

ESPINETTI, GRETCHEN L., Ph.D., May 2011

FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP
AND ADMINISTRATION

THE THIRD CULTURE KID (TCK) EXPERIENCE: ADULT-TCKS' REFLECTIONS
ON THEIR MULTICULTURAL CHILDHOOD, ITS IMPACT ON
STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS IN U.S. CLASSROOMS AND THEIR
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MULTICULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE
UNITED STATES (189 pp.)

Director of Dissertation: Vilma Seeberg, Ph.D.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand, describe, interpret, and query about the third culture kid (TCK) phenomenon through the research participants' (TCK) lived experiences and the interplay of this TCK lived experience and acculturation with their student-teacher relationships in U.S. classrooms. This study intended to provide knowledge for all educators so they can become more culturally responsive in their work with diverse learners in U.S. schooling.

The present study was grounded in the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition, using collective case study methodology and in-depth interviews. Based on the Adult-TCKs' recall of their lived experiences, the researcher and research participants collectively made recommendations for U.S. multicultural teacher education and the preparation of all teachers for working with this growing population of learners, third culture children, in U.S. classrooms and schools.