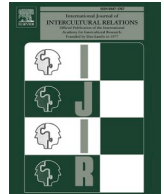




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Complex but integrated: Exploring social and cultural identities of women Third Culture Kids (TCK) and factors predicting life satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

The 21st century, defined by cultural diversity and global mobility, has triggered an unprecedented increase in multicultural individuals, defined as people who internalised more than one culture. Contrasting evidence related to multiculturalism calls for more explorative research to understand cross-cultural identities. The present study explored social and cultural identities of adult female Third Culture Kids (TCKs) ($n = 122$), multicultural individuals who live mobile lives, and adjustment factors of a global mindset, social inclusiveness and essentialism to find predictors of life satisfaction. We classified social identity into four we-concepts: we-group, we-category, we-attributive and we-axiological, and cultural identity into three configurations: integration, categorisation and compartmentalisation. Our results suggested that TCK define social identity predominantly based on passport country (we-category) and relationships with family and friends (we-group). We indicated that axiological (value-based) social identification and global mindset buffered essentialism and categorisation known to disturb cross-cultural relationships. There was a general tendency for integrated cultural identity, with cultural configurations of categorisation and compartmentalisation correlating positively with essentialism. Hierarchical regression analysis evidenced that integrated multicultural identity, global mindset, and social inclusiveness were significant positive predictors of life satisfaction for female TCK. These results feed into a better understanding of the TCK configurations of collective identities and highlighted new factors related to TCK well-being.

Introduction

Multicultural individuals who internalised more than one culture (Benet-Martinez & Hong, 2014) have become a significant aspect of the internationalised world, and their numbers are increasing worldwide (McDonald, 2010). Contrasting evidence on multiculturalism calls for research to understand cross-cultural identity (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005), as such phenomena will become increasingly prevalent. Especially relevant seems exploration of factors that may facilitate the well-being and adjustment of Third Culture Kids (TCK), who might naturally possess cross-cultural competencies to answer the globalised world's changing character (Stokke, 2013). An example of the country in which many TCK reside is the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Due to its flourishing economy, the UAE has attracted many expatriates to settle in. Most students fall into the TCK category in the UAE, as the country has a

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nine to one ratio between expatriates and local Emirati citizens (Global Media Insight, 2020), and there is no push to assimilate with the local culture. Furthermore, students in the UAE are exposed to diverse cultural paradigms early on and predominantly create their "third culture".

Defining Third Culture Kids

The term "Third Culture Kids" (TCK) was introduced by sociologists Ruth and John Useem in the late 1950s (as cited in Pollock, Van Reken, & Pollock, 2017), referring to individuals who spent a significant part of their formative development outside their parents' country. Despite variability within a TCK population, the Useems established intragroup similarities, namely experienced transience and homelessness. Historically, TCK characteristics mostly applied to children of missionaries and diplomats. However, with the increasing globalisation and internationalisation of the business, the most significant part of the TCK collective constitute children of employees on international posts (Phuwit, 2019). In many places worldwide, including the UAE, cross-cultural children are becoming the norm rather than the exception (Dillon & Ali, 2019). Despite not being yet a widely used social identity category, TCK began to be proposed as self-identification by many individuals with mobile lifestyles (Jung, 2016; Rustine, 2018; Stokke, 2013). As a unique group, TCK was identified in fields of education (Dillon & Ali, 2019; Espinetti, 2011) and mental health (Barringer, 2001; Melles & Frey, 2014; Washington & Gadikar, 2016), with some authors referring to TCK as an invisible minority (McDonald, 2010).

The example of self-identification as TCK is demonstrated by the following quotes: "TCK fits my nomadic lifestyle and, for me, has reinforced the notion that we are all products of our experience" (K.R., 2011), "me as ti-si-kayz", "my TCK tribe" (Jung, 2016), "one month after my birth, my parents started my life as a TCK" (Meinberg Paganini, 2020), "my status as an adult TCK" (Stokke, 2013). Furthermore, TCKs have multiple associations like the *International Society for Missionary Kids*, *Mu Kappa*, *Families in Global Transition* and *Interaction International*. *Mu Kappa* association, for example, gives young people with transient cross-cultural experience a virtual space to find peers and a platform on which TCK can build their identity.

The term "third culture" suggests that TCK may develop a unique cultural identity that is neither their parents' culture (first culture) nor the host culture (second culture) (Pollock et al., 2017; Useem & Cottrell, 1996). Third culture (also called after the Useems interstitial culture) is defined as a "shared commonality of those living an internationally mobile lifestyle" (Pollock et al., 2017). The theory of third space, developed by Homi Bhabha, helps understand the third culture of cross-cultural individuals (Bhabha, 1994). For Bhabha, a third space is not a physical place but an interstitial location between and beyond borders where two (or more) cultures meet, confront each other and eventually mix, and where hybrid identifications and cultural transformations happen. Hybridity suggests an interaction between cultures and rejects the idea of fixed and stable identities in favour of more fluid and plural. Bhabha, showing his anti-essentialist attitude toward culture, questions the concept of homogenous, closed and complete national cultures, highlighting that they are always in the process of becoming and changing (Jamshidian & Pourgiv, 2019).

Pearce (2011) presents an alternative perspective on the TCK phenomenon and argues against transiently raised individuals constituting a culture. Pearce explains that culture as such could not develop in a group of individuals who are only connected by similar experiences, not sharing history or space. This perspective reflects the traditional, positivistic approach to culture, which is - in most cases - a national culture. On the contrary, Hayden (2012) argues that the sense of belonging to a globally mobile group is associated with relationships with similar others rather than a specific place, such as a country. Therefore, the "third culture" would then be somewhat reflected in a similar mindset and shared patterns of life choices that cause sameness not geographically or generationally bounded (Hayden, 2012; McLachlan, 2007), reflecting post-modern perspective.

Advantages to being TCK

The multicultural identity of TCK carry both positive and negative implications, and the advantages of the TCK lifestyle are extensive. TCK benefit from exposure to many different cultures and high mobility, which positively impacts social and cognitive skills like intercultural sensitivity, an expanded worldview (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Pollock et al., 2017; Straffon, 2003) and positive diversity beliefs (de Waal, Born, Brinkmann, & Frasch, 2020). TCK demonstrate intercultural literacy, adaptability, flexibility (Stokke, 2013), cosmopolitanism (Cho, 2009), increased tolerance (Gerner, Perry, Moselle, & Archbold, 1992), decreased racial prejudice (Viser, 1986), facilitated relatedness with others, volunteering engagement (Useem & Cottrell, 1996), and predisposition for multilingualism and global mindset (Stokke, 2013).

A global mindset is a relatively new concept that facilitates cross-cultural interaction and provides a critical advantage in a globalised world. It has recently attracted many scholars' attention (e.g., Andresen & Bergdolt, 2017; den Dekker, 2011; French & Chang, 2016; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2002; Levy, Beechler, Taylor, & Boyacigiller, 2007; Lovvorn & Chen, 2011). Levy et al. (2007) proposed a comprehensive definition of the global mindset as a "highly complex cognitive structure characterised by an openness to and articulation of multiple cultural and strategic realities on both global and local levels, and the cognitive ability to mediate and integrate across this multiplicity" (p. 27). Those with a global mindset are described as having a passion for diversity (Stokke, 2013), vast cultural knowledge (den Dekker, 2011), cultural intelligence (Andresen & Bergdolt, 2017), and high cognitive abilities (Levy et al., 2007). Hence, a global mindset's cultural and cognitive components could better adjust an individual to a highly diverse and complex world.

Disadvantages to being TCK

On the other hand, there is some evidence suggesting that those with a cross-cultural upbringing have impaired psychological well-

being as a result of decreased self-esteem (Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011), lower success rate (Burrus, 2006), and increased vulnerability to emotional pain and distress (Goodwin, Cook, & Yung, 2001). Also, TCK may experience grief and loss of friends or places (Espinetti, 2011), and consequently, feelings of loneliness (Cockburn, 2002). TCK' transient lifestyle might inhibit the development of healthy social relationships and disconnect TCK from social support, which intensifies loneliness (Lee & Goldstein, 2016). Furthermore, individuals with cross-cultural backgrounds reported an increased potential for acculturative stress and readjustment distress when relocating to countries in which they are passport-holders (Pollock et al., 2017).

The most severe disadvantage to being TCK relates to identity (e.g., Fail et al., 2004; Pollock et al., 2017; Vivero & Jenkins, 1999). Multiple shifts in location, culture, and languages during childhood years create many challenges to forming mature, solid, and integrated personal, social, and cultural identities of TCK individuals. Frequent moves might threaten self-continuity, the sense that one's past, present, and future are meaningfully connected, which is one of the defining features of personal identity (Becker et al., 2018). During adolescence, the outlook on oneself, values, and worldview forms based on the cultural environment. If such context is unclear or consists of contradictory cultural paradigms, it might impact the coherence of values and norms that underlie the self. For children raised in one culture, the country of origin is the most significant category for social identity creation (Nette & Hayden, 2007). Creating collective identity might become challenging for TCK as traditional categories of nationality, ethnicity, and geographically described communities do not constitute sufficient social identity sources (Hayden, 2012). In the literature, labels ascribed to the TCK include culturally homeless, culturally rootless, or suspended between cultures (e.g., Vivero & Jenkins, 1999; Pollock et al., 2017; Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011), suggesting that TCK face almost unresolvable problems. On the other hand, as Pollock et al. (2017) observed, being rooted in various cultures might make TCK feel at home anywhere.

Social identity

The concept of social identity as presented in the Social Identity Theory (SIT), developed by Tajfel (1974), is defined as a part of one's self-concept which derives from knowledge of membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership. According to SIT, the primary psychological mechanism underlying social identity formation is a need to have a positive self-image that might be secured by belongingness to a group positively evaluated. The process of choosing a particular group (or groups) that can meet one's needs is explained by the Self-Categorization Theory (SCT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The SCT assumes that self-categorisation, i.e., including oneself to a given social category, can exist at different levels of abstraction: the interpersonal (subordinate level, self as an individual person), intergroup (intermediate level, self as a group member), and interspecies (superordinate level, self as a human being) (Turner & Reynolds, 2012).

Building upon SIT and SCT, Maria Jarymowicz (2002; 2015) introduced the we-concept, associated with different forms of social identities, which can develop on intermediate and superordinate abstraction levels. She identified four types of the we-concept, implying four types of social identity: (1) the group identity (small groups where each member has direct contact with all members, e.g., family), (2) the categorical identity (established social categories, with well-defined boundaries, e.g., gender, nationality), (3) the attributive identity (based on a more abstract criterion, such as shared interests, activities) (4) the axiological identity (based on shared values, e.g., animal lovers, freedom fighters). It should be emphasised that the types of we-concept vary as per their level of inclusiveness. Attributive and axiological we-concepts are more inclusive than we-group and we-categorical, which means that these first concepts may embrace any individual, regardless of membership in a gender, profession, national, or cultural category.

What is essential in Jarymowicz's (2002) reasoning is that individuals, referring to their social identity, use predominantly social categories such as gender, profession, and nation. Yet, this option is just one among a variety of other options in building social identity. It is in line with some authors' claims that TCK may rely on direct relationships with similar others while defining their social identity rather than looking for members of the same social category. Nette and Hayden (2007) highlighted that friendship constitutes an anchor for developing an integrated identity for "global nomads". Additionally, according to Jordan (1981), artificial reliance on passport countries in identity-building could be limiting and harmful to TCK. The question arises with whom the TCK identify predominantly and what social identity is the most prevalent?

Cultural identity

Cultural identity, according to Wan and Chew (2013), is "a part of an individual's self that signals the individual's connection with a culture" (p. 247). Culture is understood as knowledge, traditions, a collection of ideas, values, beliefs, norms, and practices, shared or widely distributed in a given population (Hong, Wan, No, & Chiu, 2007). In other words, cultural identity is an integral part of the self-concept constructed via the process of learning and sharing within a distinctive cultural setting (Kim, 2007). Wan and Chew (2013) described the development of cultural identity as the process through which an individual acquires knowledge about cultural norms, beliefs, values, and practices and attributes to oneself a label relevant to a membership in a given cultural community. In traditional societies, most members of the community share the same cultural identity. For individuals under the influence of different or contradictory cultural paradigms, cultural identity might be less precise (Van Reken, 2012). Hence, for TCK, each cultural identity element would be multiplied and either complementing or challenging to other components.

In terms of Bhabha's third space theory (1994), this process could be understood as a hybridisation. For Bhabha, hybridisation means an interaction among different cultures, during which they influence each other and merge without giving up or neglecting their specific cultural features, converging into an ultimate product, i.e. we would say - third culture identity. Furthermore, Moje et al. (2004) described the third space as a transformational bridge that allows for seeing the contradictions as constructive, not conflicting. While Bhabha was referring to the disparity in power between cultures in contact (colonial superiority), for TCK, the hybrid creation

may follow different configurations from dominance exerted by one culture (categorisation) via compartmentalisation and, finally, integration.

Researchers offer to explain such different ways that individuals might cognitively and psychologically use to organise multiple cultural identities. Amiot et al. (2007) proposed the Cognitive-Developmental Model of Social Identity Integration (CDSMI), which encompasses four main identity shaping stages: anticipatory categorisation, categorisation, compartmentalisation, and integration. Yampolsky, Amiot, and de la Sablonniere (2016) drawing from the CDSMI, evidenced for biculturals three identity configurations: categorisation, compartmentalisation, and integration. First, categorisation defines self through identification with only one of the held identities while excluding other identities from the self. Pollock et al. (2017) also recognised this type of configuration and described it as a ‘differences focused approach.’ Second, compartmentalisation reflects keeping multiple identities in their own compartments within the self, separate from each other. These individuals identify with one cultural group at a time, activated by a particular context as a response to cultural cues (e.g., language, cultural symbols). This process is also called frame switching (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000). Finally, integration configuration is based on seeing a common ground between identities, while differences are perceived as complementary. An individual may develop a higher-order, superordinate inclusive identity that incorporates different cultural paradigms. In contrast to compartmentalisation, integrated individuals can identify with all cultures simultaneously. Although an increasing number of empirical studies on multicultural identities have emerged, there is little knowledge of how TCK organise their multiple cultural identities and what factors may contribute to how cultural parts are endorsed.

Factors related to social and cultural identity

A multicultural environment offers a wide array of social collectives to belong to as the possible basis for establishing the TCK’s social and cultural identities. Nevertheless, individuals choose some, ignore others. Undoubtedly, international experience is fundamental to TCK identity (Pollock et al., 2017). Another factor is language, which as a mother tongue, is an essential source of identity (Yildiz, 2012). Vivero and Jenkins (1999) highlighted that for multilingual kids, the idea of the primary language is based on a mixture of all languages that the child is exposed to, which create an original structure not shared by anyone else. Because language is used to transmit culture, Nguyen and Ahmadpanah (2014) also evidenced that the relationships between the native languages can mediate if a multicultural person will develop a blended and harmonious or compartmentalised identity. Hence, multilingualism can contribute to general confusion and decreased well-being of cross-cultural individuals, not letting them connect fully with any cultural world.

A global mindset is another factor that should be considered. Stokke (2013) suggested that the central aspect of the global mindset for cross-culturally exposed individuals was a “passion for diversity.” Cultural and cognitive aspects of a global mindset, namely high interest in other cultures, positive assessment of culturally different others, ability to perceive similarities between diversities, facilitate cultural learning and gaining knowledge, essential for the development of cultural identity. Simultaneously, a global mindset supports questioning of the categorical identity (Kubota, 2010). An internalisation of more than one cultural worldview (ethnorelativism) is forming an opposite frame of reference to ethnocentrism (Bennett, 2017). Therefore, a global mindset creates favourable conditions for the organisation of cultural identities in an integrated manner rather than categorical or compartmentalised. Similarly, a global mindset may contribute to social identity formation based on more inclusive social types, such as attributive and axiological.

While a global mindset highlights similarity among people of different origins and promotes abandonment of traditional boundaries, essentialism amplifies others’ perceptions based on substantial distinctions and perceives the between-group differences as fixed (Bastian & Haslam, 2006). Essentialism consists of beliefs that differences between people are grounded in underlying, identity-determining essences and that human attributes are deeply rooted, natural, discrete, and informative about people. The same view is about groups and social categories since people tend to essentialise categories such as race, nationality, and ethnicity (Bastian & Haslam, 2006; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). An essentialist understanding of a group implies that group membership is immutable (Bastian & Haslam, 2007). Such a tendency to rely on a rigid categorisation process makes it more challenging to navigate cultural frames. Research shows that essentialism encourages stereotypes (Bastian & Haslam, 2006), justification for inequality, racial discrimination, and prejudice (Keller, 2005; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). In contrast, less essentialist views about culture could allow cross-cultural individuals to move between different cultural systems and define themselves in dynamic, contextualised ways (Chao, Chen, Roisman, & Hong, 2007), promoting more inclusive and integrated social identities.

Lastly, social ties may also affect the formation of social and cultural identities of TCK. Having strong family ties, close friendships, relationships at school, or work helps individuals choose a social collective as a base for social identity. Also, as Wan and Chew (2013) suggest, social ties may support establishing cultural identity since they serve as a transmission agent of shared cultural knowledge. Additionally, the perception of social inclusiveness could be supportive of one’s coherent identity formation.

Psychological well-being of TCKs

There has been a long-established approach in literature associating cross-cultural identity and frequent geographical relocations with impoverished well-being (Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011; Schaetti, 1996). “Transculturalism” and identity “between”, as ascribed to the TCK’s self-concept, have been regarded as rather negative traits related to lowered levels of self-esteem (Hoersting & Jenkins, 2010), success (Burrus, 2006), and identity integration (Pollock et al., 2017; Vivero & Jenkins, 1999). Nevertheless, growing evidence in psychological research supports the opposite view of multiculturalism. For example, bicultural individuals who can form strong, positive multi-ethnic identities have higher self-esteem (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997), fewer mental health problems (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), and higher academic achievement (Fulgini, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005) than their peers with less developed identities. However, it is essential to emphasise that merely having more than one cultural identity may not be enough to benefit the

person. Studies show that multicultural individuals' well-being depends on how individuals configure their complex identities (Amiot, de la Sablonniere, Terry, & Smith, 2007; Carpentier & de la Sablonniere, 2013; Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013). The most consistent argument in the literature is that integration predicts well-being, while categorisation and compartmentalisation operate inconsistently (Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013). Another factor to consider is the we-concept introduced by Jarymowicz (2015). In this view, inclusive we-concepts, such as attributive and axiological, diminish the possibility of negative social attitudes toward others, which improve social relationships and contribute to an individual's well-being. The axiological identity seems especially important because its psychological foundation is a community among people across diverse cultures.

Aims, research questions and hypotheses

Although biculturalism has been previously studied (e.g., Cheng, Lee, Benet-Martinez, & Huynh, 2014; Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005), there is a scarcity of quantitative research on identity structure and the psychological well-being of TCK individuals who usually have more complex cultural identity than biculturals. Within theoretical paradigms of social and cultural identities, the present study aimed at exploring the uniqueness of TCK females' cultural and social identity with multiple objectives.

Firstly, we aimed to explore the configurations and prevalence of specific forms of social and cultural identities. Assumptions based on Tajfel's SIT (1974) imply a higher frequency of categorical forms of social identity defined as a we-concept, though some authors (Jarymowicz, 2002; Nette & Hayden, 2007) suggest that other identifications might prevail. According to the SIT, configurations of multicultural identity such as categorisation and compartmentalisation might dominate over integration, but empirical evidence concerning bicultural individuals suggests otherwise (Yampolsky et al., 2016). Given inconclusive theoretical and empirical claims, the issue of configurations of social and cultural identities of TCK is posed here as an explorative research question:

RQ1. What are the configurations of TCK social and cultural identities and interrelations among them?

Secondly, we attempted to investigate the TCK characteristics, such as factors associated positively or negatively with cross-cultural individuals' social and cultural identity configurations. Based on the literature, we selected the following variables: number of countries where TCK lived, number of languages spoken, global mindset (Stokke, 2013; Kubota, 2010; Bennett, 2017), social inclusiveness (Wan & Chew, 2013), and essentialism (Bastian & Haslam, 2006, 2007; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008) as factors related to social and cultural identities. Thus, the following research question and set of hypotheses have been formulated:

RQ2. What are the relations between the number of countries where TCKs lived, the number of languages spoken and social and cultural identities configurations?

H1a. There are positive relationships between global mindset, attributive and axiological we-concepts, and integrated cultural identity.

H1b. There are positive relationships between essentialism, categorical we-concept, and cultural identity configurations: categorisation and compartmentalisation, but negative relationships between essentialism, attributive and axiological we-concept, and integrated cultural identity.

H1c. There are positive relationships between social inclusiveness, group and attributive we-concept, and integrated cultural identity.

Thirdly, we aimed to identify the potential predictors of life satisfaction of TCK. Research on social identity, defined in terms of we-concept, shows that more inclusive forms, such as we-attributive and we-axiological, promote more positive attitudes toward other people and more prosocial behaviours, resulting in higher satisfaction with life (Jarymowicz, 2002, 2015). There is empirical evidence that an integrated form of multicultural identity predicts the positive well-being of cross-cultural individuals (e.g. Yampolsky and Amiot, 2013). Also, global mindset, social inclusiveness, and essentialism would affect life satisfaction. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2. Life satisfaction of TCK is associated positively with attributive and axiological we-concepts, an integrated configuration of cultural identity, global mindset and social inclusiveness, but negatively with essentialism.

Method

Sample

One hundred thirty-three TCK were recruited via purposive sampling, but due to inequivalence of gender, the male participants ($n = 11$) have been removed from the analyses. The study comprised 122 females, undergraduate students of a British overseas university campus in Dubai, UAE, with a mean age of 20.6 years ($SD = 3.6$; Range: 18–43), coming from 18 countries, with a majority being South Asian - 77 individuals (60%), 20 Arabs (15%), 13 Europeans (9%) and others. All reported being influenced by on average two cultures ($M = 2.2$; $SD = 1.02$; Range 1–6), and they considered themselves TCK based on a given definition: *please check YES if you have been raised in a culture other than your parents (or culture of the country given on your passport) for a significant part (more than one year) of early years 6–18*. Fifty-one individuals (42%) reported being influenced by two cultures, 35 respondents (28%) by one culture, 23 respondents (19%) by three cultures, nine individuals (7%) by four cultures, three individuals (2%) by five cultures, one person (1%) by six cultures. Participants provided also information about length of stay in the multicultural environment of the United Arab

Emirates in years ($M = 14.22$; $SD = 6.5$; Mode = 18; Range: 1–35); number of countries outside passport country a person lived in for more than one year ($M = 1.66$; $SD = .83$; Mode = 1; Range: 0–5); and number of languages a person could speak fluently ($M = 2.5$; $SD = .97$; Mode = 2, Range: 1–5).

Procedure

Data was collected online via Google Forms and stopped due to the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which could have confounded life satisfaction scores. Respondents were informed about the study objectives, non-paid voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, and withdrawal rights.

Measures

Social identity – the we-concept measurement

The Questionnaire of Social Perception (Jarymowicz, 2002) was applied to establish types of we-concept based on identification with a group or a broader social collective. In response to the open question, “Who are the people you call we/us? Please, finish the following sentence: We are ...”, participants were asked to list five answers. These answers were scored, grouped, and analysed by the authors, and three indices were created.

Firstly, the answers were classified into categories such as family, friends, students, nation, religion, community, activity group, preferred values, etc., according to what type of “we” participants referred. Therefore, a number of nominal variables were created with values 0 and 1. Score 1 was assigned to an individual who mentioned a given type of “we” at least once or more times.

Secondly, the particular we-concepts were grouped together into the categories identified by Jarymowicz (2002). These were the following categories: (1) identification with small groups within which face-to-face contact was possible; e.g., family, friends; (2) identification with social categories, a membership to which was based on an explicit criterion, such as gender, ethnicity; face-to-face contacts were possible with some members only; (3) attributive identification, based on a more abstract criterion, such as shared interests, and (4) axiological identification, based on shared values. Again, four nominal variables (for each category) were created with values 0 and 1. The score 1 was assigned to an individual who mentioned at least once or more times a particular type of the we-concept which belonged to a given category.

Thirdly, we computed four weighted scores for each of four variables (group, category, attributive, axiological) according to the rank order in which a given type of “we” appeared in the string of “we”, assigned by a participant. The first position got 5 scores, the second – 4 scores, the third – 3 scores, the fourth – 2 scores, the last fifth position – 1 score. The zero score was for the type of we-concept not mentioned by a participant. The range values of each variable were from 0 (none of the given ‘we’ were indicated) to 15 (all 5 belonged to the same “we” type). For example, a person who answered: *Pakistani, young (people), a family, friends, and Muslim* got five scores for we-group (3 for family and 2 for friends), ten scores for we-category (5 for Pakistani, 4 for young people, 1 for Muslim), zero scores for we-attributive (no such an identification) and zero scores for we-axiological (no such an identification). Thus, in contrast to the two previous indicators, based on the frequency of occurrence, the weighted scores provide information to what degree a person’s social identity was loaded with a particular type of social identification. This computation was based on Bochner’s (1994) adaptation of originally constructed the Twenty Statements Test by Kuhn and McPartland (1954) with modification from self-attitudes to collective identity.

Cultural identity measurement

The Multicultural Identity Integration Scale (MULTIIS) by Yampolsky et al. (2016) assessed three different configurations of multicultural identities. The introduction to the MULTIIS includes a brief definition of cultural identity and cultural context to ensure that all participants consistently understand the questions. MULTIIS consists of three subscales: Categorisation (5 items, $\alpha = .79$) with item sample: “I identify with one culture more than any other”, Compartmentalisation (9 items, $\alpha = .75$) with item sample: “I identify with one of my cultures at a time”, and Integration (8 items, $\alpha = .73$), item sample: “My cultural identities are connected”, all scored on 7-point Likert scale 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*exactly*). We used the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess the three-factorial structure of the MULTIIS. The CFA model provided acceptable fit to the data: $\chi^2 = 274,41$; $df = 192$; $CMIN/df = 1,43$; $RMSEA = .057$ [90 %CI = .041–.072]; $CFI = .901$.

Social inclusiveness measurement

Four items related to social inclusiveness were adapted from the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (SELSA-Short) (Ditommaso & Spinner, 1993; Ditommaso, Brannen, & Best, 2004). Items were rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Item sample was: “I feel part of a group of friends” ($\alpha = .72$).

Global Mindset measurement

Global Mindset measurement was based on den Dekker (2011) Global Mindset Scale and consisted of four items scored on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Item sample was: “I am a world citizen” ($\alpha = .64$).

Satisfaction With Life Scale

The five-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, 1984) was used to measure individuals’ satisfaction with their lives, using a 7-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 7 (*strongly disagree*). Item sample was: “I am satisfied with my life” ($\alpha =$

.84).

Essentialism measurement

Essentialism was measured with an implementation of a question adapted from the Racial Essentialism Scale (Chao et al., 2007; see also No et al., 2008). This item reflected endorsement of the belief that race is characterised by unchangeable essence and that such essence determines the characteristic abilities/traits of racial group members. Item: “How a person is like (e.g., his or her abilities, traits) is deeply ingrained in his or her race. It cannot be changed much”. As in Chao et al. (2007), answers were scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*).

Analytical strategy

We applied qualitative and quantitative approaches to exploring the social and cultural identity of TCK. To assure the rigour of the content analysis (qualitative approach) of the we-concept question, the authors cross-checked their interpretational classification of the social identifications to allocate them to the groups based on Jarymowicz (2002). We used the we-concept weighted scores (quantitative approach) to describe the social identity configurations and perform other statistical procedures. We tested differences between the types of social identity (weighted scores of group, category, attributive and axiological identities) with the non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test since two variables (attributive and axiological identities) had no normal distribution. Differences between configurations of cultural identity were tested with Student’s t-test for related samples. We calculated correlation coefficients to assess relationships between forms of social identity and cultural identity configurations (Pearson’s r and Kendall’s tau) (RQ1). Analysis of correlations between study variables also provided information concerned RQ2 and H1a,b,c, on factors significant for social and cultural identity. To test H2, we performed linear regression analysis. For this analysis, two variables that violated normal distribution assumptions (attributive and axiological identity, based on weighted scores) were converted into nominal variables, where 0 indicated lack of a given type identity, and 1 – presence. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS v.26.

Results

RQ1: what are the configurations of TCKs’ social and cultural identities and interrelations among them?

Analysis of the social identifications revealed 16 types (Table 1.) further clustered into four we-concepts, presented based on frequency from most commonly mentioned to least (Table 2).

The analysis of social identity represented by weighted scores, revealed that social identities of participants were loaded most heavily with categorical identification (M = 7.0, SD = 5.29), followed by small groups identification (M = 4.55, SD = 4.61), then attributive (M = 1.14, SD = 2.31), and axiological (M = .98, SD = 2.48) (Table 3). The Wilcoxon signed-ranks test proved significant differences between we-categorical scores and we-small groups scores ($z = -2.85, p < .004$), we-attributive scores ($z = -7.52, p = .000$), and we-axiological scores ($z = -7.34, p = .000$); between we-small groups scores and we-attributive scores ($z = -5.98, p = .000$), and we-axiological scores ($z = -7.34, p < .001$), but no significant difference between we-attributive and we-axiological scores ($z = -.97, p = .333$).

The descriptive statistics for the configurations of multicultural identity have been presented in Table 3. The most highly scored configuration was integration, while compartmentalisation had the lowest scores. Pairwise comparison of the three scales revealed that the mean score for integration (M = 4.67, SD = .87) was significantly higher than the mean score for categorisation (M = 4.18, SD = 1.36), $t(121) = 3.65, p = .000$, and significantly higher than the mean score for compartmentalisation (M = 3.67, SD = .93), $t(121) = 8.02, p = .000$. Compartmentalization scores were significantly lower than categorization: $t(121) = 4.58, p = .000$.

Correlation coefficients (Pearson’s r and Kendal’s tau) for weighted scores of social identity provided in the Table 3 showed

Table 1
Types of Social Identifications (N = 122).

	Types	N (%)	Examples
1	Country of origin	67 (55 %)	Indians, British, Kenyans
2	Family	58 (48 %)	Family, immediate family, siblings
3	Friends	58 (48 %)	Friends, friend circle, peers
4	Activity	38 (31 %)	Parting people, book readers, beach lovers
5	Students	44 (36 %)	Students, psychology students
6	Religion	35 (29 %)	Muslims, Roman Catholics, Christians
7	Multiple countries	23 (19 %)	Lebanese-Canadians, Libyans-Canadians, Pakistani-British
8	Gender	22 (18 %)	Women, females, girls
9	Psychological traits	19 (16 %)	Introverts, extraverts, risk-takers
10	Community	13 (11 %)	The church community, the business community, hometown
11	Ethnicity	15 (12 %)	Arabs, Tamilians, Africans
12	Age/generation	10 (8%)	Millennials, young adults, teenagers
13	Continents	7 (6%)	Asians, Europeans, Latin Americans
14	Race	4 (3%)	White people, brown people
15	Sexual orientation	2 (1.6 %)	LGBT + people
16	Human beings	1 (0.8 %)	Humans

Table 2
Types of We-concepts (N = 122).

	We-concept	N (%)	Examples
1	We-category	87 (71 %)	Students, gender, confession
2	We-small groups	67 (55 %)	Family, friends
3	We-attributive	47 (38 %)	Basketball players, book readers
4	We-axiological	10 (12 %)	Animal helpers, risk-takers

significant negative correlations between small groups and categorical identities ($r = -.73, p = .000$), a significant negative correlation between categorical and attributive identities ($\tau = -.16; p < .05$), also between categorical and axiological identities ($\tau = -.16; p < .05$).

With respect to cultural identity, categorization was positively associated with compartmentalization ($r = .47; p = .000$) and marginally with integration ($r = .17; p < .10$), while association between compartmentalization and integration revealed the other direction, albeit of marginal significance ($r = -.17; p < .10$). It is worth noticing that the correlation matrix did not reveal any significant correlations between social identity scores and cultural identity configurations.

RQ2, H1- a,b,c: factors related to the social and cultural identities of TCK

Regarding RQ2, results show that the number of languages spoken fluently was associated positively with integration ($r = .32; p = .000$), as did the number of countries lived in ($r = .26; p < .003$). Correlation coefficients presented in Table 3 showed that almost each of the proposed variables was connected to some configurations of identities. However, proposed hypotheses were confirmed only partly. A global mindset (H1a) was positively associated only with the axiological social identity ($\tau = .15; p < .05$) and negatively with categorical social identity ($r = -.16; p < .05$), though of marginal significance. Essentialism (H1b) correlated positively with categorization ($r = .28; p < .01$) and compartmentalization ($r = .20; p < .05$); negatively with an attributive social identity ($\tau = -.17; p < .05$), and with axiological identity ($\tau = -.16; p < .05$), as expected, but no relations showed to integrated cultural identity. Our expectations concerning social inclusiveness (H1c) were confirmed only in the case of positive relations with a group social identity ($r = .21; p < .05$), but contrary to expectations, we found a tendency toward negative relations with categorical social identity ($r = -.17; p < .10$).

H2: predictors of life satisfaction of TCKs

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed (Cook's D values < 1) to investigate the influence of the factors related to social and cultural identity on life satisfaction (Table 4). Possible predictors were grouped into three models: 1. Social identifications; 2. Cultural identity configurations; 3. Psychosocial factors (global mindset, social inclusiveness, and essentialism). Small groups, categorisation, attributive, and axiological social identifications were included in Model 1, which was not a good fit for data with none of the variables predicting life satisfaction. Compartmentalisation, integration, and categorisation have been added to Model 2. The model was a good fit for data, and predictors accounted for 8% of the variation in life satisfaction, with integration being the only significant and positive predictor of life satisfaction. Global mindset, essentialism, and social inclusiveness were added to Model 3. This model explained 15 % of the variance in life satisfaction. The model fit well the data, with integration, global mindset, and social inclusiveness significantly and positively predicting life satisfaction. None of the social identity types was included in the significant predictors set. Thus, the hypothesis was confirmed only partly.

Discussion

RQ1: what are the predominant configurations of TCK' social and cultural identities and interrelations among them?

Our first research questions concerning social and cultural identities have been answered with evidence supporting the fact that TCK females' social identity is still primarily based on national categories. Previous studies demonstrated that the passport country seems to be an artificial factor in identity building for TCK and can be harmful to their well-being (Jordan, 1981). For children exposed to diversity, limiting their origin to one 'root' in the form of a passport country might be confusing, restricting, and feed into reverse culture shock experience (Gaw, 2000; Pollock et al., 2017; Szkudlarek, 2010). Despite commonly identifying themselves with passport countries, most of the participants also included social identifications based on relationships, not geography, which extends previous results of Hayden (2012) and McLachlan (2007). The most commonly mentioned social identifications based on relationships were "we as a family" and "we as friends," which is in line with the thesis of Nette and Hayden's (2007) that friendship constitutes a central aspect of coherent identity development. There is, therefore, a tendency for women TCK to find alternatives to often irrelevant country categories in their social identity building. We conclude that friendships and small group belongingness could constitute an essential and facilitative factor for the identity of TCK.

Another key outcome of the present study was related to cultural identity configurations. Out of three configurations, TCK females most commonly demonstrated integration, supporting previous research (Yampolsky et al., 2016). It might suggest a general tendency among TCK towards the coherent configuration of diverse cultural selves. Some factors could, however, disturb such harmonious

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Intercorrelations of Variables.

Variables	M	SD	Skew	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1 We-group	4.55	4.61	.50	1											
2 We-categorical	7.00	5.29	.01	-.73**	1										
3 <i>We-attributive</i>	1.14	2.31	2.78	-.08	-.16**	1									
4 <i>We-axiological</i>	.98	2.48	3.12	-.04	-.16**	.10	1								
5 Categorization	4.18	1.36	.02	-.11	.08	-.06	-.06	1							
6 Compartment	3.67	.93	-.13	-.05	.01	.01	-.04	.47**	1						
7 Integration	4.67	.87	-.41	.03	.06	.04	-.09	.17 ^t	-.17 ^t	1					
8 Global Mindset	3.61	.82	-.11	.01	-.16 ^t	.02	.15*	-.09	-.01	.14	1				
9 Essentialism	3.32	1.01	-.31	-.02	.10	-.17*	-.16*	.28**	.20*	.01	-.09	1			
10 Social Inclusiveness	4.03	1.60	.69	.25*	-.18*	-.10	.08	-.02	-.04	.09	.14	.08	1		
11 Life Satisfaction	4.75	1.20	-.24	.03	.04	.01	-.02	.02	-.15	.21*	.21*	.09	.24**	1	
12 Languages	2.48	.97	.43	.11	-.04	.03	-.04	.12	.07	.32**	.01	.06	.11	.14	1
13 Countries Lived In	1.67	.84	1.39	-.13	.09	.07	-.03	-.07	-.03	.26**	.14	-.05	.03	.15	-.15

Note: We-attributive and We-axiological don't have a normal distribution (high skewness scores), so non-parametric Kendal's tau were computed between these and other variables in italics.

^t $p < .10$.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 4

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Social Identifications, Cultural Configurations, Global Mindset, Social Inclusiveness and Essentialism on Life Satisfaction.

Predictors	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta
We - group	.04	.04	.14	.02	.04	.08	.02	.04	.09
We - categorical	.04	.03	.14	.02	.03	.08	.03	.03	.15
We – attributive (0=No; 1=Yes)	.13	.25	.05	.03	.24	.01	.16	.24	.06
We – axiological (0=No; 1=Yes)	-.06	.27	-.02	.03	.26	.01	-.03	.25	-.01
Categorization				.01	.09	.01	.03	.09	.03
Compartmentalization				-.13	.13	-.10	-.17	.13	-.13
Integration				.44	.13	.32**	.35	.13	.26*
Global Mindset							.26	.13	.18*
Essentialism							.13	.11	.11
Social Inclusiveness							.15	.07	.20*
R sqr (R sqr Adj)	.01 (-.02)			.13 (.08)			.22 (.15)		
F	<1 (4; 117)			2.45 (7;114)*			3,09 (10;111)***		
Delta R sqr	.01			.12**			.09**		

Note: *p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p<.001.

preferences provoking deviation towards compartmentalisation or categorisation. Furthermore, correlational analyses revealed that compartmentalisation and categorisation were moderately associated pairwise. Integration was marginally related to categorisation and compartmentalisation. Similar relationships between factors have been presented by Yampolsky et al. (2016), suggesting that individuals might possess a certain level of each configuration, with one becoming salient due to personal characteristics and adjustment requirements.

Intriguingly, our results did not reveal a correlation between social and cultural identities. On one side, this might be due to the differences in employed measures, the more implicit "we" test versus questionnaire-based MULTIIS. On the other hand, our findings suggest that these notions reflect distinct and independent yet complementary processes. Social and cultural identities might not be linearly related but may interact in their impact on well-being (Chang, Jetten, Cruwys, & Haslam, 2017). Identification with a social group defined in terms of shared categorization is portrayed in literature as different from cultural identity understood as shared abstract values and beliefs (Chang & Jetten, 2015). Berry (2001) referred to these two dimensions as civic identity and ethnic identity. Therefore, our findings may touch on the previously discussed idea that social identity theory (SIT) may contradict the theory of multicultural identity development (Negy, Shreve, Jensen, & Uddin, 2003; Phinney et al., 1997). While SIT states that strong ethnic identity will predict negative out-group biases (Tajfel, Berry (2001) within the cultural paradigm suggested that secure and robust ethnic (categorical) identity might lead to positive cross-cultural tendencies. Hence, some researchers propose that culture moderates the SIT theory (Hamamura, 2016), while others suggest expanding the SIT perspective by cultural orientation as an independent factor (Feitosa, Salazar, & Salas, 2012). Our findings could reflect these inconsistencies, but more research is needed.

RQ2. What are the relations between a number of countries where TCK lived, the number of languages spoken and social and cultural identities configurations?

We have further aimed to highlight the specific factors that might feed into variations of cultural and social identities based on the assumption proposed in the Integrative Model of Biculturalism (Cheng et al., 2014). According to Tsai, Ying, and Lee (2000), early migration experience can facilitate integration, primarily due to relationships between acquired early language competencies and cultural engagement. Our participants, on average, spoke at least two languages fluently, with a maximum of six and fluency in more than one language was correlated with integration which aligned with the literature (Russell, 2011; Pollock & Van Reken, 2017; Tarique & Weisbord, 2013). Hence, our findings confirm previous evidence that higher linguistic proficiency supports harmonious bicultural identity (Haritatos & Benet-Martinez, 2002; Tsai et al., 2000), extending these predictions to a multicultural context. Furthermore, the number of countries lived in was significantly associated with cultural identity integration. This finding connects with Den Dekker's (2011) claims that exposure to diversity is central to intercultural sensitivity and acceptance of diversity. Therefore, exposure to diversity and multiple language proficiency have shown to be predictors of intercultural competencies and facilitative to integration.

H1a. There are positive relationships between global mindset, attributive and axiological we-concepts, and integrated cultural identity

H1a hypothesis was partially confirmed as only axiological social identification was positively associated with a global mindset. These findings support Den Dekker's (2011) argument that the ideal form of a global mindset accepts diverse paradigms and takes values-based perspectives on identity. Contrary to our expectations, individuals who formed identity on shared values and had higher predispositions for a global mindset have not been more integrated in terms of cultural identity. The following hypothesis (H1b) explains that integration might be supported by the axiological we-concept in another way by its buffering role in compartmentalisation and categorisation.

H1b. There are positive relationships between essentialism, categorical we-concept, and cultural identity configurations: categorisation and compartmentalisation, but negative relationships between essentialism, attributive and axiological we-concept, and integrated form of cultural identity

H1b was partially confirmed as out of the above suggested social and cultural identifications, compartmentalisation and categorisations configurations were positively associated with essentialism, while axiological and attributive negatively. These relationships support the notion that essentialism is rooted in a fixed and categorical mindset. [Tajfel and Turner \(1986\)](#) proposed that categorisation increased essentialistic and ethnocentric tendencies, influenced attitudes, and took forms of stereotyping and prejudice. Such segregation in the case of TCK could lead to their cultural identity compartmentalisation. As categories-based social identification can lead to depersonalisation, influence conformism, and adherence to group ideals while decreasing personal identification ([Hornesey, 2008](#)), it is vital to search for buffering factors harmonising the social functioning of multicultural individuals.

Our results further highlighted that such buffers could be seen in values-based and interests-based social identifications. Essentialism was negatively associated with attributive identification, confirming [Hornesey's \(2008\)](#) theory that identifications based on shared interests and individual attributes could buffer categorisation tendencies. Hence, supporting idiosyncratic identifications could associate with less essentialist inclinations and possibly more acceptance towards various internal cultural paradigms. Additionally, axiological social identification was also negatively associated with essentialism. It could further extend [Hornesey's \(2008\)](#) idea that categorisation could be overridden by establishing a values-based, non-categorical identity, which would integrate different paradigms within oneself.

H1c. There are positive relationships between social inclusiveness, small groups and attributive we-concepts, and integrated configuration of cultural identity

Literature on TCK articulates that close interpersonal relationships are vital to their functioning and their social identity depends on the quality of such social interactions ([Wan and Chew, 2013](#)). In line with this notion, our findings confirmed H1c partially, revealing the positive association between small group social identification (family, friends) and social inclusiveness. According to [Hayden \(2012\)](#) and [McLachlan \(2007\)](#), such identification might constitute an alternative to the categorical self-concept for multicultural individuals. On the same note, social inclusiveness for TCK correlated negatively with categorical identification, confirming the notion that the more an individual is embedded in direct interpersonal relationships, the less important it is to belong to a broad universal category in which direct relations with all members are not possible. Such findings are crucial to understanding the role family and friends play in forming an identity for multicultural individuals. Moreover, the lack of association between social inclusiveness and integrated cultural identity we interpret as a supportive argument on the theoretical duality of these two constructs: social identity is constructed based on real interpersonal relationships. Cultural identity is instead an abstract community of values, transmitted via interactions but relying on cultural media.

We conclude our findings related to the first set of hypotheses with a statement that integrated cultural identity relies on exposure to diversity, language competencies, axiological social identification and global mindset. These factors buffer categorisation and essentialism due to their connections with positive attitudes towards culturally different selves ([den Dekker, 2011](#)) and the ability to perceive similarities within diversity ([Gupta & Govindarajan, 2002](#)).

H2: predictors of life satisfaction of TCK

Hierarchical regression was performed to test H2, and results highlighted that life satisfaction could be predicted from an integrated multicultural identity, global mindset and social inclusiveness. Out of TCK's characteristics and identity variables, integrations seemed the most critical in predicting life satisfaction. Our results support [Yampolsky et al. \(2016\)](#) findings that a complex multicultural identity can flourish if all cultural selves are similarly accepted. Our outcome is also in line with [Cheng et al. \(2014\)](#), who proposed that individual differences in how biculturals manage their identities psychologically have important implications for their functioning. Integration of multicultural paradigms within cross-cultural identity might relate to TCK's flexibility, adaptability, curiosity, and potency for a global mindset, positively predicting life satisfaction. On the other hand, the reviewed earlier issues related to well-being, namely emotional and social disturbances, might, in fact, be related to lack of integrity for multicultural individuals who either compartmentalise or categorise their complex identities ([Cockburn, 2002](#)).

Such findings might highlight the prominent position of a global mindset in multicultural discourse. The question about the potential for a global mindset among TCK individuals has been posed and explored by [Stokke \(2013\)](#). Her research highlighted a higher latency for a global mindset among TCK, with them being also more likely to welcome change ([Stokke, 2013](#)). It is in line with other studies, as an early and more frequent exposure to different norms and values was correlated with a global mindset in the research of [Den Dekker \(2011\)](#) and with predispositions for a metacognitive cultural intelligence ([Tarique & Takeuchi, 2008](#)). Our study further suggested that a global mindset might support the well-being of TCK besides cross-cultural competencies.

Furthermore, social inclusiveness was vital to the life satisfaction of TCK. According to the stress-buffering hypothesis model, social support attenuates the effect of adverse events and decreases stress ([Cohen & Wills, 1985](#)). Integrated identity does not only support the right life choices and is related to life satisfaction ([Côté, 2002](#)) but also is connected to successful social bonding ([Beyers & Seiffge-Krenke, 2010](#)). The social relationships, a perceived 'fitting in', predicted whether bicultural identity would be integrated or oppositional ([Cheng et al., 2014](#)). Therefore, our findings that social inclusiveness predicts life satisfaction for TCK align with the literature, extending knowledge to the TCK discourse.

Limitations and future directions

Some limitations must be considered when interpreting our results. The sample nature and size limit the generalizability of findings, yet obtaining a sample of adult TCK is exceptionally challenging (Tarique & Weisbord, 2013). As participants were from diverse origins with a prevalence of South Asians, the potential influence of their cultural backgrounds on the results cannot be excluded as culture influences self-perception. Another limitation is seen in the measurement of essentialism as a one-item measure. It might be that it did not capture the totality of the concept. The levels of internal consistency for the global mindset measure were relatively low, which poses another limitation. The global mindset is a novel concept, and we refer to Nunally and Burstein (1994), pointing to lower levels of alpha as acceptable for exploratory research. Still, more studies related to global mindset dimensionality are recommended. Lastly, the variance explained by our model was comparatively small; therefore, we recommend further extensions to our study exploring other possible factors that might be impacting the life satisfaction of TCK individuals. To address such limitations, we further recommend replicating our research to implement alternative designs, measures, and male samples, as acculturation processes influence males and females differently (Chavez & Rudolph, 2007).

Conclusion

To conclude, the present research proposed an extensive exploratory analysis of the complex social and cultural identities of adult female Third Culture Kids. We have highlighted the importance of value-based (axiological) social identification and global mindset as possible buffers of essentialism and categorisation for TCK. Furthermore, this study confirmed previous predictions about the positive role of cultural identity integration in multicultural individuals' life satisfaction, extending from bicultural to multicultural context. Lastly, we have pointed to the significance of the global mindset and social inclusiveness for TCK females' life satisfaction. Hence, our findings highlighted new factors related to multicultural individuals' well-being, which serves knowledge building and constitutes a starting point for future research targeting facilitation of TCK's functioning. The global mindset, social inclusiveness and integration are dynamic concepts and can be stimulated via environmental inputs. Interventions targeting these variables could, hence, improve the well-being of TCK.

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CRedit authorship contribution statement

Magdalena Mosanya: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. **Anna Kwiatkowska:** Data curation, Methodology, Supervision, Visualization, Validation, Writing - review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors report no declarations of interest.

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