. This triggered further self-segregation by international students. Cultural segregation compounded stereotyping by both groups, reinforcing the separation and stigma. For some interviewees, differences of values, beliefs and activities were also obstacles to local friendship. However, the main problem was that

most local students were not very motivated to engage. These blockages to integration reduced the capacity of international students to become competent agents on their own behalf as well as their persistence to graduation (Marginson, 2012).

#### **2.4. Glocalization**

Many educators now acknowledge that issues related to globalization influence their local practice (Apple, Kenway, & Singh, 2005; Burbules & Torres, 2000; Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002). This shift demands a consideration of *glocalization*, a meaningful integration of local and global dynamics (Courchene, 1995; Robertson, 1995; Roseneau, 1994; Scholte, 2000). Brooks and Normore (2010) suggest that ‘glocal’ may increasingly become part of leadership lexicon, as school leaders recognize that many aspects of leadership have both global and local connections. They use the term “glocal” to describe how globalization impacts local practice. Brooks and Normore (2010) state that the dynamic, interconnected nature of glocalization “demands that educational leaders develop new skills, and broaden their understanding of the way local and global forces are enmeshed in an increasingly sophisticated manner” (p. 74). It is important for school leaders to understand that people in a glocalized world exist in multiple cultures simultaneously, and the particular cultures of which each person is part have a profound effect on education (Spring, 2008).

The phrase “glocal development” refers to the dialectic term of the global and the local (Weber, 2007). Glocalization originated from Japanese business practices of the 1980’s. Before it was adopted into English-speaking societies, its meaning was *Dochakuka* (土着化, indigenization: melding global inside local) which was used to refer to changing farming techniques to fit the condition of the land of the region. Glocalization was first popularized in the English-speaking world by Robertson in the 1990s (Robertson, 1995). Robertson defines



glocalization as "the simultaneity — the co-presence — of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies" (1995, p. 30). According to the dictionary, the term “glocal” and the process noun “glocalization” are “formed by telescoping global and local to make a blend” (*The Oxford Dictionary of New Words*, 1991, p. 134 quoted in Robertson, 1995, p. 28). By definition, the term “glocal” refers to those individuals, groups, divisions, units, organizations, and communities that are willing and able to “*think globally and act locally*” (Tien & Talley, 2012, p. 126).

Regarding globalization and localization in an educational context, Luk-Fong (2005) and Tong & Cheung (2011) suggest taking Robertson’s (1995) notion of ‘glocalization’, a term that combines ‘global’ with ‘local’ into account. Glocalization presents the twin relationships that may occur between globalization and localization, and it is a way for progressive advancement to occur, thus enhancing the quality of life of international students and their adaptation. Glocalization improves the voice, participation and prosperity of individuals and communities. It is an idea whose time has come (Robertson R., 2003; Stiglitz, 2002). Bauman identified “glocalization as redistribution of privileges and deprivations [. . .] of resources and impotence, of power and powerlessness, of freedom and constraint [. . .] a process of world-wide re-stratification, in the course of which a new world-wide socio-cultural hierarchy is put together” (1998, p. 43). . In my thesis, I am using the creative language of “glocalization” to emphasize that global influence is now a local reality (Eoyang, 2005; Roberts, 2007). With this emergent "glocal" reality as the backdrop, this study identifies how glocalization in university teaching helps international student retention. This study also focuses on promising practices for glocalization in university teaching.

The Glocalization Manifesto (2004) states that a new approach must be developed, incorporating both global and local interests while monitoring the threats and opportunities of this incorporation. Glocalization acts as a bridge between domestic and international students, linking local communities to global resources and knowledge contributing to students' persistence and development in the long term. The innovative strategy of glocalization offers a unique platform for a mutual understanding of needs, problems and solutions, and it also recognizes the vital role of students and the importance of including their viewpoints and abilities in development activities. The vision of glocalization focuses on a brighter future, while remaining firmly rooted in current realities (The Glocalization Manifesto, 2004). Hence, to implement the concept of "Think globally, act locally" educators and administrators, especially in the area of higher education, should re-think their strategy relating to curriculum design and institutional policy. This would permit the construction of courses, pedagogy, and campus environments that would enhance students' retention, help them in their future career needs, and prepare them to become globally compatible citizens (Yang, 2001).

To be truly globalized, Blackmore (1999) states that glocalization is a valid response. Teasdale (1997) acknowledges the tensions and discontinuities between the local and the global and suggests searching for a new way of synchronizing or blending the diverse cultures of knowledge in order to equip students with skills for the modern world. Douglass (2005) claims that although the trends of globalization located within instructional technologies create new markets and force a reform in higher education, "all globalization is in fact subject to local (or national and regional) influences" (p. 1). He suggests that in order to have a better understanding of the complexity of glocalization toward the future of higher education, institutions should analyze the rapid growth of market needs and the strength and weakness of each institute. This

would allow institutions to make certain changes for finding its individual niche or to broaden its services in order to improve student retention and survive (Douglass, 2005).

Javidan (2008) argues that those studying cross-culturally have two major responsibilities. First, these students need to understand their own cultural lens. Second, and based upon the first, if they want to persist and influence cross-culturally, they need to understand the other's cultural lens. Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) argue that, "To be effective in another culture, people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to notice cultural differences, and then also be willing to modify their behavior as an indication of respect for the people of other cultures" (1992, p. 416). Beneke (1983) argues that one of the keys to educating for cross-cultural interactions is to take a contrastive approach that emphasizes cultural differences, but more importantly, through this emphasis nurtures an underlying curiosity around "the others." Beneke encourages educators to "exploit every opportunity to illustrate 'otherness' in language and, consequently, concepts" (1983, p. 132), since doing so provides a best-practice approach to evoking student engagement around the importance of learning cross-cultural skills necessary for training international students. In selecting an initial contrastive approach, it is also important to nurture an appreciation of difference in the academic environment.

Harth (2010) supports Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1987) by confirming that more important than skills and knowledge are perspectives and attitudes. These help shape our vision, define our character, and influence how we live our lives. They also affect the questions we ask, the knowledge we pursue, the skills we develop, and how we put these qualities and information together to do good work. Given their role as underlying drivers, perspectives and attitudes are pivotal for education and organizational citizenship that will empower students and enhance retention. Specifically, we need to cultivate glocal perspectives and attitudes in our

students, including an awareness of our growing interconnectedness, an appreciation of cultures from all over the world, and a willingness to consider different viewpoints and opinions.

As glocal citizens, students should recognize both similarities and differences, avoiding prejudice and bigotry, as they try to learn about themselves and others. Top priorities also include an inquisitive spirit and a lifelong love of learning, as well as an understanding of complexity and an appreciation for nuance. In shifting terrain with multiple actors, inchoate identities, and evolving ends and means, international students must be intellectually engaged and agile; open-minded and pragmatic with their selection of appropriate tools and techniques; and ready, willing, and able to adapt to changing conditions in order to persist and stay. In this respect, glocal research, collaboration, service, and internships can be wonderful complements to classroom learning and powerful developmental tools that can reinforce the need for and viability of concerted and constructive action on multiple levels — local through global — which is the hallmark of glocalization. Thus, it is suggested that the more students and faculty can work together in a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and in the service of others, the more meaningful and constructive the educational experience will be and the more valuable the associated civic preparedness in the host country will become. Local and global learning opportunities can and should be combined to generate transformational educational outcomes. Local subjects can be explored with international guests; global topics can be collaboratively studied with local partners; and international partners can work together to serve local communities (Harth, 2010). In relation to the effects of the glocalization phenomena on educational concepts, Schröttner (2010) expresses that “both the volume and the speed of global flow have intensified the entanglement of the local and the global, thus many local developments have enormous global consequences and vice versa” (2010, p. 51).

As a representation of globalisation-localization enmeshed, or as an example of a mix of ‘east’ and ‘west’, Luk-Fong (2005) uses the development of a guidance curriculum in a Hong Kong university. “The appearance of two separate curricula (i.e., Eastern and Western) in place of one integrated guidance curriculum seems to reflect a desire to identify one’s own unique characteristics as reflected in the process of glocalization” (2005, p. 86). Among the things to be considered while implementing the integrated curriculum are both international and domestic students’ emotions, mental processes, and individual behaviors. This example of mixes of globalization-localization in curriculum development, as provided by Luk-Fong, best offers a theoretical framework for facilitating the actual implementation of the guidance and moral education curriculum that will improve student retention as a response to glocalization (Luk-Fong, 2005).

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1. Research Question**

Using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) this research aims to answer the following question and contribute to filling an existing research gap because only a few studies have investigated international student retention (Andrade, 2005; Andrade, 2008; Behroozi-Bagherpour, 2010; Evans, 2001; Johnson, 2008; Kitsos, 2012; Kontaxakis, 2011; Lee, 2012):

- ❖ What promising practices related to glocalization of higher education, both in teaching and in the broader learning environment, help international student retention?

According to Airini, Curtis, Townsend, Rakena, Brown, Sauni, Smith, Luatua, Reynolds, & Johnson, (2011), good university teaching is a combination of practices that support personal holistic growth and academic success, eventually producing learners who are both independent and interdependent. They are successful in university settings, and culturally strong (Airini et al, 2011). University teaching involves a relation among learner(s), teacher(s), and what is learned, with the purpose of promoting and facilitating learning (Dall’Alba, 2005).

### **3.2. Participants**

To answer the research question, critical incident interviews were conducted by an independent interviewer to achieve anonymity and confidentiality as well as to avoid bias (Creswell, 2014).

Flanagan (1954) states that there are no firm rules about appropriate sample size for CIT. The determining factors relate to the complexity of the activity and variety and quality of the critical incidents, rather than the number of participants. Incidents should continue to be collected until redundancy occurs – that is, when no new critical behaviors appear. Thus, the optimum number of critical incidents for a CIT study can range anywhere from 50-100 to several

thousands (Flanagan, 1954). Patton (2002) states that sampling to the point of redundancy is ideal while Thomson (2011) specifically states that theoretical saturation generally occurs between 10 and 30 interviews (2011). As indicated by Airini et al. (2011) and Smith (2006), meta-analysis of narrative research methods suggests that after eight participants, some repetition of categories of incidents are anticipated. Therefore, the total number of participants for this study were 16 international students, eight of whom were graduate students and eight were undergraduate university students. These students were recruited through the snowball sampling technique. This kind of sampling is employed when participants are part of a small population (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). The snowball sampling technique is a type of purpose sampling where existing participants recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. Passive snowball recruitment was used, where participants were asked to discuss the research with friends and contacts who they think may be suitable or interested in volunteering to be participants. The potential participants were then given the contact details for the researcher so that they may independently volunteer to participate. Students at the undergraduate level had successfully finished their second year, and graduate student participants had successfully finished their first year. This ensured that these students had passed through the first three to six months which Marginson (2012) highlighted in his study, "Including the Other", as the most critical period for all international students to adapt and continue their education in the host country (Marginson, 2012). The idea behind including graduate and undergraduate international students was to compare any differences in the students' stories due to their level and lived experiences as students.

### 3.2.1. Participant Demographics

Figure 2 shows participant demographics according to gender, educational level, program, and ethnic origin.

**Figure 2.** Participants' Demographic Distribution

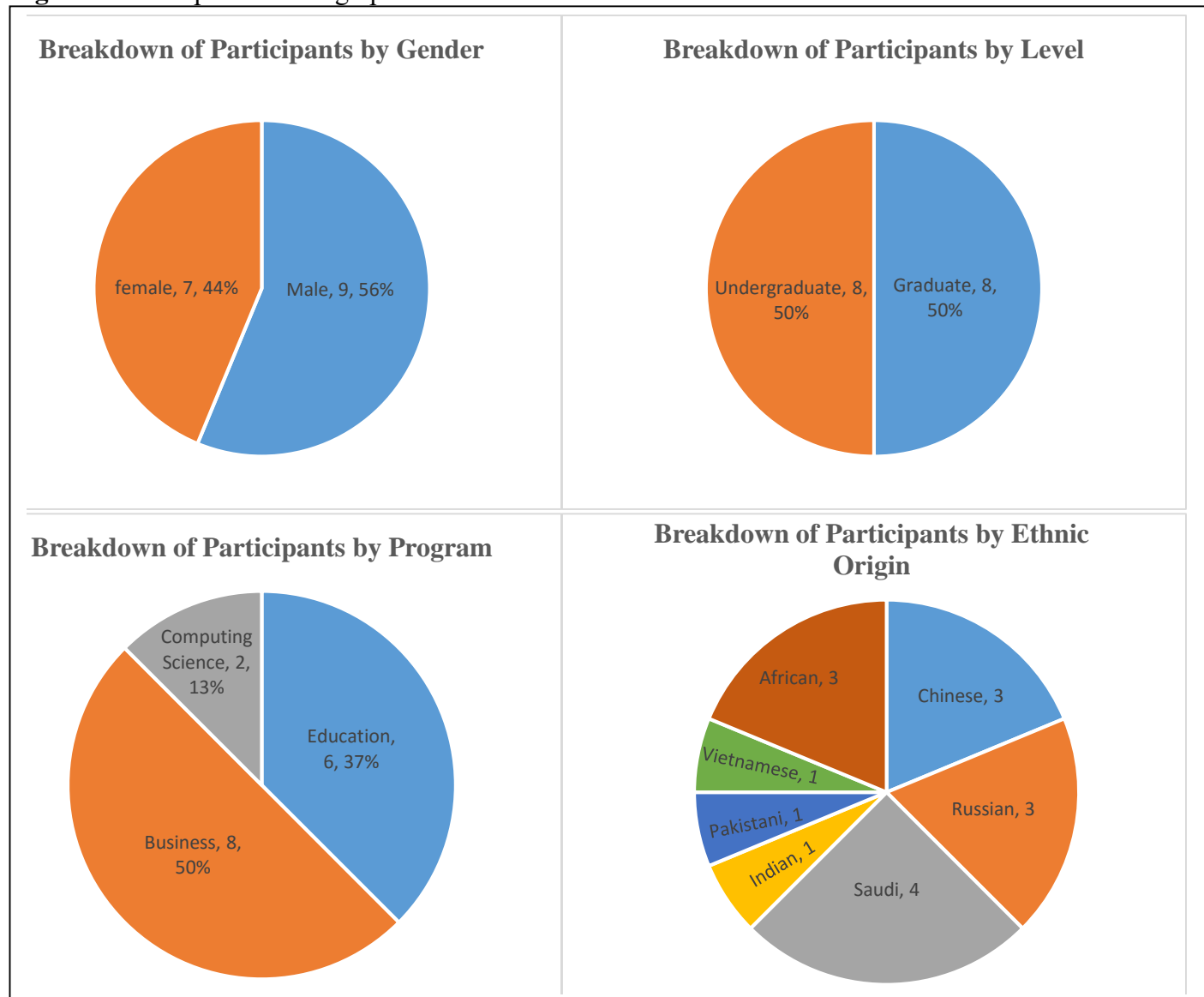


Figure 2. Breakdown of participants by gender, educational level, program, and ethnic origin.

The total number of participants were 16 international students. Seven were female and nine were male. There were eight graduate and eight undergraduate students. Six were in the education program, eight were in the business program, and two were in the computing science program. The group was comprised of three Chinese, three Russians, four Saudis, one Indian, one Pakistani, one Vietnamese, and three Africans.



### 3.3. Critical Incident Technique (CIT)

As an established form of narrative inquiry, the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was used in this research to reveal and chronicle the lived experiences of the participating international students and how glocalization has helped in retaining them, thus far (Airini et al., 2011). Stucki, Kahu, Jenkins, Bruce-Ferguson and Kane (2004) and Bishop (2005) have suggested that in this way students are able to talk openly rather than present official versions. The CIT is a form of interview research in which participants provide descriptive accounts of events that facilitated or hindered a particular aim. As conceptualized originally, a critical incident is one that makes a significant contribution to an activity or phenomenon (Flanagan, 1954). Similarly, use of the CIT allowed the student voice to direct the development of interventions (Curtis et al., 2012).

The resultant student ‘stories’ were grouped by similarity into themes and subthemes which guided the identification of the promising practices of glocalization in retaining international students in higher education. In this context, promising practices are teaching methods, learning activities, and policies and procedures (Airini et al., 2011) that help improve international students’ retention in university teaching and learning with respect to glocalization. As described in previous research (Narum, 2008; Schwartz & Jenkins, 2007), the term promising practices refers to a mixture of factors that positively influence student outcomes. Narum (2008) described promising practices in terms of a “kaleidoscope” of “policies, practices and programs, faculty, spaces and budgets all coming together in new ways, in the service of students, ... and society” (p.13).

To maintain objectivity of the collected interview data, collecting, coding, and analyzing were guided by a semi-structured set of questions (Creswell, 2014). During the semi-structured

interviews, the participants were requested to reflect on their experiences through the following questions after they were introduced to the definition of *glocalization* in this research where glocalization is defined as "the simultaneity — the co-presence — of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies" (Robertson, 1995, p. 30), and as the dialectic term of the global and local (Weber, 2007). By definition, the term “glocal” refers to those individuals, groups, divisions, units, organizations, and communities that are willing and able to “*think globally and act locally*” (Tien & Talley, 2012, p. 126).

### **3.4. Interview Questions:**

In accordance with the definition of ‘glocalization’ in this study, the interview questions were as follows:

- Can you describe times when as a student you have experienced glocalization in university teaching?
- Can you describe times when glocalization in university teaching has helped you to remain at university?

Flanagan (1954) developed the critical incident technique for job analysis purposes, with the aim of identifying the critical requirements for job success. The critical incident technique consists of a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles (p. 327). The CIT has become a widely used qualitative research method and today is recognized as an effective exploratory and investigative tool. Evidence of its ubiquitous presence lies in the fact that Flanagan’s work has been cited more frequently by industrial and organizational psychologists than any other article over the past 40 years. However, its influence ranges far beyond its industrial and organizational psychology roots. It

has been utilized across a diverse number of disciplines, including communications, nursing, job analysis, medicine, marketing, organizational learning, performance appraisal, psychology, and social work, to name but some of the fields in which it has been applied (Butterfield et al., 2005, p. 475). The critical incident technique consists of a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327):

- 1- The trigger, a brief description of the scenario that is concise and sufficiently descriptive for subsequent analysis;
- 2- The action, a description of the action/s in context identifying the significance of the event, describing the issues or concerns involved; and
- 3- The outcome of the action, a review of the actual or potential outcome of the incident.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

After an independent interviewer conducted the interviews, the audio files were coded according to interview number/ ethnic origin /gender/program/level. For example, the Third interview was with a Chinese Female who enrolled in an Education program at the Graduate level. (3CFEG).

The interviews were transcribed using the verbatim transcription for the first three interviews and targeted transcription was used for the remaining interviews. I then analysed the transcripts and identified triggers, actions, and outcomes. These three aspects would come together to form an incident, allowing an analysis of the aspects of university teaching and learning which could be glocalized in order to improve international students' retention. The inductive and deductive approaches of grounded theory were utilized. Each of these stories was then coded using open and axial coding to identify a theme, subtheme, and a promising practice

using the Critical Incident Technique. For example, a praxis subtheme was identified under the pedagogy theme and paired with the promising practice of engaging and empowering all learners regardless of their ethnic or cultural background by promoting critical thinking towards local and global issues.

### **3.6. Reliability and Validity of the CIT**

The Critical Incident Technique is an investigative research tool that has been widely used in a number of areas of research over the last 60 years. Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, & Maglio, (2005) have summarized the array of disciplines that have employed CIT:

It has been utilized across a diverse number of disciplines, including communications (Query and Wright, 2003; Stano, 1983), nursing (Dachelet et al., 1981; Kemppainen et al., 1998), job analysis (Kanyangale and MacLachlan, 1995; Stitt-Gohdes et al., 2000), counselling (Dix and Savickas, 1995; McCormick, 1997), education and teaching (LeMare and Sohbat, 2002; Oaklief, 1976); Parker, 1995; Tirri and Koro-Ljungberg, 2002), medicine (Humphrey and Nazarath, 2001; McNabb et al., 1986), marketing (Derbaix and Vanhamme, 2003; Keaveney, 1995), organizational learning (Ellinger and Bostrom, 2002; Skiba, 2000), performance appraisal (Evans, 1994; Schwab et al., 1975), psychology (Cerna, 2000; Pope and Vetter, 1992), and social work (Dworkin; Mills and Vine, 1990), to name but some of the fields in which it has been applied. (p. 476)

CIT is designed to generate descriptive and qualitative data regarding an experience that is still mostly uncharted in the literature (Flanagan, 1954). Others have also found that CIT is appropriate when a gap exists in the literature and the researcher wants to discover more (Butterfield et al., 2005). Woolsey states that CIT is particularly helpful in that it can be used for

“criterion development” and to “generate both exploratory information and theory or model-building” (Woolsey, 1986, p. 252).

For the purpose of this research, I conducted a number of validity checks to guarantee data reliability and the validity of my categorization. Firstly, I provided a random transcript to an independent coder who has experience with the CIT method. She was asked to identify triggers, actions, and outcomes, which were then cross checked with my own identification. She extracted the incidents from the designated portion of the interview. The initial rate of agreement was 85%. After discussing the variations, a 100% agreement was reached. The triangulation of data was a further measure of trustworthiness. Secondly, a randomly selected representative number of incidents were given to an independent reviewer to place the incidents into the identified categories. The initial rate of agreement was 90%, and a 100% consistency was reached after further consideration.

Finally, as recommended by Butterfield et al. (2005), a third validity check was conducted by checking theoretical agreement, in which the findings in this research were compared to relevant scholarly literature. In this case, the data was supported by a number of key articles, including Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1987) which suggested that the retention of students at the institutional level depends upon students' overall experiences with an institution. Thomas (2000) and Grayson & Grayson (2003) also had similarities between this research and their projects when they stated that social and academic integration, positive classroom experiences, and effective teaching all contribute to student retention. Other researchers found that students were reluctant to leave an institution once they had become an active organizational member (Gasser, 2006; Rivas, Sauer, Glynn, & Miller, 2007). By these means, validation was addressed.

## Chapter 4: Results

### 4.1. Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses results in relation to the main question of this study:

- ❖ What promising practices related to glocalization of higher education, both in teaching and in the broader learning environment, help international student retention?

The aim of this inquiry was to identify the promising practices of glocalization in university teaching and in the broader learning environment that support international student retention using Critical Incident Technique (CIT). After defining glocalization to the participants at the beginning of the interview, results included that implementing a glocalization approach in higher education will contribute to international student retention. As an example, the below incident discusses glocalization in classroom teaching. This and following incidents are presented in a three-stage form of: trigger, action, and outcome. This approach aligns with the set of procedures recommended by Flanagan (1954) for collecting direct observations while using the Critical Incident Technique research methodology.

**Trigger:** *One of my instructors teaches organizational behavior. She puts everybody into different teams, and at the end she makes sure it's balanced.*

**Action:** *We interact with each other, and we learn about each other's cultures.*

**Outcome:** *This is glocalization in our daily life; we learn how to understand other cultures, respect them, and work together as an engaged team<sup>1</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> Quotes from the interviews may have been adjusted for correction in English usage. No information, opinion or other content was adjusted. The grammar and structural English was adjusted to standard English usage to assist the reader in understanding the important content of the interview.

Results also confirmed that glocalizing student services will enhance organizational citizenship among international students and improve retention rates. Participants confirmed that they were reluctant to leave the institution once they had become active organizational members.

**Trigger:** *I'm a member of the Intercultural Council at TRU. Recently, we organized an event for international foods.*

**Action:** *We conduct events and activities to share experiences and cultures from different parts of the world. We prepared five tables where people can demonstrate cultural cooking. We had Russian and Ukrainian tables, a Canadian table, a Mali table, African food, food from Sweden, and from China.*

**Outcome:** *This is very helpful. It engages students from different cultural backgrounds and creates the feeling of belonging, and it is a good example for glocalization.*

Glocalization supports inclusion and involvement of international students in campus social activities. Inclusion was clearly indicated by participants as helping them to feel engaged, more comfortable, and less stressed on campus.

**Trigger:** *The student union (TRUSU) is the best example of glocalization.*

**Action:** *In TRUSU, we participate in many events and we have local and international students.*

**Outcome:** *We work together as a team to help other students stay and continue their degrees; we bring the local and global together.*

According to the participants, positive interaction between international students and their peers, as well as with faculty, will benefit them and help them to stay.

**Trigger:** *My whole life in Canada is about glocalization. In my first semester at TRU, it was very hard to find a place to stay.*

**Action:** *One person helped me and joined me in trying to find a home-stay, and we are still friends. It was challenging for me. I dropped some courses, until I came to know a few friends and made some relationships and networking.*

**Outcome:** *Friendships and networking were very helpful and encouraged me to stay and continue until today, and I'm graduating this semester.*

Participants indicated that the innovative strategies of glocalization offer a unique platform for mutual understanding of needs, problems, and solutions, serving as a bridge between domestic and international students who are willing and able to “think globally and act locally”. Overall, glocalization in a university environment contributes to students’ retention and development in the long term.

#### **4.2. Promising Practices**

This section will present the identified promising practices of glocalization in university teaching and in the broader learning environment that help international student retention. Through the process above, 150 incidents were collated in this study when glocalization in university teaching and learning helped international students’ retention. The number of incidents matched the recommended size (50-100 to several thousands of incidents) of sampling to describe requirements for a complex activity (Flanagan, 1954). In accordance with the definition of university teaching and learning used in this research, incidents were categorized into four main themes and ten subthemes of glocalization in university teaching. Through this



process, twelve promising practices were identified: engage and empower learners; provide equitable learning opportunities; provide and promote dialogic interactions; provide culturally responsive learning content; design a curriculum that enhances knowledge mobilization; involve students in setting criteria; engage self and peer-assessment; provide timely and constructive feedback to support learning; create a safe learning space; create a positive learning environment that supports student's inclusiveness and personal regard for others; create welcoming and inclusive student services; and, celebrate intercultural diversity and inclusiveness on campus. In the following sections, each theme, subtheme, and promising practice is discussed. Table 2 below provides a summary of the collated data. The themes and subthemes are identified and the number and percentage of incidents coded is also provided in detail.



#### **4.2.1. Pedagogy**

Forty-two percent of the participants identified glocalization in pedagogy as the most effective way of motivating students and improving retention and success, describing teaching practices they perceived as constructive or destructive. Within this theme, 20% of the sample population identified reciprocity, 15% pointed to autonomy, and 7% discussed teaching praxis as the most effective and influential pedagogical factors. These factors guided international students successfully through the exploration of creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving processes to develop their own understanding of the new culture and educational system. After clearly defining glocalization for the interviewees, they were able to identify and describe incidents that are related to glocalization in university teaching and in the broader learning environment that promote international student retention and enhanced their feeling of belonging.

**4.2.1.1. Promising Practice in Relation to Reciprocity:** Encourage and incorporate more opportunities for students to expand and deepen their knowledge about target concepts by reflecting on their previous experience and culture.

Participants confirmed that developing reciprocal teaching and learning relationships with their instructors is critical for sharing ownership of learning and empowering them as holders of knowledge. As educators become more open to student voice, they are adopting a teaching stance that enables students to become powerful protagonists of their own learning experience. In building trusting and reciprocal relationships, educators are putting students in the driver's seat and encourage peer interaction in a diverse and inclusive learning environment.

**Trigger:** *Last semester in my conflict management class*

**Action:** *the instructor gave us different topics and asked us to reflect on them from our own culture and how we handle that conflict. We also had to think about the implications of such conflict on the Canadian educational system which is good.*

**Outcome:** *That was good and helped me to understand both the Canadian educational system and my own back home better.*

**Getting students to learn from each other:**

**Trigger:** *In classroom assignments and group work*

**Action:** *Our instructors try to push international students out of their comfort zone by regrouping us in ethnically diverse groups so we learn from each other especially when they ask us to reflect about the subject matter from our own cultural point of view or our educational system back home.*

**Outcome:** *Which makes it easier and convenient but we still learn about the Canadian system from other students in class and also when we do extra research as a group, it engages us.*

Positive relationships between students and teachers have significant implications for the overall well-being of international students. Participants indicated that when there is a high level of trust and cooperation with teachers, they feel cared about and safe within the institution which influenced their decision to stay and continue their degrees.

**Trigger:** *I live in the north shore which is very far from here and one of my classes finishes very late at night.*

**Action:** *At the end of each class, my professor used to announce if any of us needed a ride somewhere in her way and she offered me a ride many times.*

**Outcome:** *This gave me a feeling that somebody cared about me and engaged me in the local community and made me love the Canadian culture and helped me to stay.*

**4.2.1.2. Promising Practice in Relation to Autonomy:** Provide learners with equitable opportunities to develop their independence, interdependence, and self-directedness through engaging and developing their creativity, critical thinking, social responsibility, decision-making and problem-solving skills for lifelong learning.

Autonomy, as Holec (1981) noted, is not an inborn capacity “but must be acquired either by ‘natural’ means or by formal learning” (p. 3). As identified in this research, pedagogy for autonomy aims at facilitating an approximation of the international students to the learning process and content by giving them the opportunity to assume greater responsibility for learning, and acknowledging them as crucial participants in the management of the learning processes. Pedagogy for autonomy is defined as “the conscious and deliberately organized implementation of the possibility for learners to set their learning objectives, to establish the procedures and methods for learning, to monitor their progress and to self-evaluate the learning process and outcomes” (Camilleri, 2007, p. 83). Participants stated that international students need to experience personal agency, by being able to take a pro-active role in making decisions concerned with their learning to develop their independence, interdependence, and self-directedness.

**Trigger:** *In my second year, I had my Organizational Behavior class.*

**Action:** *the instructor assigned us in teams to teach us how different organizations work. She gave us the Mayer's personality test and many other tests to determine our personalities and capabilities regardless of our cultural background. And based on the results of those tests, she divided us into groups and then we had so many tasks and worked to go through. We also discussed the curriculum assessment techniques with her from the beginning of the semester.*

**Outcome:** *This experience was wonderful because these tests remove the cultural differences between students, and we were only grouped according to our personalities and way of thinking. We were added to each team without stereotyping. So, I ended up in a diverse group from India, Africa, Canada, and China. Now, we are partners with the instructor in our learning.*

Thirty-five percent of the participants who discussed pedagogy viewed the faculty at their institution as role models and they valued the support given to them in class as learning opportunities including real-world learning and work placements, which positively influenced their retention.

**Trigger:** *In my management class last semester, I had to present in front of the class for the first time.*

**Action:** *I was sweating, but the teacher treated me as a CEO or a member of the board of directors. It was amazing. He was fair and he wanted me to feel confident and empowered.*

**Outcome:** *I think this was so cool. This is an experience which I never had before.*

*So, this is actual help.*

**4.2.1.3. Promising Practice in Relation to Praxis:** Engage and empower all learners regardless of their ethnic or cultural background by promoting critical thinking towards local and global issues.

The last pedagogical approach to improving international student retention, as described by participants was to glocalize praxis by creating a safe space where all learners can share their understanding and critical thinking. Glocalizing the praxis is a necessity in university teaching according to the participants in this study, it can be reconstituted in accordance to the learning capabilities and background of all learners. In this process, learning becomes creative, engaging, and empowering because it enhances mutual respect and dignity for all stakeholders, which will improve international students' retention.

**Trigger:** *In my marketing class this semester*

**Action:** *Our professor gave us many cases to analyse and discuss in class from all over the world, not only from Canada. We talked about marketing strategies and how we are influenced by them.*

**Outcome:** *This discussion enriched our learning and understanding and it was an eye opener for all of us.*

#### **4.2.2. Policies and Procedures**

Twenty-seven percent of the participants declared that being aware of, respecting, and considering international students' background while executing policies and procedures or providing services on campus as a significant contributor to their retention and engagement. International students expressed this need campus-wide as opposed to a few committed

individuals. They agreed that the notion of international students' inclusion and retention should be embedded into the institutional vision, reflected in its policy, and actively endorsed by senior institutional leaders. Thus, it is the responsibility of policy makers to glocalize policies and procedures to ensure staff enactment through recognition, support, development and reward. This enables all staff to engage in international student retention. Participants recommended glocalizing students services and cultural holidays and celebrations as the two main subcategories of policies and procedures in order to improve their retention in higher education.

**4.2.2.1. Promising Practice in Relation to Student Services:** Create welcoming and inclusive student services to enhance student retention, intercultural understanding, and enrich international students' experiences by incorporating and respecting their cultural background while providing services.

Participants confirmed that engagement and belonging can be nurtured throughout the institution's academic, social and cultural services and can have a positive impact on not only students' retention, but success as well. They identified advising services, admission services, campus media (website, newsletter, and radio), student orientation, food services, career services, clubs and societies, chaplaincy, student union, and social events as potential spaces for glocalization. They focused on the value of social events that include them with their domestic fellows. The findings also endorsed international students' involvement in clubs and societies as a tool for increasing feelings of belonging and social engagement, thus increasing retention rates.

**Trigger:** *After two years of being an international student at TRU, I realized that I made too many friends by being involved in on-campus activities.*



**Action:** *Now I'm taking a class of service learning to qualify me for community volunteering and helping other people. I also volunteer with St. John's ambulance and other food organizations.*

**Outcome:** *This makes me happy and gives me feelings of belonging; it also makes me involved with domestic students to improve my English and to connect to the local community as local and global.*

#### **Glocalizing advising services:**

The key finding from this aspect of the study is that both international student advisers and the admissions office have an important part to play in international students support and retention.

**Trigger:** *I don't have many students who speak my language in my class.*

**Action:** *I'm always trying to be active and involved in any discussion or communication in class or on-campus. But, as we always need to talk in our own language, just talk without thinking, it's easier and more natural.*

**Outcome:** *I talk with the student advisor who speaks my language, and she's my friend. She helps me a lot, provides me with advice, and this helped me to think globally and act locally which is why I'm still here in Canada.*

#### **Glocalizing admission services:**

**Trigger:** *Here at TRU, we have the international admissions office and the domestic admissions office.*

**Action:** *Both help all the students regardless of their backgrounds and that's what I like about TRU, we all are students.*

**Outcome:** *It's all about engagement, and this is what TRU actually does. They want us to be one team. It doesn't matter if you are local or international, actually there's no difference, it's glocalization. It's so fair. Actually, I don't feel labeled anymore, it was the language barrier at the beginning. But, now I feel that I belong to TRU and I want to stay.*

**Glocalizing food services:**

**Trigger:** *TRU is comparatively more open to other races and cultures than other Canadian universities that I know.*

**Action:** *We have Indian food on campus. There is also Indian Club, Pakistani Club and many other clubs that represent each culture.*

**Outcome:** *At the end of the day they've taken an attempt to make sure that the students are happy. I genuinely feel that TRU has a comforting environment for international students.*

**Glocalizing Social Events:**

**Trigger:** *I'm the leader of TRU Lip dub (L.I.P.D.U.P) team. It's basically about showcasing the campus and the diversity of people in a five-minute video. People sing, dance, and do their cultural things.*

**Action:** *We had 40 people in the crew and everybody was from different cultures. Every time we meet, we have a thing at the end of our meeting. It's called share your culture. People just talk about their culture or something, bring food, or do whatever they want to share their culture. So it's like every person in the group gets a chance.*

**Outcome:** *This was a completely glocalized experience where we learned about each other's cultures without stereotyping, and we shared many interesting things including the Canadian culture. It was amazing!*

**4.2.2.2 Promising Practice in Relation to Cultural Holidays and Celebrations:** Celebrate diversity and inclusiveness on campus by engaging students of diverse cultural backgrounds and domestic students in international students' cultural holidays and celebrations.

Several students discussed involving international students in the planning and execution of holiday-related events as one of the best ways to ensure inclusion and engagement. According to the participants, while they want to learn about Canadian culture, the hegemony of Canadian traditions and culture makes them feel disrespected and isolated at times when they miss their families and home country.

**Trigger:** *When we celebrate our cultural festivals at TRU like the Nigerian Independence Day and the Diwali celebration for example.*

**Action:** *We invite all of our friends on campus, not necessary to be Indian or Nigerian. We celebrate together, and we learn about each other's cultures. We dance we sing, we have fun.*

**Outcome:** *There you feel really homely, like you belong to this place and you love it. It's really mixed emotions and very nice. We also invite our Canadian friends and they join us. My Ukrainian friend taught me how to perform Bahangra, my cultural dance. I love this cultural diversity on campus.*

#### **4.2.3. Learning Environment**

Fourteen percent of the total participants in this research highlighted the importance of the learning environment in general. Participants mentioned their need for an environment that

maximises faculty and students' safety and interaction, a comfortable environment where basic needs for all learners are met. They emphasise the value of a diverse and inclusive learning environment where the local and global meet. Their discussion about learning environments covered both the physical and psychological learning environments. The physical learning environments include the classroom, library, labs, graduate commons, research space, student lounge and campus grounds. The psychological learning environment includes any space where learning happens, including, but not exclusive to the classroom.

**4.2.3.1. Promising Practice in Relation to Psychological Learning Environment:** Create a safe and positive learning environment that supports student's inclusiveness and personal regard for others while respecting how these concepts might differ according to the background and identity of the different learners.

For many international students, class participation and engagement is a major problem, mainly because of the language barrier and the perceived lack of tolerance for error. Cultural factors also influence the way international students participate in class activities. For participants of certain cultural backgrounds, it is unusual to argue or question the instructor even regarding the subject matter. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the instructor to create a safe and positive psychological learning environment that supports student's inclusiveness and encourages participation. According to 85% of the participants in this study who discussed the psychological learning environment, trust, privacy, respect, and safety are critical factors to achieve inclusiveness and improve retention in higher education. Participants confirmed the importance of glocalizing the learning environment because just as domestic students, they, too, need a collaborative and safe learning environment to unleash their capabilities and achieve their learning goals.

**Trigger:** *For us as Chinese students in an interactive learning environment.*

**Action:** *In our culture, it is unusual for the students to argue or question the teacher even at university level. That's why you find many Chinese students shy and not interactive in class activities. Couple this with the language barrier, then we are shocked. We prefer to be grouped up with other students including domestic students who can stand up and do the presentation part and encourage us for that.*

**Outcome:** *It is very helpful for us to be included in such groups that respect us and include different students of different cultural backgrounds. This is how glocalization improves our retention.*

**Another example:**

**Trigger:** *In my first class at TRU and for the purpose of an assignment.*

**Action:** *The instructor asked us to group up in diverse groups. In my group, we had three domestic students. They were really kind to me but still, we kind of had a language barrier or gap. When they speak very quickly I can't understand, which influenced my participation and our group dynamics.*

**Outcome:** *At the beginning, this was not a happy experience for me, but after that we did a great job and became good friends until this day.*

**4.2.3.2. Promising Practice in Relation to Physical Learning Environment:** Ensure that learning spaces are learner-centered, flexible, sustainable, and able to accommodate the diverse approaches to learning and knowing in order to support the teaching and learning processes of all learners.

According to 15% of the participants, a flexible, learner-centred environment aids learners to play a more active role in their learning processes. Participants talked about the physical

learning environment inside and outside the classroom that includes the library, labs, graduate commons, research space, and student lounge with its flexible and modifiable seating arrangements. The provision of well-equipped and learner-centered physical environments promotes and increases teacher-student and peer interaction and can be understood in relation to the social and emotional dimensions of learning. According to the participants, the existence and availability of such environments draws on international students' previous experiences and influences their sense of belonging, achievement, and retention.

**Trigger:** *When I first came to TRU and joined the program last year*

**Action:** *There was no space for students to sit or meet outside the classroom in our building. Then, they decided to create a new lounge for students with different seating arrangements and a nicer view.*

**Outcome:** *It made a big difference for students. Now we can meet there. We sit and finish our group work, and we feel like home there. We now spend longer time on campus because of this friendly space.*

#### 4.2.4. Curriculum

Participants argued that the curriculum ought to be culturally relevant to widen participation in the classroom and to prepare both domestic and international graduates for a diverse workplace. They also argued that higher education curricula should offer students the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and systems in their home country to function as an ideal forum for student engagement and future employability. According to the participants, glocalizing the curriculum will develop a sense of belonging among students through academic and social engagement. They recommended that curriculum content, design (typology), and

assessment should take a broad and holistic approach to engage students academically and socially.

**4.2.4.1. Promising Practice in Relation to Curriculum Content:** Create culturally responsive and relevant curriculum content that engages students of many cultural backgrounds.

Findings showed that engaging students through the curriculum content is one of the most effective ways of motivating students and improving retention and success. Forty percent of participants who discussed the curriculum confirmed that glocalizing curriculum content will increase collaborative learning opportunities and enhance holistic education. They also highlighted the fact that delivering education and curriculum content solely from the host country's cultural lens will only empower domestic students and leave international students feeling vulnerable and isolated. Glocalized curriculum content promotes inclusive education that allows international students to share their global experiences and reflect on the local context.

**Trigger:** *While working in groups during class projects.*

**Action:** *Canadian students will be the dominant because the content is relevant to their culture and experience.*

**Outcome:** *This is not beneficial for me as an international student because I will never have the opportunity to lead the group and accomplish the project to enrich my learning experience and develop leadership skills.*

**4.2.4.2. Promising Practices in Relation to Assessment:**

The findings showed that students who had a clear understanding about expectations and assessment processes have higher confidence levels and are less likely to think about leaving early. Thirty-three percent of participants who discussed assessment suggested that an understanding of assessment should be developed early, and students need to have positive

relationships with the instructor so that they can ask for clarification. Participants also stated that feedback needs to be detailed and timely to guide learners for future tasks. They mentioned the following three promising practices in relation to assessment:

**First promising practice in relation to assessment: Involve students in setting criteria.**

To be independent, interdependent, and lifelong learners, international students must learn to take full responsibility for their learning. According to the participants, both teachers and students should work together to set the criteria and develop assessment techniques to improve learning.

**Trigger:** *In my international economic class*

**Action:** *The instructor knows the fact that students will help each other in understanding the assignments according to the rubric, and he encourages that. So, you see local students and international students coming together during the day or late at night to get the assignments done according to the assessment techniques that we agreed upon with the instructor.*

**Outcome:** *I love these moments when we meet and work together. This also adds to the outcome of the group work and improve the individual's academic achievement and grades as well.*

**Second promising practice in relation to assessment: Engage self- and peer-assessment.**

According to the participants in this study, peer mentoring and assessment were found beneficial in helping international students learn how assessments work by making expectations



more explicit and providing a safer venue to ask questions. Participants also appreciated instructors who allowed learners to plan and evaluate much of their own learning. International students interviewed preferred to take an active role, for at least a portion of the course, in exploring their learning needs, choosing and implementing appropriate strategies, and evaluating the outcomes.

**Trigger:** *In my global management class*

**Action:** *Students were assigned in groups for different projects. Every group was given only one country to study and make their report about. Our group was given a group of small countries, and it was very hard for us. I approached the professor many times asking him about his expectation regarding the project. By knowing the instructor's expectations, I was able to assess my work and the whole group output.*

**Outcome:** *Taking the lead in monitoring the group work and having frequent assessment from each member added a lot to our final grade and we continued doing this in other courses.*

**Third promising practice in relation to assessment: Provide timely and constructive feedback to support learning.**

According to the participants, timely feedback is very useful to provide guidance and support with assessment. Participants confirmed that constructive feedback should enable reflection and self-correction without fostering hostility or defensiveness. Furthermore, feedback should be specific and directed towards what needs improvement, not an attack on the person. From the perspective of the international students interviewed in this research, feedback is

effective when provided while it still matters and in time for them to apply it into their next assignments to support their learning in a new educational context.

**Trigger:** *I remember one time, actually, I was in a classroom*

**Action:** *The teacher was Canadian, and he used to make the classes kind of interesting by telling stories, listening to students, and providing timely feedback to avoid our mistakes in our next projects and assignments.*

**Outcome:** *For me, this was a totally different style, it turned me into an active listener. I loved his class and got higher marks.*

**4.2.4.3. Promising Practice in Relation to Typology:** Design a curriculum that is relevant and transferable to different global contexts to enhance knowledge mobilization. Twenty-seven percent of participants discussed the importance of integrating international perspectives in curriculum by encouraging domestic and international students to reflect and discuss global issues and phenomena. They also suggested expanding the curriculum to include local and global perspectives to create transferable learning and skills.

**Trigger:** *When the instructor opens a global political discussion in the classroom, for example if we talk about terrorist attacks there were three or four attacks in the world in Kenya, Russia, and in France....*

**Action:** *The core of our classroom discussion was only about France, but what about the other countries? They're also part of this world and they are humans!*

**Outcome:** *Actually, for me it sounds horrible. I can't imagine how this happened in a classroom discussion at graduate students level. We are all humans, but here we are talking about selective humanity or local communities only. I found this is very different from where I used to live. But it's the world here, so we have to do*

*something and we have to educate people and change the current curriculum to be more inclusive.*

According to the participants, a curriculum typology that will enhance their development and knowledge mobilization abilities is a curriculum that is relevant and transferable in Canada, and outside. International students bring knowledge from their own cultures and eventually would like to take back knowledge that is transferable and applicable to their local realities around the world. Participants, therefore, recommended introducing international themes while designing curriculum to facilitate critical discussions and reflections in order to enhance knowledge mobilization potentials.

**Trigger:** *In business school, we have instructors from all over the world which is very special.*

**Action:** *They teach us their global experience in a local context which is good for us.*

**Outcome:** *This is very useful for my future career because they are not only teaching me knowledge but also transferring their experiences. So, I can transfer this knowledge and experience to my country after graduation.*

Another related incident:

**Trigger:** *In my intercultural communications class*

**Action:** *The instructor always asks us to reflect on our educational system in China.*

**Outcome:** *It helps us to prepare ourselves to go back to teach in China and transfer the Canadian knowledge and technology to our curriculum. It is very helpful.*

#### 4.2.5. Other Factors

In addition to the mentioned promising practices where glocalization in university teaching and learning helps international students retention, 11% of the participants highlighted the importance of family and preparation prior to arrival as well as the importance of the local community in direct relation to their retention in Canadian higher education.

##### 4.2.5.1 Local Community

Eighty-two percent of participants who discussed factors unrelated to university teaching and learning indicated that they are seeking opportunities to engage with the local Canadian community, opportunities that are not only advantageous to their academic success, but also to their social and professional development in the long term. This engagement and interaction equated to positive outcomes and a better overall student experience that improved international student retention. They expected the university to carry part of the responsibility in building bridges between international students and local communities. According to the participants, such bridges could be built by creating off-campus employment opportunities, internships, and volunteering opportunities. Additionally, they focused on homestay and accommodation services that could be professionally regulated by the university to enrich their experiences, ease their struggles, and improve their retention.

**Trigger:** *Another example of Glocalization off campus is where I live. I have both Canadian and Indian neighbors, and they are very nice to me.*

**Action:** *They invited me last year to Christmas celebrations, we gathered for dinner sometimes, and we played cards together.*

**Outcome:** *This year, I will invite them for my religious holiday, and I'm thinking of buying a Christmas tree and inviting them all to my place. All these factors helped me become engaged with not only my peers on campus, but with my neighbors which helped me to persist and stay in Canada.*

#### **4.2.5.2. Family and Prior Arrival Preparation**

Eighteen percent of participants who discussed other factors highlighted the importance of family support and prior arrival preparation such as language training and proper travel arrangements. They stated that such support and arrangements gave them a good start and enhanced their retention in the host country. When they had good language skills, they were able to communicate with people in the host country upon arrival and avoided any misunderstandings. In addition, early arrival allowed some international students to attend campus orientation sessions and find a suitable accommodation before classes started. Participants also confirmed the importance of family support to avoid cultural shock and minimize the complications of homesickness, especially during the first few months.

**Trigger:** *When I first came to Canada in my first trip*

**Action:** *I came a month late to the university.*

**Outcome:** *I didn't get any orientation, and I didn't understand many things at the beginning.*

### 4.3. Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results of 16 interviews conducted with international students at a medium-sized, research-oriented institution in Canada. The research aimed to answer the question, *What promising practices related to glocalization of higher education, both in teaching and in the broader learning environment, help international student retention?*

Using Critical Incident Technique methodologies, data was collected through semi-structured interviews using an independent interviewer to increase trustworthiness and ensure anonymity. Interviews were then analyzed using the approaches of grounded theory.

The results of this research indicated common glocalization stories in university teaching and learning that helped in international student retention. Glocalizing of pedagogy was the highest among university teaching and learning practices to promote international student retention followed by the glocalizing of policies and procedures, the learning environment, and finally, the curriculum. Participants identified 12 promising practices for glocalization that positively impacted international students' retention.

The identified promising practices in this research will be used to create a model for supporting international student retention. In addition to the above-mentioned promising practices that are directly related to university teaching and learning, other factors were identified as supporting factors for international student retention. These factors were coded as community factors and family support and prior-to-arrival factors. Participants identified off-campus employment, homestay and accommodation, family support, and travel arrangements as important supporting factors that improve retention. A discussion of the results, the conclusion, the implications, the limitations, and the recommendations for future research is presented in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the results of the data analysis of this study in the context of the existing literature on glocalization and international student retention. The results presented in the previous chapter are an indicator of the rich narratives shared by the 16 international students who participated in this research. In this chapter, a glocalization model is generated to help educators and policy makers in the field of higher education improve international student retention and maximize the mutual benefits of glocalization. Finally, the conclusion of this chapter includes the implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

### **5.2. The Purpose of the Study Revisited**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether successful implementation of glocalization in university teaching and learning could positively impact international student retention in higher education. The premise was that if successful implementation of glocalization is helpful in retaining international students, institutions should be more supportive and more motivated to invest institutional resources into the innovative strategies of glocalization. The main research question which guided this study was:

- ❖ What promising practices related to glocalization of higher education, both in teaching and in the broader learning environment, help international student retention?

Qualitative research methodology using Critical Incident Technique was used to answer the main research question. Semi-structured interviews by an independent interviewer were conducted in order to identify the promising practices of glocalization in Higher Education that impact international student retention. The total number of participants in this research were 16 international students, eight of whom were graduate students and eight were undergraduate

university students who were recruited through the passive snowball sampling technique. The transcribed interviews were then analysed using the inductive and deductive approaches of grounded theory. Finally, described stories were coded using open and axial coding to identify a theme, subtheme, and a promising practice.

### **5.3. Summary of the Results**

Twelve promising practices emerged from the analysis of interviews that are particularly related to university teaching and learning. The promising practices have been grouped into four larger overarching themes: a) pedagogy, b) policies and procedures, c) learning environment, and d) curriculum. These four themes consistently arose as common threads throughout my interview notes, analysis and coding. The emerged themes and the identified promising practices are summarized in the table below:



Table 3  
*Summary of Themes and Promising Practices*

Theme	Subtheme	Promising Practice
Pedagogy	Reciprocity	Encourage and incorporate more opportunities for students to expand and deepen their knowledge about target concepts by reflecting on their previous experience and culture.
	Autonomy	Provide learners with equitable opportunities to develop their independence, interdependence, and self-directedness through engaging and developing their creativity, critical thinking, social responsibility, decision-making and problem-solving skills for lifelong learning.
	Praxis	Engage and empower all learners regardless of their ethnic or cultural background by promoting critical thinking towards local and global issues.
Policies & Procedures	Services	Create welcoming and inclusive student services to enhance student retention, intercultural understanding, and enrich international students' experiences by incorporating and respecting their cultural background while providing services.
	Cultural holidays & Celebrations	Celebrate diversity and inclusiveness on campus by engaging students of diverse cultural backgrounds and domestic students in international students' cultural holidays and celebrations.
Learning Environment	Psychological	Create a safe and positive learning environment that supports student's inclusiveness and personal regard for others while respecting how these concepts might differ according to the background and identity of the different learners.
	Physical	Ensure that learning spaces are learner-centered, flexible, sustainable, and able to accommodate the diverse approaches to learning and knowing in order to support the teaching and learning processes of all learners.
Curriculum	Content	Create culturally responsive and relevant curriculum content that engages students of many cultural backgrounds.
	Assessment	Involve students in setting criteria.
		Engage self- and peer-assessment.
		Provide timely and constructive feedback to support learning.
	Typology	Design a curriculum that is relevant and transferrable to different global contexts to enhance knowledge mobilization.

#### **5.4. Discussion of the Results**

These results reinforce the importance of glocalization in retaining international students in Canadian higher education. More than 45 years of research has identified many factors found to influence students' retention. Findings included that social and academic integration, positive classroom experiences, and effective teaching all contribute to student retention (Thomas, 2000; Grayson & Grayson, 2003). Other researchers found that students were reluctant to leave an institution once they had become an active organizational member (Gasser, 2006; Rivas, Sauer, Glynn, & Miller, 2007). Tinto (1997) indicates that the better students' social integration and involvement, the more positive student learning outcomes will be. In addition, Berger and Milem (1999) suggest that students who have more positive experiences are more likely to be retained and to persist. In other words, when students' cultural values and established cultural patterns of behavior are congruent with, or respected by, the dominant culture within the campus, students are more likely to feel more comfortable and less stressed on campus (Berger & Milem, 1999). Berger and Milem (1999) also point out that positive interaction between students and their peers, as well as with faculty, will benefit them and help them to stay.

Results of this research are consistent with the limited international student literature that has investigated retention and glocalization. Research and literature have cogently argued that curriculum and pedagogy, policies and procedures, and learning environment are the major challenges for international students in the host country. The major academic challenges for international students in Canada include mastering the English language, adjusting to the campus and classroom environment, and understanding academic integrity (Kok-Soo, 2008; Liberman, 1994; Tompson & Tompson, 1996; Lipson, 2008; Pedersen, 1991). Prior research suggests that international students can experience many challenges as a result of language and cultural

barriers, academic and financial difficulties, interpersonal problems, racial discrimination, loss of social support, alienation and homesickness (Yeh & Inose, 2003).

It is not surprising then that pedagogy was found to be the most influential factor in university teaching and learning that impacts international student retention. Engaging and empowering international students, as well as providing them with equitable learning opportunities, will enhance their self-confidence and improve their retention. This trust in self can be understood as “self-efficacy”, a term coined by the father of social cognitive theory, Albert Bandura (Lent & Fouad, 2011) and defined as “beliefs about one’s capabilities to organize and perform particular behaviors or courses of action” (Lent & Fouad, 2011, p. 74). Developing self-efficacy is a corner stone of glocalization in higher education that promote international student retention. Bandura’s theory states that high levels of self-efficacy are achieved through a number of ways but that the most important source of self-efficacy is based in ‘mastery experiences’ or experiences wherein one feels confident in one’s skills. According to Zeldin & Pajares (2000), the self-efficacy beliefs that people hold “influence the choices they make, the amount of effort they expend, their resilience to encountered hardships, their persistence in the face of adversity, the anxiety they experience, and the level of success they ultimately achieve. Individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs work harder and persist longer when they encounter difficulties than those who doubt their capabilities” (p. 218).

It is surprising that, despite the vast amount of literature on the importance of curriculum in student engagement and inclusion, the majority of international students in this research identified policies and procedures as the second most influential factor after pedagogy. Results of this research confirmed that engagement and belonging can be nurtured throughout the institution by means of social and professional services. International students stated that they are

practicing glocalization in their daily life. The majority of incidents in this theme discussed services provided by the university and celebration of cultural holidays. Therefore, it is the responsibility of policy makers to create welcoming and inclusive student services to enhance student retention, intercultural understanding, and enrich international students' experience by cultivating their personal and academic achievement, leadership, social development, and civic engagement. Engagement can take place beyond the academic domain, in other spheres of the institution, namely the social and professional services, and can have a positive impact on students' retention and success. Literature on student retention suggests that higher levels of engagement are associated with higher retention rates and success (Astin, 1993; Berger, 1997; Cabrera et al., 1993; Thomas, 2000). Moreover, students involved in clubs and societies were more likely to exhibit a high sense of belonging to the university. This supports Vincent Tinto's influential work on the importance not just of academic interaction, but also of social engagement (Tinto, 1993). Results also highlighted the importance of celebrating intercultural diversity and inclusiveness on campus by engaging students of diverse cultural backgrounds and domestic students. Findings in this study regarding glocalization of students services support Andrade's (2008) conclusion about international students becoming more aware of university organizations and practices through interacting with fellow domestic students. Adjustment and understanding were easier to achieve as interaction with domestic students increased (Andrade, 2008).

Additional findings in this study that are well supported in the literature are those related to both psychological and physical learning environments. The concept of "learning environment" is becoming increasingly significant as universities become centers of lifelong learning (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011). "Learning environment" is a term used in educational

discourse because of the emerging use of information technologies for educational purposes on the one hand, and the constructivist concept of knowledge and learning on the other (Mononen-Aaltonen, 1998). The OECD (2006) defines “educational space” as “a physical space that supports multiple and diverse teaching and learning programs and pedagogies that encourages social participation, providing a healthy, comfortable, safe, secure and stimulating setting for all learners” (OECD, 2006, p. 2). According to Hiemstra (1991), learning environment consists of the physical surroundings, psychological or emotional conditions and social or cultural influences affecting the growth and development of an adult engaged in an educational enterprise.

A learning environment that involves students as active learners, rather than as recipients of knowledge, shows respect for students’ views and experiences, and therefore diversity and difference are less likely to be problematized and more likely to be valued within a transformative model of higher education (Bamber et al., 1997; Jones and Thomas, 2005). Tinto found that students benefited from and enjoyed being part of ‘learning communities’, which forged interaction between students to facilitate their learning both inside the classroom and beyond (Tinto, 1998, 2000). According to Marginson (2012), many international students faced difficulties and barriers in social integration with domestic students because they are still legally defined as aliens, as ‘Others’ and they are culturally ‘Othered’ as well. Locals tended to self-segregate and this triggered further self-segregation by international students. This cultural segregation compounded stereotyping by both groups, reinforcing the separation and stigma.

Despite the connection that is often made about the similar importance of curriculum and pedagogy (Westbrook et al., 2013), findings in this study suggested that curriculum is less significant in terms of retaining international students. Only 15% of the incidents in this study

discussed curriculum, while (63%) of the incidents focused on pedagogy. Curriculum content, assessment, and typology were the main three subthemes in this curriculum category. The curriculum, in a broad sense, provides an ideal forum for approaches and strategies that encourage student engagement and inclusion. International students in this study argued that the curriculum ought to be culturally relevant to support widening participation and to prepare graduates for living and working in a diverse society. They also argued that the higher education curriculum should offer students the opportunity to reflect on employment and previous experiences to explore the learning and skills development that is involved in these activities.

Findings showed that engaging students through the curriculum content is another effective way of motivating students and improving retention and success. Participants confirmed that developing culturally responsive and relevant curriculum content that engages learners of many cultural backgrounds will improve international student retention. They also requested a curriculum design that is relevant and transferable to enhance knowledge mobilization during their studies and after graduation. Moreover, participants recommended that international students be involved in setting assessment criteria. They confirmed that students who have a clear understanding about the assessment process and expectations have higher confidence levels and are less likely to consider leaving university before degree completion. They also confirmed the importance of timely and constructive feedback to support their learning. According to Tinto (2000), feedback about academic performance and involvement with fellow students in learning in the classroom are important to achieve student success. Among the things to be taken into consideration while implementing the integrated curriculum are both international and domestic students' emotions, mental processes, and individual behaviors. This example of mixes of globalization-localization in curriculum development, as

provided by Luk-Fong (2005), best offers a theoretical framework for facilitating the actual implementation of the guidance/ moral/ civic education curriculum that will improve student retention as a response to glocalization.

To conclude, participants in this study mentioned other factors that might influence their decision to stay, especially during the first year. These factors were classified as highly important by participants, but were not directly related to university teaching and learning which was the core of this study. Factors related to local community, family support, and prior to arrival preparation were common among all interviewed international students. Literature shows that problems may occur in adjusting to a new culture, experiencing academic differences, dealing with developments in their country of origin (including the death of family or friends), experiencing anxiety about returning home, and dealing with financial, emotional and cross-cultural challenges (Hsu, 2003).

### **5.5. Glocalization Model of International Student Retention**

The following model of retention has the potential to serve as a tool for Canadian higher education institutions to implement the innovative strategy of glocalization in university teaching and learning to improve international student retention. This model supports Douglass' (2005) suggestion that institutions should analyze the rapid growth of market needs and the strength and weakness of each institute in order to have a better understanding of the complexity of glocalization toward the future of higher education.

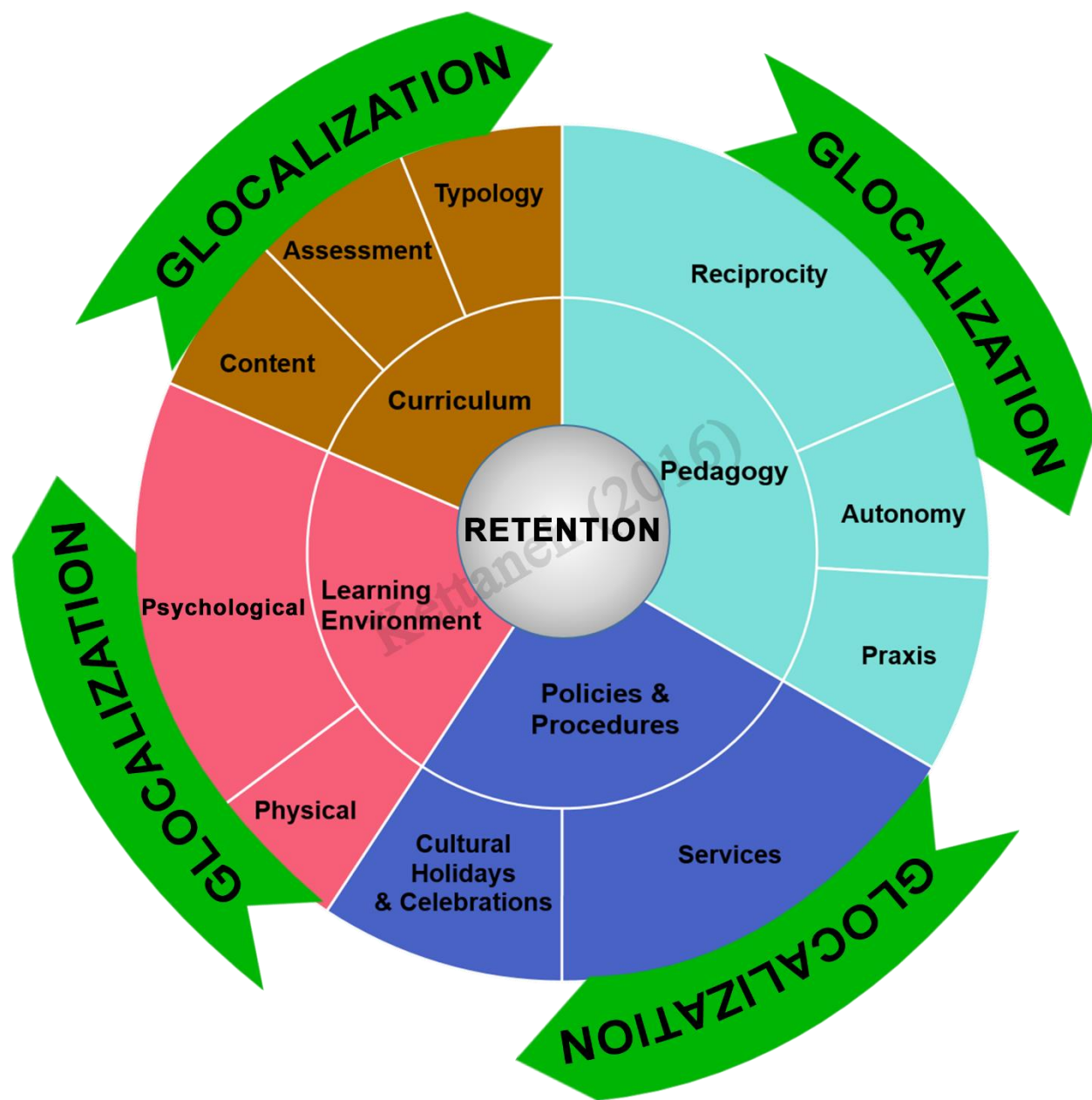


Figure 3. Glocalization Model of International Student Retention.

Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the aspects of university teaching and learning which could be glocalized in order to improve international student retention in higher education. The size of each section in the model depicts the importance of each practice according to the frequency of their occurrence in the research findings. University teaching involves a relation among learner(s), teacher(s), and what is learned (Dall’Alba, 2005). One view



that may be of value is a formula discussed by Kettaneh and Handford, 2016, where student retention is viewed as a function of the relationship of learner, teacher, subject, and learning environment in relation to glocalization. This can be expressed as a formula:

Student Retention =  $f$  (Learner, teacher, subject, learning environment) (Glocalization).

## 5.6. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of glocalization in relation to university teaching and learning and to identify the promising practices of glocalization in improving international student retention. Glocalization is the simultaneity — the co-presence — of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies (Robertson, 1995). Findings in this study confirmed that glocalizing the four main components of university teaching and learning will positively influence international student retention. Glocalization acts as a bridge between domestic and international learners, links local communities to global resources and knowledge, and, thus, contributes to international students' retention and development.

The innovative strategy of glocalization offers a unique platform for the mutual understanding of needs, problems and solutions, and it recognizes the vital role of students as well as the importance of including their viewpoints and abilities in developing culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy. Therefore, to implement the concept of “think globally, act locally”, educators and policy makers in the area of higher education should re-think their strategy relating to curriculum design and institutional policy to empower the construction of courses, pedagogy, and learning environments that would enhance international students' retention in higher education. Universities and other higher education institutions are developing long-term international partnerships by recruiting international students. Therefore,

understanding the needs, cultural lenses, and backgrounds of international students is of critical importance. Glocalization, as shown in this research, proves to be a very helpful tool not only in understanding international students, but also in retaining them and ensuring their social and academic success.

### **5.7. Implications**

The results from this research have implications for policy and practice that will positively impact international student's success and retention in Canadian higher education. It is an accepted idea in Canada that international students create a diverse community that enriches the learning experiences of everyone on campus. If Canadian higher education institutions hope to create an atmosphere that is inclusive to everyone on campus, it is clear from this research that a focus on glocalization, whether it be in the instructional pedagogy, policy and procedures, learning environment, or curriculum needs to be further examined. Institutions that seek to enhance international student retention must more clearly explicate their own cultural expectations, recognize the power of the home culture in impacting how international students engage with their institution, and intentionally create academic and social contexts in which international students can achieve desired outcomes. The campus as a whole needs to fully integrate notions of glocalization systemically so it is not a piecemeal effort. Otherwise, international students will continue to have feelings of exclusion, silencing and lack of belonging. In other words, glocalization promotes democratic and inclusive university teaching and learning that focuses on students' strengths, talents, interests, knowledge, and experiences. In the following subsections I will present the promising practices of glocalization in university teaching and learning for the different stakeholders that help international student retention in higher education.

### 5.7.1. Implications for Institutional Policy

*The 450,000 International Student Plan* by the year 2022 (CBIE, 2014), advocates for the “glocalization” of Canadian universities and society by recruiting more international students to Canada and by retaining them after graduation. The primary focus of the policy and the supporting strategies, such as “Imagine Education au/in Canada”, is to enable governments, educational institutions and the various other participants in the education field address international students by using a consistent and culturally responsive and informed voice (CMEC, 2015). If Canada intends to recruit and retain this number of international students as an integral part of Canadian society and its economy, educators and policy makers need to implement the following promising practices of glocalization:

1. Glocalize advising and admission services by including advisors and supporting staff of many cultural backgrounds who speak different languages in order to connect and build bridges with international students.
2. Glocalize activities and social events, including cross-cultural and cross-boundary campus social gatherings and trips for domestic and international students together.
3. Glocalize on-campus student services such as media, food services, and chaplaincy, as well as student societies and clubs by actively involving international students.
4. Glocalize on-campus employment opportunities by providing equitable recruitment opportunities.
5. Glocalize cultural holidays and celebrations by engaging students of diverse cultural backgrounds.
6. Glocalize curriculum design and technology by providing culturally responsive and relevant content.

7. Conduct frequent surveys to evaluate existing services provided by the institution as well as course evaluation.
8. Provide professional development learning opportunities for university staff in foreign languages and intercultural communication.
9. Encourage international student recruitment and retention by offering financial support (scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships).
10. Encourage the presence of international students on committees that require student representation.
11. Enhance internal communication and coordination between student engagement centers, departments in the university that recruit or coordinate international students, program coordinators, and faculty to ensure service visibility and availability for students.

### **5.7.2. Implications for Practice**

1. Globalize pedagogy by leading international students through exploration of the creative, critical thinking, and problem solving processes to develop their own understanding of the new culture and educational system. Globalization of pedagogy could be at the following levels:
  - **Praxis:** By engaging and empowering all learners regardless of their ethnic or cultural background and promoting critical thinking towards local and global issues.
  - **Autonomy:** By providing learners with equitable opportunities to develop their independence, interdependence, and self-directedness through engaging and developing their creativity, critical thinking, social responsibility, decision-making and problem-solving skills for lifelong learning.

- **Reciprocity:** By encouraging and incorporating more opportunities for students to expand and deepen their knowledge about target concepts by reflecting on their previous experience and culture.

2. Glocalize the psychological and physical learning environments by:

- Creating a safe and positive learning environment that supports student's inclusiveness and personal regard for others while respecting how these concepts might differ according to the background and identity of the different learners.
- Ensuring that learning spaces are learner-centered, flexible, sustainable, and able to accommodate the diverse approaches to learning and knowing in order to support the teaching and learning processes of all learners.

3. Glocalize curriculum by providing culturally relevant curriculum that supports widening participation in classroom, prepares both domestic and international students for a diverse workplace, and offers them the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and educational systems to provide an ideal forum for student engagement and future employability.

Glocalization of the curriculum could be on three levels:

- **Content:** By creating culturally responsive and relevant curriculum content that engages students of many cultural backgrounds.
- **Assessment:** by involving students in setting criteria, engage self- and peer-assessment, and provide timely and constructive feedback to support learning.
- **Typology:** By designing a curriculum that is relevant and transferable to different global contexts to enhance knowledge mobilization.

To implement the glocalization concept of “think globally, act locally”, educators and policy makes in the area of higher education should re-think their strategy relating to pedagogy, policies

and procedures, learning environment, and curriculum in order to enhance international students' retention and prepare them for employability in a globally competitive market.

### **5.8. Limitations**

This study has certain limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results of this research. First, the usefulness of the BC HeadSet retention statistical data (2011) is questionable. The available statistical data compares domestic and international student retention in B.C.'s main educational institutions, albeit, there should be more attention paid to the fine nuances and differences based on admission requirements (GPA and English proficiency test), as well as the size, location, and focus of the university. This data was presented in this paper as the only data I could access related to student retention despite contacting several universities and conducting numerous searches in existing literature.

Another key limitation is the location of my research. It was conducted at a single institution and in one province only. While the chosen university is a diverse institution that includes more than 85 different nationalities on campus, not having broader geographical diversity makes it more challenging to generalize the results.

Finally, a limitation can be found in my method of recruitment, passive snowball sampling technique. Those who chose to respond to my request may represent a certain demographic, thus creating the potential of skewing my findings. The participants who responded may be particularly interested in the topic of glocalization or belong to a specific student club or society and this could distort the themes and incidents that they identify.

### **5.9. Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research is needed to explore the applicability of glocalization and its impact on international student retention in other settings and populations outside British Columbia contexts. Research that utilizes similar questions to those posed in this study, but includes international students from multiple peer universities (meaning similar in size and rankings) in Canada would help in better understanding whether and how glocalization of municipal and regional factors and institutional or provincial policies and practices have different impacts on international student retention. A comparative study at multiple peer universities across several countries within the global field would help develop a universal glocalization policy that serves the huge number of international students who are “located in a ‘gray zone’ of regulation with incomplete human rights, security and capabilities” (Marginson, 2012, p. 497).

The findings of this study suggest the need for additional research to explore particular results in more details. While this research provides some answers for those interested in the problem of international student success and retention, a reconsideration of the current definition of retention is necessary to include international students who leave their studies for family, financial, or political reasons and then choose to return to the same institutions to continue their degrees and earn their credentials. Additional research will also help in learning more about and in establishing if the incidents that participants described as influential and promising practices for glocalization actually do affect their academic performance. Finally, further research could consider how the glocalization of higher education in Canada enables or constrains the development of citizenship competencies and prepares international students to be more successful in their settlement in Canada after graduation.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A. Informed Consent Form



Thompson Rivers  
University

## Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Project

900 McGill Road

Box 3010

Kamloops, BC

V2C 0C8

Telephone (250) 828-5000

Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education

**Note:** The University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of participants. This form and the information it contains is given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures, risks and benefits involved in this research project or experiment.

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more details, feel free to ask at anytime. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

You have requested information from Hasan Kettaneh, M.Ed-educational leadership student of the Faculty of Human, Social and Educational Development of Thompson Rivers University, telephone number 778.257.6272, regarding participation in a research project entitled: ***Glocalization and international student retention in higher education*** which encompasses the following details below. This paper provides information to potential research participants, a section to sign if you voluntarily consent to participate in this research, and a copy of the Participant Feedback Form.

### **Purpose of the research**

International education is a two-way flow of students, educators, and ideas between countries, and its expansion helps to create new relationships between nations. With the emergent reality of glocalization as the backdrop and using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) this research aims to answer the following questions and contribute to filling a research gap because few studies have investigated international student retention (Andrade, 2005; Andrade, 2008; Behroozi-Bagherpour, 2010; Evans, 2001; Johnson, 2008; Kitsos, 2012; Kontaxakis, 2011; Lee, 2012):

- Does glocalization in university teaching help international students' retention?
- What are promising practices for glocalization in university teaching?

The innovative strategy of glocalization offers a unique platform for mutual understanding of needs, problems, and solutions. It also acts a bridge between domestic and international students who are willing and able to “think globally and act locally” contributing to students’ retention and development in the long term.

### **Research procedures**

As an established form of narrative inquiry the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) will be used in this research to reveal and chronicle your lived experiences as an international student. We are interested in how glocalization has helped you to remain at university. Stucki, Kahu, Jenkins, Bruce-Ferguson and Kane (2004) and Bishop (2005) have suggested that research is needed where students are able to talk openly rather than present official versions. The CIT is a form of interview research in which participants provide descriptive accounts of events that facilitated or hindered a particular aim. As conceptualized originally, a critical incident is one that makes a significant contribution to an activity or phenomenon (Flanagan, 1954). Similarly, use of the CIT allows the student voice to direct the development of interventions (Curtis et al., 2012).

During the interview, you will be requested to reflect on your experience through the following questions after becoming familiar with the definition of glocalization in this research. Glocalization is defined as “the simultaneity — the co-presence — of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies” (Robertson, 1995, p. 30), and as the dialectic term of the global and local (Weber, 2007). By definition, the term glocal refers to those individuals, groups, divisions, units, organizations, and communities which are willing and able to think globally and act locally (Tien & Talley, 2012, p. 126).

#### **Interview Questions:**

In the way in which we are defining glocalization‘ in this research:

- Can you describe times when as a student you have experienced glocalization in university teaching?
- Can you describe times when glocalization in university teaching has helped you to remain at university?

The role of the interviewer will be to help you describe a ‘complete story’ which is made up of a trigger (something that happened that triggered the incident), action (what happened following the trigger), and outcome (what was the end result of the incident).

The resultant stories will be collaboratively grouped by similarity into categories that encompass the events which will guide the co-construction of professional development initiatives and identification of the promising practices of glocalization in retaining students in higher education.

**What will be expected of you**

Your participation is completely voluntary and nobody will be forced to take part. Participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, and all data related to that participant will be destroyed and removed from the study. You would advise me by email, telephone or in person of your wish to withdraw. No reason need be given and there are no consequences related to withdrawing from the study or to refusing to participate in the study. As a result of this communication your data would be immediately removed from the research materials and data storage. The interview data will only be viewed by the researchers who will have signed a confidentiality agreement. The project will be conducted at Thompson Rivers University's Kamloops campus. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. It is not anticipated that the study will cause any discomfort or long term risks to participants. The information gleaned will provide excellent data for future planning.

**How the research will be used, e.g. presented at conferences, published work, etc.**

The information that the participant provides will be used for the purpose of this study and may be reported in conferences, academic journals and other academic publications. In the reporting of this research, participant identity will be strictly confidential and identifiers such as names, dates and locations removed or coded generally.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of all information shared within the interview and analysis is assured through researcher team members (including transcribers) signing a confidentiality agreement form. Every effort will be made to ensure participants will be non-identifiable in all reporting of findings from this research. The researcher will remove all identifying features (names, dates, and locations) or code them.

Hard copies of the data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in Dr. Victoria Handford's office. Electronic data will be stored on an external hard drive in a locked file cabinet in Dr. Victoria Handford's office. The data will be stored for seven years after the completion of the research project, after which it will be destroyed.

If you agree to participate, please confirm this by completing a Consent Form and forwarding it to me. Consent forms will be kept in separate and secure place in Dr. Victoria Handford's office for seven years, after which, they will be destroyed. You are very welcome to ask questions about the project before signing the Consent Form. Academic and professional relationships will not be affected by either refusal or agreement to participate.

**Updated information during the course of the research**

A report of findings will be available in the Winter of 2016 for the participants in the project. Publication of findings in an academic journal is anticipated sometime in 2016. You can request an executive summary of the findings from the study by contacting me at the email address provided below, when the study has been completed.

**Financial matters**

There are no financial costs or gains to you as a participant due to participation in this research.

**Copies of the results of this study**

Each participant will receive a hard copy or electronic pdf copy (as indicated) of the completed report. Further copies can be obtained by contacting:

Hasan Kettaneh

M.Ed-educational leadership student

Faculty of Human, Social and Educational Development

Thompson Rivers University

Kamloops, BC

Canada

Email: [kittanehasan@hotmail.com](mailto:kittanehasan@hotmail.com)

Tel.: (778) 257-6272

Prof. Airini is the Dean of Faculty of Human, Social and Educational Development. She can be contacted at [airini@tru.ca](mailto:airini@tru.ca)

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible.

*Sincerely,*

*Hasan Kettaneh*

---

My signature on this form indicates that I understand the information regarding this research project, including all procedures and the personal risks involved, and that I voluntarily agree to participate in this project.

I understand that my identity and any identifying information obtained will be kept confidential.

I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw my participation in this project at any time without any negative consequences. My involvement or non-involvement in this project is in no way related to my status as a student.

I have had the opportunity to ask questions about this research. I understand that I may ask further questions or register any complaint I might have about the project with either the chief researcher named above or [kittanehasan@hotmail.com](mailto:kittanehasan@hotmail.com), or telephone number +1 (778) 257-6272.

If I have any questions or issues concerning this project that are not related to the specifics of the

research, I may also contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board, telephone number, 828-5000 or see the Participant Feedback form.

I have received a copy of this consent form and a Participant Feedback form.

Name: (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator and/or Delegate's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

.....

I agree to have audio data collected which entails an interview of 45-60 minutes and will be used for the purpose of this study and may be reported in conferences, academic journals and other academic publications. Hard copies of interview data will be destroyed by shredding and digital data and associated functions will be disabled seven years after the completion of the research project.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B. Participant Feedback Form****Participant Feedback Form**

**Thompson Rivers  
University**

**900 McGill Road**

**Box 3010**

**Kamloops, BC**

**V2C 0C8**

**Telephone (250) 828-5000**

Dear Participant,

The Research Ethics Board would like to thank you for participating in this study. If you would care to comment on the procedures involved you may complete the following form and send it to the Chair, The University Research Ethics Board. Completion of this form is optional, and is not a requirement of participation in the project. All information will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Name of Principal Investigator: Hasan Kettaneh

Title of Project: *Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education*  
Faculty: Faculty of Human, Social and Educational Development

Did you sign an informed Consent Form before participating in the project? \_\_\_\_\_

Were you given a copy of the Consent Form? \_\_\_\_\_

Were there significant deviations from the originally stated purpose, procedures and time  
commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to comment on my involvement in the above project which took

place: \_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

(Place)

(Time)

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is it permissible for the Research Ethics Board to contact you regarding this form?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**Completion of this section is optional**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

This form should be sent to Chair, Thompson Rivers University, Research Ethics Board, 900 McGill Road,  
Room CT225, TRU, Kamloops, B.C. V2C 0C8

## **Appendix C. Interview Questions**

### **Interview questions using Critical Incidents Technique (CIT)**

In the way in which we are defining glocalization in this research:

- Can you describe times when as a student you have experienced glocalization in university teaching?
- Can you describe times when glocalization in university teaching has helped you to remain at university?

### **Probing Questions**

Trigger:

- Is there a specific moment you can describe?
- Do you remember a particular time?
- What was the event that you think was the beginning of this experience?
- Is there more you can tell me about the beginning/middle/end of this experience?

Action:

- Was there an action you took as a result of the moment you were in?
- What did you say next?
- Was there a sequence of events that happened in this incident?
- Were there others involved?

Outcome:

- Did anything change as a result of this incident, either with you or in the environment?
- So what was the outcome of that whole scenario?
- Did anyone speak to you about the situation, and in doing that you felt something changed?



**Appendix D. Principal Investigator Confidentiality Agreement****PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (CA)**

**Thompson Rivers  
University**

900 McGill Road  
Box 3010  
Kamloops, BC  
V2C 0C8  
Telephone (250) 828-5000

**Title of Project: Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education**

Principal Investigator: Hasan Kettaneh

Faculty Supervisors : Dr. Airini

Dr. Victoria Handford

As the Principal Investigator on the above named project, I agree to keep all the data/information obtained from this research or associated with this project confidential. I will not communicate information I am privy to from any aspects of the research or about the participants to anyone other than the researchers on this project.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix E. Supervisor Confidentiality Agreement- Dr. Airini**



**SUPERVISOR CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (CA)**

**Thompson Rivers  
University**

900 McGill Road  
Box 3010  
Kamloops, BC  
V2C 0C8  
Telephone (250) 828-5000

**Title of Project: Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education**

**Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Airini**

As a faculty supervisor on the above named project, I agree to keep all the data/information obtained from this research or associated with this project confidential. I will not communicate information I am privy to from any aspects of the research or about the participants to anyone other than the researchers on this project.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix F. Supervisor Confidentiality Agreement- Dr. Handford****SUPERVISOR CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (CA)**

**Thompson Rivers  
University**

900 McGill Road  
Box 3010  
Kamloops, BC  
V2C 0C8  
Telephone (250) 828-5000

**Title of Project: Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education**

**Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Victoria Handford**

As a faculty supervisor on the above named project, I agree to keep all the data/information obtained from this research or associated with this project confidential. I will not communicate information I am privy to from any aspects of the research or about the participants to anyone other than the researchers on this project.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix G. Independent Interviewer Confidentiality Agreement****INDEPENDENT INTERVIEWER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (CA)**

**Thompson Rivers  
University**

900 McGill Road  
Box 3010  
Kamloops, BC  
V2C 0C8  
Telephone (250) 828-5000

**Title of Project: Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education**

Principal Investigator: Hasan Kettaneh

Faculty Supervisors : Dr. Airini

Dr. Victoria Handford

As an independent interviewer on the above named project, I agree to keep all the data/information and any other research activities associated with this project confidential. I will not retain research data and I will not communicate information I am privy to from any aspects of the research or about the participants to anyone other than the researchers on this project.

I agree to undertake research duties in accordance with these conditions.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix H. Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement****TRANSCRIBER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (CA)**

**Thompson Rivers  
University**

900 McGill Road  
Box 3010  
Kamloops, BC  
V2C 0C8  
Telephone (250) 828-5000

**Title of Project: Glocalization and International Student Retention in Higher Education**

Principal Investigator: Hasan Kettaneh

Faculty Supervisors : Dr. Airini

Dr. Victoria Handford

As a research transcriber on the above named project, I agree to keep all the data/information I gather from interviews, transcribing tapes and any other research activities associated with this project confidential. I will not retain research data and I will not communicate information I am privy to from any aspects of the research or about the participants to anyone other than the researchers on this project.

I agree to undertake transcribing of audio-tapes and other research duties in accordance with these conditions.

Name:

Signature:

Date: