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Developing Global Leader Self-Complexity through International Experience

by

Katherine C. Cotter

A dissertation presented to the faculty of Claremont Graduate University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology

Claremont Graduate University

2021

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APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The dissertation has been duly read, reviewed, and critiqued by the Committee listed below, which hereby approves the manuscript of Katherine C. Cotter as fulfilling the scope and quality requirements for meriting the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology with a concentration in Organizational Behavior.

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Abstract

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Katherine C. Cotter

Claremont Graduate University: 2021

Globalization introduces new challenges related to increased levels of diversity and complexity that organizations cannot meet without capable global leaders. Such leaders are currently lacking, so a theory-based approach to global leader development is needed. As a critical intermediary outcome, global leader self-complexity enables competent global leadership performance and develops through identity construction during international experiences. This research aims to generate and test a theory of the development of global leader self-complexity. In Study 1, I gathered qualitative data through retrospectively interviewing 27 global leaders about identity-related changes following their international experiences. Using a grounded theory approach, I developed a theoretical model of global leader identity construction during international experiences, which I empirically tested using quantitative data in Study 2. Specifically, I tested the hypothesized relationships through structural equation modeling with cross-sectional survey data from a sample of 610 global leaders and found support for some of the theorized relationships. Findings from both studies indicate global leader identity construction during international experiences primarily occurs through interacting with locals and local culture over a sustained period, motivated by appreciation of cultural differences, and resulting in increased global leader self-complexity. These results advance understanding of the global leader self-complexity construct (i.e., *what* develops) and global leader development

processes (i.e., *how* it develops). Additionally, the findings have practical implications for the design and delivery of global leader development initiatives, including the preparation of participating global leaders and how organizations can support them for maximal development.

Acknowledgements

I've received a great deal of support from many people throughout my Ph.D. journey for which I will always be grateful. First and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Becky Reichard. Your expertise, guidance, support, and friendship throughout the last five years has been invaluable to me as both a developing researcher and an individual. I have so much admiration for you and the work you do as a leader development researcher, practitioner, advisor, and professor. Thank you for being such a positive role model, and for always pushing me to elevate the quality of my work. You provided the perfect balance of challenge and support that helped me to grow to the point where I feel fully prepared to begin my career. Thank you!

Second, I would like to thank my other committee members, Dr. Michelle Bligh, Dr. Stephen Gilliland, and Dr. Allan Bird, who provided timely and high-quality feedback and support throughout my portfolio and dissertation research stages. You are a true dream team of cross-cultural management, global leadership, and leadership development scholars, practitioners, and fellow travelers. Thank you for your insights and encouragement!

Third, I would like to thank my research lab, LeAD Labs, and other friends and members of the Claremont Graduate University community. Thank you to my fellow LeAD Labs members and to Sevelyn VanRonk and Christina Putrov for being constant sources of friendship and fascinating research conversations. Laughing with you and discussing our research and career goals and ideas always helped to inspire and energize me when the Ph.D. journey felt too long. I'd also like to specifically thank Poom Pitichat for his mentorship, and Jessica Diaz and Sevelyn VanRonk for their help in preparing me for a successful dissertation defense. I am so thankful for your advice, feedback, time, and support!

Fourth, I would like to thank Linda Pillow and Sherry Nissen for their guidance and kindness throughout my time at Claremont Graduate University. Thank you for supporting my degree progress by always ensuring I met all of the requirements, including paperwork and event scheduling. I appreciate it so much!

Fifth, I would like to thank my family and friends in the US and in Sweden. To my husband Philip, thank you for loving me and supporting me through every stressful moment, for understanding my commitment to my work, even when it meant missing out on other things, and for filling the free time I did have with fun and adventure. I couldn't imagine a better partner. To my parents, thank you for encouraging me to fulfill my lifelong dream of earning a Ph.D. and becoming an organizational psychologist, and for supporting me throughout every step along the way. I'll always feel incredibly blessed to have parents that believe in my capabilities and do everything they can to help me achieve my goals. I never would have made it to this point without you and I really can't thank you enough. To my parents-in-law, thank you for welcoming me into your family and for making Stockholm truly feel like home – the place where I finished the last two years of my degree, defended my dissertation, and will soon begin my career as a leader development consultant. I'm so grateful for your positivity, love, and support. Finally, I'd like to thank my sisters, sisters- and brothers-in-law, grandmother, extended family members, and friends for cheering me on throughout this long journey. Thank you for the encouragement and for the wonderful memories throughout the past five years.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	viii
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xiii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Research Questions	5
Global Leader Self-Complexity	5
Global Leader Self-Differentiation	5
Global Leader Self-Integration	8
Global Leader Development through International Experience	13
Increasing Global Leader Self-Complexity through Identity Construction.....	17
Chapter 3: Study 1	23
Study 1 Methods	23
Participants and Recruitment	23
Grounded Theory	26
Data Collection and Analysis Overview	28
Email Interviews	28
Open Coding	28
Semi-Structured Interviews	29

Axial and Selective Coding	30
Researcher Sensitivity	31
Study 1 Results	32
Global Leader Self-Complexity	40
Global Leader Self-Differentiation	40
Global Leader Self-Integration	42
Interacting with Locals and Local Culture.....	46
Mental and Physical Presence.....	46
Observing and Learning.....	49
Relationship Building and Experimentation	51
Arriving at New Perspectives	55
Perceived Cultural Distance.....	58
New and Unfamiliar Leadership Role Responsibilities	61
Previous International Experience	65
Previous Leadership Experience	70
International Experience Duration	73
Appreciation of Cultural Differences.....	76
Language Ability	80
Social Support.....	82
Paradox Mindset	84
Summary of Results	86
Study 1 Discussion.....	87
Chapter 4: Study 2	90

Study 2 Methods	90
Participants and Recruitment	90
Design and Procedure	93
Measures	95
Global Leader Self-Complexity	95
Interacting with Locals and Local Culture.....	95
Pilot Test.	97
Perceived Cultural Distance.....	98
New and Unfamiliar Leadership Role Responsibilities.....	98
Previous International Experience	99
Previous Leadership Experience.....	100
International Experience Duration	101
Appreciation of Cultural Differences.....	101
Control Variables	102
Language Ability	102
Social Support.....	103
Paradox Mindset	103
Social Desirability Bias.....	104
Study 2 Results	105
Data Cleaning.....	105
Descriptives, Correlations, and Normality.....	106
Hypothesis Testing.....	109
Structural Equation Modeling.....	109

Exploratory Analyses.....	118
Summary of Results.....	121
Study 2 Discussion.....	123
Chapter 5: General Discussion.....	129
Global Leader Identity Construction Involves Change <i>and</i> Stability	130
Global Leader Identity Construction May Occur through Three Pathways	132
Global Leader Identity Construction is a Social Process Motivated by Appreciation	137
Managerial Implications	141
Limitations	144
Future Research	145
Conclusion	147
References.....	149
Appendices.....	162

List of Tables

Table 1. Contributions and Limitations of Relevant Existing Theories	20
Table 2. Study 1 Participant Characteristics	24
Table 3. Study 1 Results	36
Table 4. Study 2 Participant Home and Host Countries	91
Table 5. Previous Experience Measures	100
Table 6. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix.....	108
Table 7. Correlation Matrix for Latent Factors in Measurement Model	111
Table 8. Model Fit Indices	113

List of Figures

Figure 1. Study 1 Grounded Theory Methodology Flow Chart.....	27
Figure 2. Theoretical Model of Global Leader Identity Construction during International Experiences	34
Figure 3. Parallel Analysis for Study 2	94
Figure 4. Results of Structural Equation Modeling Analyses of the Hypothesized Model	115
Figure 5. Results of Structural Equation Modeling Analysis of the Hypothesized Interaction between Interacting with Locals and Local Culture and International Experience Duration Predicting Global Leader Self-Differentiation (left) and Self-Integration (right)	116
Figure 6. Results of Structural Equation Modeling Analyses of the Exploratory Model	119

Chapter 1: Introduction

As a consequence of the cross-border connections and interdependencies that characterize globalization, the environment in which today's organizations operate has become increasingly complex, ever-changing, and difficult to predict (Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). One strategy for helping organizations meet these demands is to increase their global leadership capacity through global leader development (Gregersen et al., 1998). *Global leadership* is the enactment of influence processes that span multiple national cultural boundaries in a context characterized by high degrees of task and relationship complexity (Reiche et al., 2017). Accordingly, *global leaders* are the individuals who occupy global leadership roles as they influence organizational members toward goal achievement (Reichard & Walker, 2016). Thus, *global leader development* is the process of increasing an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities to improve their effectiveness in a global leadership position (McCauley et al., 2010).

Research indicates that although organizations recognize the need for effective global leaders to realize their business goals, few organizations are engaged in global leader development. Furthermore, among the limited number of organizations that do have global leader development initiatives in place, many view their efforts as ineffective (Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). Consequently, there is a glaring lack of capable global leaders, creating a "global leadership vacuum" that researchers have deemed one of the top ten most critical issues in the world today (Maznevski et al., 2013, p. 494).

Thus, the primary aim of the present paper is to explore how organizations can address this vacuum by leveraging international experiences to develop global leaders. Building on previous research about leader development in general and global leader development in

particular (e.g., Day et al., 2014; Sebova, 2020), this research adds to the understanding of global leader development outcomes (i.e., *what* develops) and processes (i.e., *how* it develops).

Similar to the outcomes of leader development in general, global leader development outcomes are typically described in terms of competencies – traits, behaviors, attitudes, and other characteristics that organizations view as valuable based on their specific business strategy (Reichard & Walker, 2016; Sutaari, 2002). Researchers have proposed over 200 global leadership competencies organized into the categories of business and organizational savvy, managing people and relationships, and managing self (Bird, 2017). However, the field’s current emphasis on competencies may be limited; therefore, scholars have called for consideration of other relevant development outcomes, including changes in leader identity (Herman & Zaccaro, 2014). Leader identity provides leaders with the motivation, interest, and direction needed to develop and practice leadership skills, as well as a structure around which to organize leadership knowledge (Lord & Hall, 2005). Thus, changes in leader identity are likely to precede the development of dynamic leadership skills and complex knowledge structures that characterize expert-level leadership (Day & Dragoni, 2015; Lord & Hall, 2005).

Leader identities are contained within leaders’ self-concepts, which vary in degrees of complexity (Hogg, 2003). Higher leader self-complexity, defined by the number of unique leader identities contained within a leader’s self-concept (i.e., self-differentiation) and the extent to which the identities are integrated with the leader’s sense of self (i.e., self-integration), is indicative of more advanced degrees of development (Day & Lance, 2004). The expansion of global leaders’ self-concept complexity, as global leaders add new distinct leader identities to their self-concepts, occurs in tandem with acquiring global leadership skills (Lord & Hall, 2005).

Therefore, the focal outcome of global leader development in the present paper –*what* develops – is global leader self-complexity.

But *how* does global leader self-complexity develop? I aim to provide insight into the development process by examining global leader development during international experiences from an identity construction perspective. Based on theories that identity develops as a function of challenging experiences (e.g., Day & Harrison, 2007; Lord & Hall, 2005), I study international experiences as a unique context for global leaders to increase their self-complexity as they acquire new leader identities to accommodate changing role and cultural demands. Researchers assert that global leader development requires extensive experiential learning in global contexts, such as international assignments. This assertion has received much theoretical and empirical support (e.g., Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017), but *how* global leaders develop through their international experiences remains underexplored (Kohonen, 2005). Researchers recommend focusing on leader self-concept and identity changes as an avenue for advancing research in this area (Kohonen, 2005). With increased awareness of global leaders' inner experiences during their time abroad and how individual and contextual factors impact those experiences, organizations can better support the development of their global leaders (Osland, 2000).

The present research makes two significant contributions to existing research on global leader development and self-complexity. First, this research enhances understanding of the construct global leader self-complexity, which is currently lacking in the literature (Herman & Zaccaro, 2014). Researchers assert that this is a promising area of research with the potential to increase knowledge of global leader development and performance (Herman & Zaccaro, 2014), making it a worthy topic for investigation. Second, this research contributes insight into the

process of global leader identity construction during international experiences, giving rise to a needed theoretical model of global leader self-complexity development. The theory can inform the design of international assignments, as well as the preparation of participating global leaders to facilitate the acceleration of global leadership learning and development. The theory can also guide future research on global leader identity. Taken together, this research adds to global leader development research and practice by uncovering how the critical outcome of global leader self-complexity (i.e., *what* develops) is developed through the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences (i.e., *how* it develops).

The proceeding sections of this paper include a review of the literature on global leader self-complexity and international experiences as a context for global leader identity construction, followed by a description of two studies designed to develop and test a theoretical model of the development of global leader self-complexity, the theoretical and managerial implications for global leader development, the limitations, and finally, directions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Research Questions

Global Leader Self-Complexity

In this section, I discuss the two components of global leader self-complexity – the *what* of global leader development – in detail. I also explain why global leader self-complexity is a valuable development outcome by describing how each component contributes to effective global leadership performance (i.e., the *so what*). Specifically, global leader self-complexity is a function of the global leader's (a) *self-differentiation*, or formation of various leader identities to exercise their different leadership roles in multiple cultural contexts and (b) *self-integration*, or identification of connections across leader identities associated with different roles and cultural leadership domains (Cotter, 2019). Thus, global leader self-complexity is present when concomitantly high levels of self-differentiation and self-integration are developed (Cotter, 2019; Hooijberg et al., 1997). Next, I discuss each of these components, in turn.

Global Leader Self-Differentiation

First, global leader self-differentiation reflects the extent to which global leaders vary the performance of their different leadership roles across cultural contexts. Variation in performance across leadership roles aligns with the differentiation component of Hannah et al.'s (2013) theory of leader self-complexity – leaders are considered high in self-differentiation if their self-concepts contain many different leadership roles (e.g., mentor, diplomat, team leader) with a unique set of self-aspects (e.g., traits, skills, attributes, self-regulatory structures) for each role (Hannah et al., 2013). Additionally, variation in performance across cultures aligns with the differentiation component of Herman and Zaccaro's (2014) cultural leadership self-concept theory. Similar to leaders high in cultural leadership self-concept differentiation, leaders high in

global leader self-differentiation identify with multiple cultural groups and utilize different self-descriptors to describe themselves in each cultural context (Herman & Zaccaro, 2014).

Leadership role performance requires a complex combination of cognitive, social, and behavioral skills (Mumford et al., 2000). To sustain the necessary interest to develop and demonstrate these complex skills, leaders must assimilate leader identities into their self-concepts (Lord & Hall, 2005). Thus, global leaders are likely to have a leader identity for each of their leadership roles in every cultural context in which they demonstrate that role (e.g., ‘mentor in France,’ ‘team leader in Brazil,’ ‘peer in Australia’). Global leader self-differentiation stems from the number and distinctiveness of their different leader identities. Global leaders high in self-differentiation can adopt patterns of thinking and behaving appropriate for exercising their leadership roles in different cultural environments (Cotter, 2019).

To illustrate with a metaphor, we can imagine that global leaders’ self-concepts are gardens and leader identities are plants. A lush garden with many plants of various species indicates high global leader self-differentiation; whereas, a meager garden with few plants, all of the same species, reflects low global leader self-differentiation. As global leaders develop leader identities in response to demands in their leadership role and cultural contexts, plants take distinct shapes as they grow and interact with their environments. Each unique plant in the resulting garden represents a different means through which the garden can achieve harmony with its wider environment, as different plant species may be better suited to surviving different seasons, animal predators, etc.

As this metaphor suggests, global leaders high in self-differentiation have access to numerous ways of thinking about and responding to situations due to their multiple identities and skillsets, allowing them to be highly adaptable, and thus, effective in their global leadership roles

(Day & Lance, 2004; Herman & Zaccaro, 2014). Empirical research provides support for this claim. The results of Hannah and colleagues' (2013) study suggest that leader self-differentiation positively predicts adaptive decision-making, a critical global leadership skill (Bird, 2017). Additionally, Cotter (2019) found evidence that global leader self-differentiation is a significant positive predictor of cultural intelligence, another critical global leadership skill reflecting the ability to adapt to novel cultural environments (Bird, 2017; Earley & Ang, 2003). Global leader self-differentiation demonstrated a significant positive association with cultural intelligence measured concurrently and measured two weeks later (Cotter, 2019).

The positive impact of global leader self-differentiation on adaptability may be partly attributed to the fact that self-differentiation enhances the capacity to efficiently process self-relevant information and discriminate among various role demands, allowing for quick, appropriate responses (Linville, 1985). The context may automatically elicit certain aspects of the leader's self-concept, or the leader may intentionally activate certain self-concept aspects to meet the situational demands (Markus & Nurius, 1986). In this way, global leaders can assume a leader identity appropriate for the situation based on the cultural and leadership role context. The "active" leader identity is part of the leader's working self-concept – the contents of the self-concept that are salient in a particular situation, serving a self-regulatory function for the leader's affect, cognition, and behavior (Hannah et al., 2009, p. 272).

As suggested by Lord and Hall (2005), the presence of specific individuals (e.g., followers, peers, managers) may cue particular leader identities and associated self-regulatory processes. The development of "domain-specific productions," or programmed responses to specific situations (e.g., a performance review with a follower in Thailand) is a sign of leadership expertise (Lord & Hall, 2005, p. 595). A relational orientation to identity, where leader identity is

partly rooted in the leader's relationships, is also an indicator of more advanced levels of leader development. Global leaders exhibit a relational orientation to leader identity when they adjust their leadership style based on the needs of others (Day & Harrison, 2007). Thus, self-differentiation enables global leaders to exhibit flexibility as they adapt their leadership to align with the role and cultural situational requirements, demonstrating leadership expertise.

Additional insight on the global leadership performance-related benefits of self-differentiation comes from Sussman's (2000) conceptualization of intercultural identity. Similar to global leaders high in self-differentiation, global leaders with intercultural identities simultaneously hold multiple "cultural scripts" (i.e., ways of thinking and behaving in a given culture) that they can flexibly draw on as the situation demands (Sussman, 2000, p. 367). As a result, these leaders can perceive the world through different cultural lenses and adjust their behavior accordingly, allowing them to exercise their leadership roles in numerous cultural contexts (Sussman, 2000). Thus, research supports the notion that global leader self-differentiation enables the demonstration of effective global leadership, suggesting that it is a desirable development outcome. I argue that this reasoning also applies to the other component of global leader self-complexity – global leader self-integration.

Global Leader Self-Integration

Global leader self-integration is the extent to which global leaders have a coherent sense of self, as reflected in their identification of common features that unite their different leader identities. Awareness of the relationships among different cultural leadership identities aligns with the integration component of Herman and Zaccaro's (2014) cultural leadership self-concept theory. Like individuals high in cultural leadership self-concept integration, individuals high in

global leader self-integration can perceive how their different cultural context-specific leader identities relate (Herman & Zaccaro, 2014).

Hammond, Clapp-Smith, and Palanski's (2017) theory of cross-domain sensemaking lends insight into the nature of the common identity features that relate to leader identities, as well as the process through which global leaders achieve self-integration. According to Hammond et al. (2017), leaders attain identity integration across their different life domains (e.g., family, work, community) by identifying cross-domain connections, including values and principles. The identified connections provide leaders with a sense of meaning that is incorporated into their self-concepts and impacts future enactments of leadership (Hammond et al., 2017). Global leaders may similarly integrate their various identities, uncovering similarities across multiple roles and cultural contexts. For example, a global leader with the identities 'department representative in Austria' and 'salesperson in China' might reflect on instances when she candidly reported to top management that her department had lost an important customer and when she revealed an issue with a new product to a potential buyer. Following reflection, she may determine that 'honesty' and 'integrity' are values underlying both identities.

Returning to the metaphor that global leaders' self-concepts are gardens and leader identities are plants, self-integration occurs through the common foundation – the soil. Values and principles are the water and nutrients the plants share through the soil. A garden in which all of the different plants appear healthy and nourished indicates high global leader self-integration. Whereas, a garden where some plants are withering away because they are cut off from the supply of water and nutrients reflects low global leader self-integration. Just as forging connections among leader identities creates coherence in global leaders' self-concepts, disseminating water and nutrients throughout the garden leads to steady, uniform growth, rather

than a patchwork of green and brown as certain areas are isolated or neglected. This dispersion of sustenance occurs beneath the surface, below the plants growing in the garden, just like global leaders' reflections on the values and principles underlying their leader identities.

Similar to global leader self-differentiation, increases in global leader self-integration are likely to enhance global leadership capacity. Whereas global leader self-differentiation enables global leaders to adapt to the situational requirements, global leader self-integration provides global leaders with self-concept stability across global leadership contexts. Unlike global leader self-differentiation, which is primarily influenced by external factors like role demands and cultural context, global leader self-integration stems from internal factors like the global leader's values, principles, and self-narrative. These internal factors help global leaders make sense of who they are across roles and cultural domains through connecting their different leader identities (Hammond et al., 2017). Thus, global leaders high in self-integration have a personally-derived sense of self that exists independently from situational factors, which is essential for global leadership effectiveness (Bird et al., 2010).

The positive impact of global leader self-integration on global leadership performance may be further explained by the overlap between global leader self-integration and self-concept clarity (Rafaeli-Mor & Steinberg, 2002). An individual high in self-concept clarity has a clearly defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable self-concept (Campbell et al., 1996), promoting self-awareness – a key component of many models of effective leadership (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). As a result of their self-awareness, global leaders high in self-integration can demonstrate expert-level leadership by grounding the performance of their leader identities in their core values, which enables them to assume each of their leader identities with integrity (Lord & Hall, 2005). Furthermore, they can demonstrate predictable behavior and form authentic

relationships with their followers (Chao & Moon, 2005; Herman & Zaccaro, 2014; Lord & Hall, 2005). Consequently, global leaders high in self-integration are less likely to be perceived as shape-shifting chameleons as they adapt to their cultural and role demands (Lord & Hall, 2005), compared to global leaders with low self-integration.

Thus, research suggests that self-integration allows global leaders to exhibit authenticity, heightening the effectiveness of their global leadership as they are better able to influence followers and win their trust (Lord & Hall, 2005). Previous empirical studies lend support to this notion. Cotter (2019) found that global leader self-integration is a significant positive predictor of authentic leadership when measured concurrently and measured two weeks later. Empirical evidence also supports the contention that followers are more likely to view global leaders favorably if they behave consistently (Staw & Ross, 1980). Global leaders who “go native” and trade their values for the values of their host countries may be looked upon with suspicion (Osland, 2000, p. 231). Therefore, global leaders higher in self-integration are likely to be more effective in their global leadership roles because it positively impacts their abilities to build relationships with their followers and exhibit influence.

Furthermore, global leader self-integration has positive consequences for the global leaders themselves. Global leaders high in self-integration are likely to experience enhanced well-being and be autonomously motivated to enact their integrated leader identities (Ryan & Deci, 2012), which is expected to contribute further to global leadership effectiveness. In addition to being more motivated to enact their leader identities, global leaders high in self-integration are also more likely to deploy the appropriate leader identity based on the leadership role and cultural context because they see how their specialized leadership skills relate (Hannah et al., 2013). Thus, research suggests that similar to global leader self-differentiation, increased

global leader self-integration is an essential outcome of the development process, as it is likely to enable competent global leadership.

In summary, global leader self-complexity is a development outcome worth pursuing because it promotes effective global leadership. Specifically, global leader self-complexity reflects the optimal balance between several self-concept and identity-related tensions, including multiplicity versus unity, change versus stability, external versus internal, and flexibility versus authenticity. Global leader self-differentiation reflects an external focus, multiple identities, the capacity for change, and flexibility in leadership. At the same time, global leader self-integration reflects an internal focus, self-concept unity, a stable sense of self, and authenticity in leadership. In mastering this balancing act, global leaders high in self-complexity can reap the benefits of both ends of each tension, allowing them to demonstrate expert-level global leadership. This argument aligns with Gardner and Coglisier's (2008) suggestion that leaders who can be "simultaneously authentic and responsive to contextual forces and follower needs" are "more effective at achieving and sustaining high performance outcomes" (p. 94). Research suggesting that leader complexity positively predicts leadership effectiveness, and in turn, the organization's effectiveness offers empirical support for this proposition (Bullis, 1992; Denison et al., 1995; Streufert et al., 1988). Furthermore, Cotter (2019) found that global leader self-complexity is a significant positive predictor of global leadership effectiveness when measured concurrently and measured two weeks later.

Taken together, theoretical and empirical research support Day and Lance's (2004) position that higher degrees of leader complexity are indicative of more advanced levels of leader development, making global leader self-complexity a worthy target of global leader development initiatives. The metaphorical result will be a vibrant self-concept garden, abundant

with differentiated leader identity plants, each growing strong as all are connected to a shared source of vitality through the soils of integration.

I now transition from *what* develops in global leader development – global leader self-complexity – and why it matters (i.e., the *so what*) to *how* it develops. Previous research suggests that international experiences are an effective strategy for global leader development (e.g., Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). Still, we know little about the process through which international experiences impact learning outcomes like global leader identity, which has created a kind of “black box” (Kohonen, 2005; Ng et al., 2009, p. 228). I intend to open this black box up by developing and testing a theory of global leader identity construction during international experiences. To that end, I begin by reviewing the literature on global leader development through international experiences to provide a theoretical foundation and identify knowledge gaps.

Global Leader Development through International Experiences

So, *how* does global leader self-complexity develop? Similar to traditional, domestic leader development approaches, the methods employed to develop global leaders include formal training, executive coaching, mentoring, 360-degree feedback, action learning, and job assignments (Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). Furthermore, like traditional leader development, global leader development approaches emphasize experiential learning, particularly in the context of developmental challenges like role transitions (Kolb, 1984; McCall, 2010; McCauley et al., 1995; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). The focus on learning from experience aligns with the 70-20-10 rule, which states that 70 percent of leadership learning occurs through experiences (e.g., job rotations, international assignments), 20 percent through developmental relationships (e.g., coaches, mentors), and 10 percent through formal training (e.g., classroom lectures; Rabin,

2014). Researchers acknowledge that other development methods can be useful but assert that international experiences are essential to global leader development (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017).

International experiences include short-term (i.e., less than one year) and long-term (i.e., one or more years) expatriate assignments. Short-term expatriate assignments may be appropriate for developing certain global leadership skills, such as understanding different points of view and cross-cultural sensitivity (Oddou et al., 2000; Suutari, 2002). However, long-term expatriate assignments are generally considered most effective in producing lasting increases in global leadership ability (Black & Gregersen, 2000; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; Suutari, 2002). This assertion aligns with Day, Zaccaro, and Halpin's (2004) position that compared to interventions aimed toward improving definitive skillsets, interventions designed to induce macro-level changes, such as leadership development interventions, require a long-term timeline.

Research supports the value of international experiences for both developing global leaders and their organizations. Empirical findings indicate that international assignments predict increases in global leadership competencies like strategic thinking, cross-cultural communication skills, and a global business perspective (e.g., Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; Dragoni et al., 2014; McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). Additionally, 80% of the global leaders that Gregersen and colleagues (1998) surveyed indicated that their experiences living and working in other countries had the most significant impact on developing their global leadership capacity. Research further suggests that these benefits extend beyond the individual leaders – several studies have found that the international experience of CEOs is positively associated with the corporate financial performance of international firms (e.g., Carpenter et al., 2001).

Long-term international experiences enable global leader development by providing opportunities for global leaders to (a) develop cross-cultural competencies and globally applicable skills, (b) increase their understanding of their organization's global operations and global organizations in general, and (c) be promoted to higher-level leadership positions (Suutari, 2002). Global leaders reap the developmental potential of these opportunities by engaging in experiential learning, applying the conceptual knowledge they may have acquired from pre-departure training programs to actual global leadership situations (Oddou et al., 2000). Such situations include interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds in a meaningful way, perhaps in the context of a business transaction, where the leader must identify and enact culturally-appropriate behaviors for conducting business (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2014). These experiences stretch developing leaders' minds toward a global perspective of organizing as they encounter new ways of thinking and behaving (Black & Gregersen, 2000).

For example, during an international assignment in Sweden, a developing global leader from the United States observes a Swedish leader facilitating a team meeting with her followers. The global leader notices how the Swedish leader's followers openly disagree with her, which surprises the global leader. Still, this behavior appears to be acceptable – in fact, it seems helpful to the aims of the meeting. As a result of this experience, the global leader's understanding of 'leadership' is expanded. With this increased understanding, the global leader is better prepared to exercise leadership in egalitarian cultural contexts like Scandinavia, opening up new possibilities for the leader's future career.

Lessons learned from international experiences are especially likely to 'stick' because experiential learning involves intellectual *and* emotional memory (Caligiuri et al., 2013; Pless et al., 2011). In addition to prompting cognitive insights, international experiences are likely to

trigger emotional reactions as leaders are challenged. Global leader development researchers argue, “the principle obligation of the firm is to place the manager in contexts and situations that will elicit experiences that force him/her to grapple with skills and strategies necessary for the development of global leadership competencies” (Oddou et al., 2000 p. 170). During international experiences, global leaders must wrestle with big, existential questions surrounding issues like identity, values, and assumptions about everyday life (Osland, 2000). Furthermore, insights gained from international experiences are likely to be especially compelling due to the high sensory involvement – leaders’ senses of sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing are all involved in their learning experiences as they interact with the surrounding cultural environment (Black & Gregersen, 2000). Returning to the global leader in Sweden, the insight that participative, team-based leadership is acceptable and even useful may spark a strong emotional reaction if the global leader feels uncomfortable or unequipped to lead in this way. The emotional memory, as well as the sensory memories of how the team meeting looked, sounded, smelled, etc., are likely to enhance intellectual memory (Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017).

Thus, the existing theoretical and empirical literature supports the notion that international experiences are an effective method of global leader development in general. I posit that international experiences positively impact the development outcome of global leader self-complexity in particular because international experiences cue the process of global leader identity construction (i.e., the *how*). I now turn to a discussion of research suggesting that international experiences are rife with identity construction triggers, and that identity construction is part of global leadership learning and the resulting increases in self-complexity. However, the literature is limited in informing a theory of global leader identity construction

during international experiences, which leads me to pose two questions that guide the present research as I open the black box of global leader self-complexity development.

Increasing Global Leader Self-Complexity through Identity Construction

Leaders develop self-complexity by engaging in challenging experiences and integrating them with their self-views (Day & Harrison, 2007). Thus, I propose that identity construction, defined as the process through which individuals create identities through continual cycles of social interaction and self-reflection (Lindgren & Wåhlin, 2001), is part of experiential learning for developing global leaders during international experiences. Experiential learning is “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). Drawing on existing research on global leader development and self-complexity, I argue that global leaders translate their international experiences into global leadership knowledge by incorporating those experiences into their self-concepts through identity construction. Specifically, global leaders use insights gained from their international experiences to construct new leader identities to effectively fulfill their leadership roles in different cultural contexts (Kohonen, 2005). In this way, the lessons global leaders learn from international experiences are “stamped in” through identity construction and the subsequent increases in self-complexity (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Herman, 2012, p. 34).

Existing literature widely acknowledges that identity-related changes are often associated with role transitions and context changes (Miscenko & Day, 2016; Yip & Wilson, 2010; Yip et al., 2020). Therefore, global leaders entering new roles in new cultural environments have “double pressure to engage in reflexive identity construction” (Kohonen, 2004, p. 29). Again returning to the metaphor that global leaders’ self-concepts are gardens and leader identities are plants, changes in leadership roles and cultural environments are seeds for new leader identities.

The suggestion that there are self-concept consequences when global leaders modify their behaviors and cognitions to improve the fit between their leadership and their new cultural environments is consistent with Sussman's (2000) theory of cultural identity change. Providing empirical support for this claim, Herman (2012) found that challenging cross-cultural experiences positively predict cultural leadership self-concept differentiation. Additionally, the experience of being in a culture that is perhaps characterized by values that differ from the global leaders' values may make their personal values more salient (the "reaffirmation effect"; Kosmitzki, 1996, p. 246), increasing global leader self-integration as new unifying self-concept features (i.e., common values) are identified (Hammond et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the results of Lindgren and Wahlin's (2001) qualitative investigation of boundary-crossing individuals, defined as individuals who frequently change organizations, provide evidence for the notion that individuals construct identities fit for exercising their roles in different contexts, increasing self-differentiation. Moreover, this process may involve identifying patterns and deeply held values (Lindgren & Wahlin, 2001), enabling self-integration. Kohonen's (2004) findings suggest that individuals engage in a similar identity construction process during international assignments. Thus, the changes in global leaders' roles and cultural contexts associated with international experiences are likely to prompt identity construction, resulting in increases in both components of global leader self-complexity.

Therefore, in addition to being an outward adventure, international experiences can be characterized as transformational inward journeys for developing global leaders (Osland, 2000). Still, the specific characteristics of this inner journey are mostly unknown – we know little about how the seeds planted by leadership role and cultural context changes lead to the growth of new leader identities. Existing theories like Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, Mezirow's

(1978) theory of transformational learning, Black and Gregersen's (2000) global leadership learning theory, Mendenhall, Weber, Arnardottir, and Oddou's (2017) model of global leader development, Ibarra's (1999) model of professional adaptation, and Ibarra, Snook, and Guillén Ramo's (2010) theory of identity-based development lend insight into the general processes of learning and identity construction. However, these insights may not extend to the more specific process of global leader identity construction in the context of international experiences. I describe the contributions of these established theories to a theory of global leader identity construction during international experiences, as well as their limitations, in *Table 1*.

Table 1*Contributions and Limitations of Relevant Existing Theories*

Theory	Major Premise	Contribution(s) to Theory of Global Leader Identity Construction	Limitation(s) of Applicability to Global Leader Identity Construction
Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory	<p>Individuals create new knowledge from experience as they progress through a four-stage cycle:</p> <p>(1) <i>Concrete learning</i>: the individual has a new experience or reinterprets a previous experience</p> <p>(2) <i>Reflective observation</i>: the individual reflects on the experience</p> <p>(3) <i>Abstract conceptualization</i>: the individual forms new ideas or modifies existing ideas based on insights from reflection</p> <p>(4) <i>Active experimentation</i>: the individual applies and tests the new or modified ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrality of experience in global leadership learning and development • Importance of reflection and arriving at new understanding through cycles of ideation and experimentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is on individuals learning from experience more broadly, rather than global leaders learning from international experiences specifically • Lacks consideration of how learning impacts identity
Black & Gregersen's (2000) global leadership learning theory (builds on Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory)	<p>Global leaders transform their perspectives by remaking mental maps through a three-stage process:</p> <p>(1) <i>Contrast</i>: the individual has an experience that is inconsistent with expectations based on existing mental maps for relevant concepts</p> <p>(2) <i>Confrontation</i>: the individual confronts assumptions about concepts</p> <p>(3) <i>Remapping</i>: the individual redraws mental maps for concepts based on insights about limiting or flawed assumptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of process describing how global leaders in particular learn from their experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks consideration of how learning impacts identity
Mendenhall, Weber, Arnardottir, and	<p>Global leaders develop global leadership competencies through the following process:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of global leadership competency development process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is limited to competencies as the development outcome

Oddou's (2017) global leader development theory

(1) *Trigger event*: the individual has an experience that creates awareness of global leadership competency deficits
 (2) *Self-commitment*: the individual commits to engaging in global leader development
 (3) *Reflection-learning strategy focus-learning strategy implementation cycles*: the individual critically examines existing meaning-making structures, formulates learning strategies, implements learning strategies, reflects on learning strategy implementation process and outcomes, and then the cycle repeats

- Lacks consideration of how learning impacts identity

Ibarra, Snook, and Guillén Ramo's (2010) identity-based development theory (builds on Ibarra's (1999) professional adaptation theory)

Individuals become leaders as they develop a leader identity through a three-phase process:
 (1) *Separation*: the individual is physically, socially, and/or psychologically separated from their familiar work context
 (2) *Transition*: the individual has begun to shed previous identity, but has not yet arrived at new identity; potential new identities ("provisional identities") emerge
 (3) *Incorporation*: the individual internalizes a new identity based on internal and external feedback indicating experienced authenticity as well as effective leadership performance when experimenting with potential new identities

- Identification of leader identity development process as leaders transition into new roles
- Consideration of link between learning and identity changes

- Focus is on leader identity development more generally, rather than global leader identity development specifically
- Lacks consideration of how leader identity development process would be similar or different when role transition is accompanied by change in cultural context, as is the case for global leaders during international experiences

Given the importance of increasing global leader self-complexity (the *what* of global leader development) by engaging in identity construction during international experiences (the *how* of global leader development), a theory of this process is needed. The theory should be anchored in the unique challenges global leaders face during international experiences as they construct new leader identities to authentically adapt to changes in both their leadership roles and cultural contexts. Furthermore, the theory should include the factors that facilitate or impede the effectiveness of the identity construction process to advance both researcher and practitioner understanding of how to maximize global leader development during international experiences. Thus, I aim to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the characteristics of the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences that may result in changes in global leader self-complexity?

Research Question 2: What factors enable versus constrain global leaders' capacity for identity construction during international experiences?

Chapter 3: Study 1

Study 1 Methods

The purpose of Study 1 was to gain insight into the process of global leader identity construction during international experience to inform the creation of a theoretical model of global leader self-complexity development, which I empirically test with quantitative data in Study 2. I conducted Study 1, a qualitative investigation, using grounded theory methodology. Grounded theory is an appropriate method when the research objective is theory development (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2007), which was true for the present study.

Participants and Recruitment

The participants were 27 global leaders who live and work in countries other than their countries of origin. As shown in *Table 2*, there was a lot of variation represented in participant gender, home and host countries, industry, previous international and leadership experience, and current international experience duration. Company names will not be specified to protect participant confidentiality, but many of participants' organizations appear in the Fortune Global 500 2020 list (Fortune, 2020).

Table 2*Study 1 Participant Characteristics*

ID	Gender	Home Country	Host Country	Industry	Prior Leadership Experience: Years	International Experience: # of Countries Lived in	Years in Host Country
GL1	Male	Switzerland	UAE	Business	28.5	7	1.5
GL2	Male	Netherlands	China	Technology	0	3	5
GL3	Male	New Zealand	Singapore	Technology	6.5	5	1.5
GL4	Male	Nigeria	Netherlands	Food	8.5	2	1.5
GL5	Male	Lebanon	Spain	Food	10	6	3
GL6	Male	Pakistan	South Africa	Retail	10	5	5
GL7	Male	Canada	Italy	Education	19	11	1
GL8	Female	US	Sweden	Manufacturing	7	3	23
GL9	Female	Romania	Spain	Hospitality	0	2	7
GL10	Female	India	Kenya	Business	1	4	11
GL11	Male	Mexico	Switzerland	Food	8	6	5
GL12	Female	Sweden	Netherlands	Hospitality	0	2	2
GL13	Female	Brazil	US	Hospitality	0	3	22*
GL14	Female	Sweden	Spain	Retail	0	7	18
GL15	Male	Italy	Netherlands	Finance	3	7	7
GL16	Male	New Zealand	Denmark	Healthcare	0	4	4
GL17	Male	Spain	US	Food	10.5	5	4.5
GL18	Male	Italy	UAE	Transportation	0	5	5
GL19	Male	India	Singapore	Technology	0	2	4
GL20	Female	Bulgaria, Canada	Switzerland	Manufacturing	4	5	10
GL21	Female	Spain	UK	Utilities	0	4	8*
GL22	Male	Mexico	Colombia	Retail	5	3	2
GL23	Female	Sweden	Iran	Healthcare	4	6	3
GL24	Male	Italy	Turkey	Entertainment	15	4	5
GL25	Female	US	Sweden	Technology	3.5	4	1
GL26	Female	Germany	Denmark, Sweden	Retail	16	2	2
GL27	Male	Australia	UK	Technology	7.5	5	4.5

Note. GL = global leader. Numbers correspond to the order in which participants completed the email interviews. GL20 was born in Bulgaria, but moved to Canada at a young age, and identifies Canada as her “home” country. GL26 lives in Denmark and works in Sweden. International experience country count includes home and current host country. *Time in host country was interrupted by periods of living in other countries.

The sample size was determined based on *conceptual saturation*, which occurs when the properties and dimensions of all categories, as well as the nature of all relationships among categories, are fully developed and well understood, making theory-building possible. I stopped recruiting participants when new and/or significant data no longer emerged from additional data collection (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As a secondary consideration, the final sample size ($N = 27$) is within the expected sample size range for grounded theory research (Creswell, 2007).

To be eligible for inclusion, participants had to qualify as expatriate global leaders. Participants had to be expatriates, meaning they lived and worked in a country other than their country of origin to ensure that questions about international experience were personally relevant to them. Furthermore, their relocation had to have occurred at least one year prior to the time of their participation because researchers assert that long-term timelines (one or more years) are necessary for leader development (Day et al., 2004). To be characterized as leaders, participants had to report occupying management positions that included leadership responsibilities, meaning their roles entailed influencing others (Yukl, 2006). Furthermore, based on Reiche et al.'s (2017) definition of global leadership, participants had to indicate that they regularly interacted with direct reports, colleagues, and/or customers based in multiple different countries as part of their routine job responsibilities.

I recruited participants using a convenience sampling method. I began by searching InterNations, an online social networking platform for expatriates, for individuals employed at global organizations, which broadly refers to organizations whose functioning (e.g., offering products and services to customers) requires coordination across national boundaries (Sebova, 2020). Such organizations are more likely to contain roles that meet Reiche et al.'s (2017) aforementioned global leadership definition, compared to organizations based entirely within one

nation. My status as an expatriate provided me with legitimacy and access to potential participants on InterNations. Next, I searched for the individuals I identified as expatriate employees at global organizations on LinkedIn, and based on their profile information (e.g., current title and job description), inferred if they occupied leadership roles in their organizations, which they later confirmed. Using LinkedIn messaging, I then contacted those I believed to be expatriate global leaders with the recruitment message in Appendix A.

Grounded Theory

The grounded theory methodology proceeded as a cyclical process of data collection and analysis. The results of the first analysis informed the second round of data collection, and the cycle continued until I reached conceptual saturation, and eventually, a theoretical model (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). A visual depiction of the grounded theory methodology is provided in *Figure 1*. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) recommend, I used MAXQDA Plus, a qualitative research tool, to complete the analysis.

Figure 1

Study 1 Grounded Theory Methodology Flow Chart

Data Collection and Analysis Overview

Sources of data collection included email interviews and one-on-one, semi-structured virtual interviews via video conferencing. Because I asked participants to reflect on identity changes that have occurred since their relocation, both interviews can be considered retrospective. Researchers argue that retrospective interviewing is appropriate for capturing identity construction during international experiences (Kohonen, 2005). Furthermore, Day (2000) encourages leadership development researchers to use retrospective methodology to measure change. Data analysis involved iterative coding from open coding to axial coding, and lastly, to selective coding.¹

Email Interviews

The email interview stage of data collection lasted one month. To begin data collection, I emailed all the expatriate global leaders who responded favorably to my recruiting efforts (i.e., my LinkedIn message) by indicating that they were willing to participate and providing me with their email address. Included in the email was an Informed Consent form and a few questions intended to gather basic background information and elicit responses I could use to begin data analysis (see “Email interview” questions in Appendix B). As described below, I used the email interview analysis results to inform participant recruitment and the questions I asked during the one-on-one interviews.

Open Coding

Data analysis began with open coding of the email interviews. First, I familiarized myself with the data by carefully reading through the participants’ emailed responses to the questions. I

¹ For simplicity, I present the iterative stages of coding as if the next stage did not begin until the previous stage was complete, but there was overlap between stages. For example, I began to organize concepts into categories as soon as groupings became apparent, as Corbin and Strauss (2008) recommend, which means I at times engaged in open and axial coding simultaneously.

then engaged in *open coding* by identifying *concepts*, or interpretations, that captured the meaning of the raw data. I labeled the appropriate data extract with the concept name, and wrote a memo detailing my analysis of the concept's *properties* and *dimensions* – descriptions of the concept's defining characteristics and variations. I used the results of each round of open coding to inform subsequent waves of participant recruitment. Specifically, I engaged in *theoretical sampling* by intentionally creating variation in participant characteristics that appeared to be sources of meaningful differences in development during international experiences (e.g., years of leadership experience). The cycle of data collection through email interviews and data analysis through open coding continued until further data collection no longer led to identifying new concepts (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

After the email interview stage of data collection, I used the results to develop the questions I asked during the first round of one-on-one interviews (see “One-on-one virtual interview (V1)” questions in Appendix B). Again, engaging in theoretical sampling, I generated questions to deepen understanding of the properties and dimensions of concepts that appeared important based on the frequency with which participants mentioned them (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I then contacted participants to schedule one-on-one interviews.

Semi-Structured Interviews

I conducted the semi-structured, one-on-one virtual interviews over two months in approximately the same order in which participants completed the email interviews (see *Table 2*). Although I asked all questions in my interview protocol, I allowed some variation in the question ordering and follow-up questions based on the conversation flow. I selected a semi-structured interview format to minimize bias without sacrificing rapport (Crano et al., 2014). As a strategy for building rapport and trust, I briefly shared my own international experience with

participants at the beginning of the interviews. The interviews were all one hour in length to balance concerns for data depth/breadth with respect for participants' time. I recorded the interviews with participant consent. After each interview concluded, I transcribed the audio recording, read through the data, and engaged in open, axial, and selective coding. However, as data collection and analysis progressed and I reached theoretical saturation in terms of the properties and dimensions of key concepts, open coding became less necessary. The analysis shifted to primarily axial and selective coding.

Axial and Selective Coding

Axial coding entailed organizing concepts with shared properties under higher-level concepts or *categories* (also referred to as *themes*), facilitating a parsimonious description of the data. This form of analysis occurred through memo writing, with the focal concepts in the title and my analysis of their relationship in the memo body. The analysis proceeded from a description of concepts and categories to theoretical explanation through *selective coding*, when I analyzed the relationships among the different categories. I similarly conducted this form of analysis through memo writing, listing the focal categories in the memo title and describing my analysis of their relationship in the body. To achieve a further depth of understanding of the relationships among categories, I considered *context* and *process*. Context reflects the set of conditions that gives rise to the situations participants face, such as national culture. Process refers to participants' actions, interactions, and emotions that occur in response to their situations (e.g., identity construction; Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Finally, I built a theoretical model by linking the categories around a *core category* that captures the central theme of the research. The primary process is also embedded within the main theme. Just as I did during cycles of email interview data collection and open coding, I also did

theoretical sampling at this stage to elaborate on categories, concept relationships, context, or process as necessary. I used the results of each round of one-on-one interview data analysis to guide the next round of data collection by making additional revisions to the one-on-one interview protocol as necessary (see Appendix B). To arrive at the theory that offered the soundest explanation for my findings as a whole, I used the memos I wrote describing categories and the relationships among them (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Thus, the resulting theoretical framework is the culmination of the analyses I continually completed through memo writing.

As a final step, I conducted follow-up, one-on-one virtual interviews with eight participants, approximately one-third of the total sample, to validate my theory. The follow-up interview participants were GL2, GL3, GL4, GL9, GL12, GL19, GL20, and GL23, a representative subsample of the complete sample in terms of the participant characteristics in *Table 2*. I began the follow-up interviews by briefly explaining each relationship in the theoretical model without using any academic jargon. After confirming they understood the theory and allowing them to ask questions, I requested their feedback regarding the extent to which the theory aligned with their experiences. Participants all agreed that the theory accurately captured their development during their international experiences. Additionally, participants inspired ideas for exploratory analyses, which I describe in the results.

Researcher Sensitivity

Before describing the results, I now present a researcher sensitivity analysis to acknowledge how my knowledge and experience may have influenced the research. I am very familiar with global leader development research and international experience. I have been researching global leader development for the past four years (i.e., since beginning my Ph.D. program in 2016). Therefore, I started this research with knowledge of the existing literature on

concepts related to global leader identity construction during international experiences, such as global leader self-complexity, which may have impacted my interpretation of the results. However, I made a conscious effort to remain open to discovering any findings that expanded upon or departed from my understanding of these concepts. Furthermore, knowledge of the literature and established concepts can be useful when the research goal is theory development because it provides insight and direction (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Regarding international experience, I was born and raised in the US, but I have been living in Sweden on-and-off-again for the past five years (three years in total), so as noted above, I am an expatriate myself. My time in Sweden includes six months working at a global organization, so I can relate to participants' experiences living and working in other countries and cultures. Although I consciously refrained from overgeneralizing my experience to participants, my experience helped sensitize me to concepts in the data (i.e., to recognize something as important), as well as to connections among concepts, which is beneficial for results interpretation in grounded theory research (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Thus, my knowledge of global leadership development and my personal international experience played a role in the present research, which I view as elevating the quality and depth of analysis, rather than introducing bias. My knowledge and experience prompted me to question my assumptions continually and to compare and contrast my findings with the literature and my own experience, which opened up new perspectives (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Study 1 Results

The results of Study 1 gave rise to the development of a theory of global leader identity construction during international experiences (see *Figure 2*). I begin by providing an overview of

my findings, including the main categories, before defining and discussing each category and the relationships among the categories, as shown in the theoretical model, in greater detail.

Figure 2

Theoretical Model of Global Leader Identity Construction during International Experience

First, through open and axial coding, I identified eight primary categories, some including lower-order concepts, involved in global leader identity construction during international experience: (1) global leader self-complexity, comprised of the sub-concepts of global leader self-differentiation and self-integration, (2) interacting with locals and local culture, made up of the sub-concepts mental and physical presence, observing and learning, relationship building and experimentation, and arriving at new perspectives, (3) perceived cultural distance, (4) new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, (5) previous international experience, (6) previous leadership experience, (7) international experience duration, and (8) appreciation of cultural differences. I assessed each category's importance based on the number of interviews in which it appeared, the frequency with which it emerged across all interviews, and apparent relevance based on relationships to other primary categories (or lack thereof; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As shown in *Table 3*, these eight categories came up in all 27 email interviews and all 27 one-on-one virtual interviews at a high frequency.

Table 3*Study 1 Results*

Open and axial coding results: Categories and concepts	Number of email interviews in which it emerged	Number of 1-on-1 interviews in which it emerged	Total number of codes across all interviews
Primary 8 categories:			
1. Global leader self-complexity: the extent to which leader self-concepts are high in differentiation and integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global leader self-differentiation: leader self-concept contains distinct leader identities and skillsets to fulfill leadership roles in different cultural contexts • Global leader self-integration: leader self-concept is unified by stable, deeply held aspects (e.g., values, beliefs, purpose) 	27/27	27/27	330
2. Interacting with locals and local culture: the extent to which leaders engage with local people and culture, at work and outside of work, resulting in increased understanding of cultural context. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental and physical presence: regularly spending time with local people and culture • Observing and learning: learning about local culture through watching local people, including leaders • Relationship building and experimentation: deepening understanding of local culture through forming relationships with locals, attempting leadership, receiving feedback, and revising accordingly • Arriving at new perspectives: gaining additional outlooks on leadership and wider world based on understanding of local culture 	27/27	27/27	317
3. Perceived cultural distance: the degree of difference leaders perceive between their home and host country cultures	27/27	27/27	251
4. New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities: the extent to which leaders' new roles at their host country organizations include job demands they had not previously encountered	27/27	27/27	147
5. Previous international experience: the amount of prior experience leaders had with living and working in countries other than their countries of origin in terms of number of years, number of different countries, and number of years in countries perceived as similar to current host country	27/27	27/27	173

6. Previous leadership experience: the amount of prior experience leaders had with leadership in terms of number of years, number of different leadership positions, and relevance of those positions to current roles	27/27	27/27	111
7. International experience duration: the number of years leaders have spent in their current host countries	27/27	27/27	91
8. Appreciation of cultural differences: the degree to which leaders possess an intrinsic sense of curiosity, excitement, and openness towards interacting with other cultures and confidence in their ability to do so effectively	27/27	27/27	189

Other 3 categories:

1. Language ability: leaders' level of proficiency in the national or most widely spoken language in their host countries and the primary language spoken in their host country organizations	6/27	18/27	67
2. Social support: the extent to which leaders have access to relationships (e.g., family, friendship and expatriate networks) that can provide social and emotional comfort, as well as informational resources	10/27	23/27	51
3. Paradox mindset: the degree to which leaders embrace being both a particular kind of leader in their home country and a particular kind of leader in their host country	6/27	19/27	41

Selective coding results: Relationships among categories

• Proposition/ Hypothesis 1: Interacting with locals and local culture, including mental and physical presence, observing and learning, relationship building and experimentation, and arriving at new perspectives, positively relates to global leader self-complexity	N/A	27/27	127
• Proposition/ Hypothesis 2: Perceived cultural distance positively moderates the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this relationship will be stronger when perceived cultural distance is greater	N/A	27/27	109
• Proposition/ Hypothesis 3: New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities positively moderate the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this relationship will be stronger when new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities are greater	N/A	27/27	95
• Proposition/ Hypothesis 4: Previous international experience negatively moderates the positive moderating impact of perceived cultural distance on	N/A	27/27	97

the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this moderating relationship will be weaker when previous international experience is greater

• Proposition/ Hypothesis 5: Previous leadership experience negatively moderates the positive moderating impact of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this moderating relationship will be weaker when previous leadership experience is greater	N/A	27/27	77
• Proposition/ Hypothesis 6: International experience duration positively moderates the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture on global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this relationship will be stronger when international experience duration is longer	N/A	27/27	57
• Proposition/ Hypothesis 7: Appreciation of cultural differences positively relates to interacting with locals and local culture	N/A	27/27	68
• Language ability positively relates to interacting with locals and local culture	N/A	18/27	59
• Social support positively relates to interacting with locals and local culture	N/A	22/27	41
• Paradox mindset positively relates to global leader self-complexity	N/A	17/27	28

The central category in the theory of global leader identity construction during international experience is interacting with locals and local culture. I identified interacting with locals and local culture as the central category because it had the greatest explanatory power and relevance to changes in global leader self-complexity and the highest potential for linking the categories together (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Regarding process and context, the primary process, global leader identity construction during international experience, is embedded in this central category, and the role of context in shaping this process is captured through the categories perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities.

Although not of central importance, three other categories emerged in some of the email interviews and the majority of the one-one-one virtual interviews: (1) language ability, (2) social support, and (3) paradox mindset. These categories are not included in the main theory, given the lower frequency with which they emerged in the data (see *Table 3*), to avoid cluttering the theory with concepts of lesser relevance and importance (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). However, as I will describe, these three categories do seem to meaningfully impact the process of global identity construction for some leaders, making it important to understand and control for their effects.

Following the identification and analysis of categories through open and axial coding, I used selective coding to assess the relationships among the primary categories, which led to the development of seven theoretical propositions, as illustrated in the theoretical model in *Figure 2*. I do not offer propositions regarding the relationships among the three other categories and the eight main categories, but I describe my findings below and in *Table 3*.

I will now present the category and concept definitions arrived at through open and axial coding, as well as how each category contributes to changes in global leader self-complexity, as inferred through selective coding. In doing so, I answer *Research Question 1*, as I define the

characteristics of the process of global leader identity construction, and *Research Question 2*, as I identify the variables that enable versus constrain this process. The description of the results includes a selection of interview excerpts. For a more comprehensive presentation of interview excerpts that support the forthcoming propositions, see Appendix C.

Global Leader Self-Complexity

The first main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experiences is global leader self-complexity, the outcome of this process, which includes the lower-order concepts global leader self-differentiation and self-integration.

Global Leader Self-Differentiation

Global leader self-differentiation is defined by the existence of distinct leader identities within leaders' self-concepts, fit for exercising leadership in different cultures. Thus, increased global leader self-differentiation reflected leaders' development of a new leader identity and corresponding skill set to meet the demands of their new leadership roles and cultural contexts. Leaders demonstrated increased global leader self-differentiation when they described incorporating specific insights about their host country cultures into their knowledge structures, or schemas, related to leadership in that context, including who they are as leaders. For example, GL2 described learning about cultural norms around communication in his host country, China, and adapting accordingly,

The way of communication is very different. In the Netherlands, people tend to be very direct. Here people are much more implicit...It took me awhile to first of all, realize that, but then also to understand that, and to change my way, and the way I was used to doing things and communicating...So that was a big shift or a big learn for me.

He continued to elaborate on how that understanding impacted him as a leader, and more specifically, how he communicated feedback to his followers,

I do think I've become a little bit more subtle in the sense that I wouldn't necessarily give feedback in a public space. I'm more sensitive to like, "Let's pull somebody on the side, let's make sure that no other people hear it," because losing face is really a big thing in China. You wouldn't want anyone to lose face in public.

In this way, leaders broadened their cultural, leadership, and self-related schemas, constructing leader identities for their new cultural contexts that are meaningfully different from their home country leader identities, as GL26 described,

It's completely different. The Germans, you'd go in and go "Do this until then," and they go, "Okay," and get it done by then. As with Sweden, I'd have to go in and suggest that they maybe come up with a task...with a deadline that they maybe can all agree on.

The ultimate result is that leaders have multiple approaches to leadership available to them, reflecting an expansion of their leadership knowledge, skill, and ability repertoires, as stated by GL15, "Working here has added more 'tools' to my 'leadership arsenal.'" However, leaders don't need to consciously select which leader identity to inhabit; it seems the relevant identity and associated knowledge, skills, and abilities are automatically activated based on situational cues, as GL13 said, "It's automatic, it's auto-pilot."

Thus, the value of global leader self-differentiation for effective global leadership lies in the fact that it allows leaders to adapt to the needs of the present moment, a critical capability, as noted by GL11, "You need to adapt to your current reality. Being in touch with multiple countries all the time keeps you always switching your mind to adapt to their needs and reality." As GL20 pointed out, this reality includes both situations (i.e., adapting to the culture of a place)

and individuals (i.e., adapting to the cultural background of an individual), “One needs to adapt to the particular situation, and also to the individual.” The ability to adjust is necessary to lead across cultures successfully. As GL11 went on to say, “You really need to change depending on who's in the room and how they work because there are really a lot of big, cultural differences in the way we work.” GL24 similarly remarked,

You cannot be always the same because otherwise, they will not listen to you or they will not interact with you the way you want...To lead, you need to find a way in which you have to deliver the message that you want, and you cannot change the audience...Can I change Turkish culture? No...the only thing I can change is the way I interact with them.

Global leaders high in self-differentiation are likely to possess the ability to adjust to different contexts as their varied leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities provide flexibility in how they lead, an essential competency. As GL13 described, “It does require a lot of flexibility. Just like mental flexibility to understand who it is that you're talking about, how they need to be engaged with, and adjust.” Overall, global leader self-differentiation enables the fulfillment of the purpose at the heart of leadership. In the words of GL26,

At the end of the day, a leader is a facilitator. The facilitation needs to obviously be catered to the audience or your people. I see this as a role, as a leader, to be able to adapt to those different scenarios.

The other concept organized under the category of global leader self-complexity, and outcome of global leader identity construction during international experiences, is global leader self-integration, which similarly affords global leadership benefits.

Global Leader Self-Integration

Global leader self-integration is defined by the concordance of leaders' self-concepts, as enduring, deeply held self-aspects (e.g., values, beliefs, purpose) unify the contents. Increases in global leader self-integration represented an increase in the coherence of leaders' self-concepts, as they developed leader identities that were consistent with their existing self-concepts. Thus, certain self-concept aspects did not change as a result of global leader identity construction during international experiences, as GL17 said, "There are some things about leadership that fundamentally remain stable no matter where you are or what you do."

These stable components of leaders' self-concepts included foundational values and beliefs that transcend leadership roles and cultural differences, as GL15 described, "When you go deeper – your values, your moral compass, and things like that – they tend to stick." For example, GL22 described how a specific value has always been a defining feature of his self-concept as a leader, no matter his role or geographic location, "Looking at my core values and skills I would say that "kindness" is at the top of all the attributes that you need to become a leader. This is something that always has defined me."

Such existing self-concept contents became even more salient as a result of immersion in international experiences, which GL2 reflected on,

In essence, core values have really not changed in work. For example, I think honesty is really important and probably it's even grown a little bit more to the forefront. I think my idea around it hasn't changed, but it's maybe become a little bit more visible.

Thus, increased self-integration was associated with increased self-awareness of central elements of leaders' self-concepts, which enabled more authentic leadership, as GL26 said,

Maybe it's just shaved off layers of me that were inauthentic or that I had learned, "To be a leader, you need to be like this," or I did this, but it was never actually me, and maybe

now I realized that that's not needed. I've shed that layer and the inside leader that was there is just emerging...it is completely different, but not different at all in a way. Maybe I've just come into "me" more because of this move.

The value of global leader self-integration for effective global leadership stems from the stability it affords, as leaders consistently act in alignment with their core attributes, which, as GL25 said, promotes the formation of high quality relationships: "A lot of things are going to remain consistent because it's who I am. If you change that, then your team will never trust you because they can tell if you're pretending to be a different person." Thus, similar to global leader self-differentiation, global leader self-integration also contributes to fulfilling the fundamental objective of leadership. In the words of GL1,

When people understand that you have some blocks, that's a part of yourself, and you believe in it and you will not compromise...people will feel safe and will be safe in an environment to follow you, because at the end, it's following an idea for your vision and doing something together.

Overall, global leaders described the simultaneous increase in self-differentiation and self-integration resulting from their international experiences reflecting both change and continuity. They explained this development using a few different metaphors. GL2 described changes associated with self-differentiation as happening in a "layer" closer to the surface of his self-concept than the deeper, more stable "layer" associated with self-integration, "I think attitudes, skills, openness to change approach, all those things, have maybe developed and changed. But then the layer that goes under that is not so much changed." GL5 similarly described skill changes related to self-differentiation as occurring outside of the "core" containing the stable self-concept aspects related to self-integration, "What changes actually is

just some skills and some insights that you can build on and rephrase or reframe, but the core, I think it will not change.” GL9 described the stability of certain self-concept aspects as providing a “base” from which leadership can manifest in situationally-appropriate forms, “My base is still the same. I’m still the same person, but I think that maybe I learned how to use my characteristics in different ways, or just how to adapt them to different situations or people.” Similarly, GL23 said, “The foundation has stayed the same”; “It’s just the way I deliver it has changed.”

Taken together, increased global leader self-differentiation and self-integration allow global leaders to be both adaptable and authentic, which is necessary for successful global leadership. As GL25 stated,

As a leader that works in an international environment, you have to adapt the way you communicate to different team members that’s going to resonate with them... You still have to be yourself and be authentic. You can’t pretend to be a completely different person because then no one’s really going to trust you. As long as you’re being authentic to yourself, to some extent, you have to adapt... you need to adapt how you’re going to motivate people because everyone is motivated in different ways, and as a leader, that’s your job to motivate your team to deliver for you.

Additionally, increased global leader self-complexity involves enhanced recognition of the need to balance consistency across contexts with adjustment based on situational needs. Thus, increased global leader self-complexity may also improve leaders’ ability to reconcile complex tensions between global versus local influences on how their global organizations operate. As GL24 describes,

When you deal with someone that is from a different culture, especially in business, especially in an organization, you need to be able to find a compromise between the way

people work locally and the way in which your organization works...to look at Turkish leaders, how they lead their team, I also was aware that that leadership style would not work for my company...I had to find a way in which, knowing the way in which they are used to be led, I could adjust...the organization using some of their strength.

I now turn to how global leaders develop increased self-complexity through identity construction during international experiences by interacting with locals and local culture.

Interacting with Locals and Local Culture

The second main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experiences is interacting with locals and local culture, defined as the extent to which leaders spend time engaging with the local people and culture, both at work (e.g., leading a local team or collaborating with local stakeholders) and outside of work (e.g., participating in cultural celebrations, befriending local people, etc.), resulting in increased understanding of the host country cultural context. Interacting with locals and local culture, the central category of the present theory, was necessary for identity construction during international experiences because, as GL22 said, “If you want to get into the culture, and if you want to know how they work, how they interact, you have to be in the culture.” Local people included both host country nationals and long-term residents who acted as cultural insiders. As GL25 described, “My German friend has lived here for 20 years. To me, she feels Danish, and whenever I have a Danish question I'll ask her.” The category of interacting with locals and local culture is made up of four concepts, reflecting increasing levels of interacting: (1) mental and physical presence, (2) observing and learning, (3) relationship building and experimentation, and (4) arriving at new perspectives.

Mental and Physical Presence.

Mental and physical presence, defined as regularly spending time with local people and culture, is the most basic level of interacting with locals and local culture. At work, mental and physical presence involved regularly working with a local team, including followers, clients/customers, partners, etc., as opposed to primarily working with a remote team based in other countries scattered around the world, which diverted leaders' mental presence away from their local cultural environments. GL15 described high mental and physical presence at work, "It's a daily interaction...most of my colleagues are Dutch." GL24 similarly noted, "All my team was Turkish...in Istanbul office, I had 40 Turkish people, only Turkish people. All the clients I was dealing with were mainly Turkish." In contrast, GL27 described leading a largely remote team, "Most of my reports are not based in London...In fact, I just have one direct report in London, the rest are everywhere else." Furthermore, mental and physical presence involved spending a significant amount of time on the ground in the host country instead of traveling most of the time, which made leaders physically absent from their local cultural environments. As GL5 described, this absence presented a barrier to feeling part of the culture, "I spend weekends mostly here or a maximum of three days a week in Spain...I'm like a long-term tourist."

Outside of work, mental and physical presence involved socializing with and/or living among local people, as opposed to exclusively spending time with fellow expatriates, as GL24 described,

Outside of the company, I was interacting with the local people. When you are an expat in a city like Istanbul that is huge, there are a lot of expats that if you want, you can spend your time without interacting with other people. I tried to avoid that...because I wanted to have a local experience and to learn, and so on, so I was interacting with local people. I had a lot of Turkish friends and I decided not to live in a compound in a secluded area. I

was living in the middle of the city with my landlord who was Turkish, and I used to shop by myself. I didn't have any bodyguard, I was driving in the city. Istanbul is big and the traffic sometimes can be difficult, but I decided to take that as a challenge. I was there, and I was acting like a local... This helped a lot because you learn a lot of things when you are in the middle of the community. That was my way in which I could enter in very direct contact with them.

In contrast, some leaders like GL15 described a lack of local people in their personal lives, "The personal network is mostly internationals and expats... Most of my interaction with the Dutch is either in the service industry like restaurants, supermarkets, like that and at work... I actually don't have really close friends that are Dutch." For some leaders, their low levels of mental and physical presence were due to a lack of opportunities to interact with local people and culture, as leaders worked and/or lived in environments that were dominated by expats, as is the case in Dubai, UAE, which GL18 explained,

Local people actually, in five years and a half, I have met one person... and that's it, because 99% of the population here are expats. We live in areas which are completely different from them... I have never had the opportunity to interact with the locals.

Furthermore, expatriates seem to meet other expatriates through their networks naturally.

In other words, leaders did not intentionally avoid meeting local people, as GL20 said,

Not by choice. It just happened. You meet friends, they introduce you to other friends. Basically, our circle is super international. There's people from all over the place, from Holland, from Australia, from the US, from Canada, from Germany tons of people... It's a very international circle of friends we have here. Again, not on purpose. We're not isolating Swiss people per se.

Reasons for low levels of interactions with locals and local culture aside, lack of physical and mental presence obstructed the development of increased global leader self-complexity, as leaders were deprived of the experiences needed for global leader identity construction during international experiences. However, that is not to say that these leaders did not learn and develop during their international experiences – only that their development outcomes did not necessarily include self-concept changes.² They did not need to develop a new identity because their personal and professional lives existed in a context insulated from their host country cultures, which GL16 compared to living in a bubble,

[global organization] being a big global company, there's a lot of expats working there...I do live in a bit of a bubble, both at work and then at home. My partner, she's Australian. I would say 90% of our friends are expats of some sort.

After establishing a mental and physical presence, leaders progressed to the next level of interacting with locals and local culture when they began observing and learning.

Observing and Learning.

Observing and learning is defined as watching members of the local culture, including local leaders, to learn about the local culture (e.g., local cultural norms, particularly related to leadership). Interactions at this level provided leaders with a foundational understanding of their

² Being surrounded by fellow expats seemed to give leaders a sense of permission to remain unchanged, but it is possible that leaders whose “expat bubbles” contained people from cultural backgrounds different from their own (rather than solely expats from their same home countries) developed increased global leader self-complexity through interactions with those individuals. For example, if a leader moved to Japan from Scotland and did not interact with Japanese people and culture, the development of an identity associated with leadership in a Japanese cultural context and subsequent increase in global leader self-complexity would be impeded. However, in theory, the leader could develop increased global leader self-complexity through interactions with French expats. In this case, interacting with locals and local culture would be defined as the extent to which the leader spent time engaging with French people and culture, resulting in increased understanding of the French cultural environment. Although this is possible, the quality of presence in French culture would surely be higher if the leader had been living in France instead, leading to a richer understanding of French culture, and in turn, a greater impact on global leader self-complexity. Thus, I focused my analysis on interacting with locals and local culture in the leaders’ host countries.

cultural environments, which GL1 described as part of his routine adaptation process, “The first month I try to observe and to learn as much as I can, and to soak in to how people are thinking.” Many leaders similarly described observing and learning as a critical first step when learning about their new cultural contexts before attempting leadership, including GL11, “The first thing I think you need to do is to really understand the environment where you are at, and trying to understand what are the rules.”

In addition to general observations of local people, leaders also described specific observations and leadership learning from local leaders, including role models and mentors. As GL19 said, “In Singapore, I could look at the person I look up to...see their behaviors and try to either emulate them or learn something and get there.” He went on to say,

Every time I looked at their behaviors, examples, whatever they have done, it not just inspired me, but it also influenced me to not take certain decisions. That's how I used those experiences, and it greatly changed the way I am as a leader.

Leaders described specifically identifying leaders they admired to observe and learn from, including those who demonstrated what they perceived as competent leadership, as GL17 noted,

The other strategy, and this has been a constant throughout my professional life, but definitely over the five years in the US...has been really paying attention to internal role models, managers, or other senior leaders around me that I felt were doing a great job in managing their teams. I have very intentionally observed the way they were doing things. GL4 similarly remarked,

I had also someone within the team, who, we don't work directly together, but I have observed how he worked with his team. He was the kind of person that was very loved by

his team, and everybody really liked him. I saw that his team had a lot of Dutch people, so I observed him a lot, to say, "Okay, how exactly is he working with his team and how does he do it?"

Beyond learning from the successes of local leaders they admired, leaders also learned about leadership in their host countries by observing their failures. For example, in describing her leadership learning strategies, GL25 said, "Observing what works and what didn't." GL7 similarly said, "I basically learned from others' mistakes." Thus, global leader identity construction during international experiences was influenced by exposure to both the successes and the failures of local leader role models. Furthermore, leaders also learned from observing leaders they decidedly did not admire, as GL19 stated, "My leadership approach was formed based on the leaders I had been exposed to and the qualities in them I appreciated or disliked."

Therefore, observing and learning provided leaders with an initial base of knowledge about culturally appropriate leadership in their host countries. They then used that knowledge to inform the construction of their host country leader identities as they proceeded to the next level of interacting with locals and local culture, relationship building and experimentation.

Relationship Building and Experimentation.

Relationship building and experimentation is defined as deepening understanding of the local culture through forming relationships with locals, attempting leadership in the context of those relationships, receiving feedback on attempts, and revising leadership accordingly. Thus, relationships with local people provided the basis for interactions at this level, as they represented sources of cultural information and leadership feedback. Reaching this level of interacting with locals and local culture involved progression from listening and learning to action. After arriving in their host countries, leaders could only observe and learn for so long.

Eventually, they had to begin exercising leadership and fulfilling the role for which they were hired. As GL3 described,

It does get to the point where you have to then show and make yourself a visible leader. Once you've understood the people, once you've got their trust, hopefully just through interaction and understanding and talking to them, and you've been able to observe...and applied your experience, what you're brought into the role to do. I think two to three months, you have to actually draw a line in the sand and be like, "Okay, guys, here's what I'm going to do. Here's the leader I'm going to be." In each role...at that two or three-month mark, I've always shared who I'm going to be as a leader and allowed them to input on that as well.

As illustrated in GL3's remarks, it was important for leaders to establish high-quality relationships, or relationships characterized by mutual trust, when they attempted to lead in new environments, which GL8 further underscored, "That's the key...you get to know people and they trust you." Relationship building often occurred through dialogue, as GL9 pointed out, "I try to talk to them and see what they didn't like in their former leaders, what they would expect from me...with these answers I try to build my relationship with them." In addition to building relationships high in trust, dialogue with locals also contributed to leaders' understanding of the culture, as GL2 described,

Last weekend it was Dragon Boat festival, which is a really important day for China, and I'm just generally quite interested in what are the stories behind that? And so I try and do my best to ask my local colleagues over here or people I meet outside, just like, "Tell me about this story." ...I learn something from that. So where did these stories come from? How is that embedded in Chinese culture and Chinese thinking? Maybe to some extent,

sometimes some of these stories kind of explain also certain behavior. For example, like relationships, *guanxi*, as it is called here in China, is really important, much more so than it is in places in the West, so it's interesting for me to get a bit of an insight into...why are people and things the way they are over here.

GL6 similarly mentioned dialogue in the context of relationships with local people as a source of important cultural information, "I made a lot of friends...They gave me a lot of tips about the do's and don'ts about culture, the sensitive points, things which you can't do and talk about...Interacting with them I learned a lot." GL1 also noted, "The more candid questions you ask, more answers you get, and the more quickly you frame your own understanding." Thus, relationships provided an opportunity for leaders to deepen their understanding of the culture by asking questions and receiving honest answers due to a foundation of trust. In turn, this improved cultural understanding further informed their approach to leadership in their host countries, as GL14 stated, "Talking to people and understanding the local culture and...what motivates them and what doesn't motivate them, and how to help them." GL24 similarly said,

I spent a lot of time with people and I was trying to understand how I could help them to work with me...trying to understand how I could interact better with them. I showed, always, a lot of respect for their culture, interest for their culture. I was asking questions, I wanted them to explain to me their traditions.

During their relationship-building interactions with local people, leaders attempted to demonstrate culturally-appropriate leadership based on the cultural understanding they had gained up until then through observations and previous interactions. As can also be gleaned from GL3's statement above, leaders needed to remain open to feedback from local people on their leadership performance. Another critical function of high quality, trusting relationships with

locals was that they provided opportunities for leaders to receive feedback they could use to modify their leadership, as GL27 described,

I generally have a really good relationship with my team...and because of that...I generally have a good perception or I definitely get told more or less the truth on how I'm doing...I get pretty direct feedback whenever I'm not doing a good job.

Leaders consistently emphasized the importance of feedback for their leadership development. In the words of GL18, “You need to get feedback...You need to try and do errors and learn from the errors. This is the only way for me, which is going to make a leader and make today a better leader tomorrow.” Many leaders spoke about engaging in cycles of leadership experimentation and feedback, as they tried out leadership approaches and adjusted based on feedback. GL17 labeled this learning strategy, “Learn as you go, and experiment as you go.” As GL20 described it, “Learning by doing on the job and you adapt...If you receive certain feedback, then I definitely make the mental notes...never to do something in this way, or to change it, or to adapt it.” GL8 summarized the process, “There is no substitute for that time frame of making the mistakes, learning by experience, gradually adjusting, adapting, feeling more confident.” Thus, feedback helped leaders to identify areas for improvement and to learn from their perhaps inevitable mistakes when learning to lead in a new culture, as GL17 said,

Not everything that I've done has worked, and I have seen those results also fluctuating, that's why they are informative. But all in all, as a strategy to succeed as a leader and here specifically in the US, using feedback to inform your decisions and then being confident about those experimental ideas, I think it's really important.

In addition to external feedback on their leadership performance, leaders also considered their own internal assessments of authenticity during experimentation, as GL19 said, “tweaking

some of those learnings while forming other approaches helped my approach be mine.” Leaders used their understanding of their host country cultures to form their unique approaches to leadership there, as GL15 described,

That is definitely something that I took inspiration from by some of the leaders in the Netherlands...the poise and the professionalism, mixed with the directness, definitely has informed the way that I act and operate, but with my own interpretation of that.

Such considerations of the extent to which leadership behaviors aligned with their existing self-concepts ensured leaders did not simply become the sum of the local leaders to which they were exposed. As GL15 also said,

There are some things that I believe are part of my background...I don't want to rough the edges...you don't want to smoothen them all and become overly a blend of everything else, so there are some things which are you as part of who you are and where you grow up, which I think you want to retain.

Thus, deliberations of authenticity made it possible to achieve both increased global leader self-differentiation *and* self-integration. Leaders then progressed to the highest level of interacting with locals and local culture when the cultural information and leadership feedback they received through relationship building and experimentation led them to new perspectives.

Arriving at New Perspectives.

Arriving at new perspectives is defined as gaining additional outlooks on leadership and the wider world based on understanding the host country's culture. GL9 described arriving at a new perspective of her host country culture and how to lead there,

By getting to know better the culture and the city and the country, it helps me understand the people and how they want to be led...how I should lead them...so I think that it's

really necessary to immerse in a culture when you have people from that culture in your team or working with you.

GL8 provided an example of specific perspective changes on job security, motivation, and work-life balance based on her understanding of her host country culture, which impacted the way she led there, as well as her overall worldview:

When you basically can't let go of somebody... There's a job security, but on the other hand, I found it led to job complacency and to a little bit of a mediocre level rather than what I was used to where you try to get your star performers to perform and others to reach there. Here in Sweden, I had to get everybody to level and then bring everybody up together. I felt like a lot of heavy lifting if you will, but at the end of the day, I learned to take each person's skills. I began to accept for what they did well, instead of trying to change what they weren't doing right. I just decided to stop kicking my head against the wall, say, "Hey, this person, she's a really good esthetician, does beautiful facials, customers love her, patients love her. She does it with safety. She's a beautiful ambassador. She shows up for work on time." I took the positive and stopped trying to maybe doing the way I was doing in the US, which worked really well by promoting certain superstars and then having everybody else trying to reach to that and me praising them... It was just totally different for me to begin to be more accepting and understand that life is not all about work in Sweden. If that's the case, I'm going to go leave at three o'clock, and it's really okay. We still managed and that does not mean they're not hard workers either. I began to understand that it's not a contest of who's there the latest and began to look into myself and wonder why have I done this all these years? Why haven't I

learned life-work balance? I actually think they turned me a little around rather than me turning them around.

As leaders incorporated new perspectives into their self-concepts, including perspectives related to who they are as leaders, their self-complexity increased, leading them to feel profoundly transformed by their international experiences, as GL24 stated,

I think I am, for sure, a different leader and a different person. Probably a better leader than what I used to be before. I learned a lot, and I made a lot of mistakes, as always, but I learned a lot from the mistakes I made. All those experience will, of course, shape the way in which I am today.

GL16 similarly said,

It's been very transformational, and definitely very defining both for me and for my girlfriend. It's definitely changed a lot of who we both are as people...it has changed how I am at work, and how I am a leader.

However, due to their increased self-complexity, leaders described the challenges of returning “home” again and relating to people they once considered close friends and family. In the words of GL1,

You suddenly realize...you have adapted to different mentalities and it's quite difficult to go back and to be part again in the same way before you left...When I go back, I am trapped into this kind of thing that doesn't fit anymore.

Thus, the category interacting with locals and local culture positively predicts increases in the category global leader self-complexity. In other words, global leader identity construction during international experiences occurs through interacting with locals and local culture, leading to increased global leader self-complexity.

Proposition 1: Interacting with locals and local culture, including mental and physical presence, observing and learning, relationship building and experimentation, and arriving at new perspectives, positively relates to global leader self-complexity.

However, the relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity depends on perceived cultural distance – a key contextual variable.

Perceived Cultural Distance

The third main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experiences is perceived cultural distance, defined as the degree of difference leaders perceive between their home and host country cultures. Interacting with locals and local culture was more likely to increase global leader self-complexity when leaders perceived greater cultural distance because it increased the developmental challenge of international experiences, compared to when leaders perceived less cultural distance. GL13 summarized the concept of perceived cultural distance when comparing her home country, Brazil, to other Latin American countries like Argentina and Chile versus the US and the UK:

I think that Brazilians engage with Argentinians or Chileans in a very different way than they engage with Americans...I think they would look upon people who were from the UK in a similar way. It's just there are cultures that are closer and then they're cultures that are more distant.

GL8 illustrated high perceived cultural distance when comparing her host country, Sweden, to her home country, the US,

Culturally, extraordinarily different. I think in many, many, many ways, it's a different mindset, a different attitude, a different way to look at things. It's very much of a "we," community-based experience...where there's rules, and systems to cooperate are

ingrained very deeply in the country, rather than this sort of individual experience of America where you know you have your rights. Here, it's the greater good...I think culturally for me, that was such a huge change, just how they look at things. I mean, everything.

In contrast, GL27 provided an illustration of low perceived cultural distance when comparing his host country, the UK, to his home country, Australia,

I'd say it's extremely similar...the first thing is that they're both based off, I guess, British culture. I'm looking at my window right now, if I didn't know any better, I could be looking at Australia, like it's just the same. Everything's the same. We drive on the same side of the road. The food is very similar. There's a lot of immigrants in London and...While both Australia and England are like one British culture in Australia settled by White people, London's had a big influx of immigrants from all over across the world and so has Australia in general. They're both similar in terms of they come from predominantly a White background that has become a lot more multicultural, I'd say since the mid-'60s, '70s, '80s.

When perceived cultural distance was high, leaders were more likely to develop global leader self-complexity, because interactions with locals and local people were more likely to challenge them, making adaptation necessary. GL2 described the developmental challenge of high perceived cultural distance between his host country, China, and his home country, the Netherlands, as a kind of “hardship” that contributed to his learning,

I think I've learned a lot about myself out here...and I think that comes just with hardship. I think it's really in times of hardship and when you go through things that are a bit out of the ordinary. It kind of pushes you to think about yourself and about your life in

a different way. So, I think that coming out to a different place is probably the best thing somebody can do for their career and for their view on themselves. You really get to know yourself better if you put yourself in this tough...out of the ordinary experiences, in a culture that's totally weird and you have to actively think about what you...what your opinion is on these things and what your stance or feeling is. And having that conversation with yourself or listening to those feelings. Yeah, I think that is something I probably wouldn't have been able to get, if it wasn't for moving across the world.

GL23 similarly credited the high perceived cultural distance between her host country, Iran, and her home country, Sweden, as a significant contributing factor to her development, “I think it's been the absolute best life experience I've had. It's been really transformational for me, I think, because it was so different.” GL24 also explicitly cited the challenge of large cultural differences as a source of “richness” that contributed to his growth as a leader,

I think I was very lucky to have this experience in Turkey. I think it's an experience that changed my life as a person, as a leader. I would say that I would recommend any person that wants to learn to lead people to have experience abroad, and to try to lead people that are very different from your culture because it gives a lot of richness to your life and to your experience...It was a great challenge but brings a lot of reward and a lot of unforgettable moments.

Low perceived cultural distance had precisely the opposite effect. It reduced the likelihood that leaders would develop increased global leader self-complexity because interactions with locals and local people were less likely to challenge them, making it unnecessary to adapt beyond minor adjustments (e.g., cultural references). For example, GL19 described a lack of difficulty in his interactions with local people in his host country, Singapore,

given the cultural similarities to his home country, India, which led him to remain unchanged in that context,

If it was only local Singaporeans, I would be pretty much the way I am with Indians because it's very similar. They understand my accent well because a lot of Indians are in Singapore. Like 8% of Singapore population are of Indian origin. All of these reasons included it's not that difficult for me to interact with local Singaporeans. They understand my cultural background, my upbringing.

Thus, interactions with locals and local culture were less likely to be associated with the development of a new, culturally appropriate leader identity, increasing self-complexity, when perceived cultural distance was low. As G27 said, "In terms of leadership, it will be very similar based on the fact that the cultures I find are quite similar." Therefore, the relationship between the categories interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity depends on the category of perceived cultural distance between home and host countries.

Proposition 2: Perceived cultural distance positively moderates the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this relationship will be stronger when perceived cultural distance is greater.

Another critical, context-related category that contributed to the developmental potential of interacting with locals and local culture for increasing global leader self-complexity was new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities.

New and Unfamiliar Leadership Role Responsibilities

New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, the fourth main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experiences, is defined as the extent to which leaders' new roles at their host country organizations include job demands they had not

previously encountered (e.g., being a remote leader, acting as a politician, leading a global, multicultural team, thinking strategically). GL6 described the changes to his role when he relocated to his host country,

When I relocated, I also got promoted. I became a senior global director, which meant that I have a bigger team, more countries to look after, a bigger business to look after, and I became a member of the global category leadership team, which is the biggest leadership team that [global organization] had for any category... That meant that now I'm reporting directly to the president of the category, the president of that region... spread across multiple countries. They're reporting to me. Multiple countries and multiple functions.

GL5 also described significant changes in his leadership role as he went from being a specific country manager to a more central leader at his company's headquarters office, "Now I can say I understood why in my company we say, we need to go to the central role to understand... the way things are done is very, very different. It needs different skills." He continued, "Yes, this role is very different. It's more global, it's more strategic, it's more holistic, it's more of a medium-term rather than short-term." GL11 similarly moved into a new role at his company's headquarters office and described the role shift, together with the shift in cultural context, as a "double change," "Here in Switzerland, where we have the headquarters... it's also a double change, because you are no longer in a market, which is much more operational, day-to-day activities, and so on. You're moving into more strategic global projects."

In contrast, other leaders' host country roles lacked new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, as was true for GL25, "In terms of the role, it's pretty much the same." GL9 similarly said, "Yes, I did keep the company and mostly what I did at the beginning every day,

so it was really useful.” GL16’s host country role was with the same company, team, and project he had prior to relocation, “I actually knew the team quite well...because I was even relocating to work on the same project that I had been working on in Australia.”

Leaders were more likely to report increases in global leader self-complexity if their high levels of interacting with locals and local culture were coupled with new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities. Changes in leadership roles represented an additional source of developmental challenge for leaders during their international experiences, as GL5 said, “It's not only Spain. Spain gives you an element of exposure that you didn't have...Spain offered me a different role, a different culture, different thing. All of this changed me.” GL11 described the specific development implications of his role change,

I think that changed a lot, the type of leadership that you need to develop, because the leadership when I was in Mexico, you need to manage people, but at a certain moment, you make the final call in the decisions you're making...Here, we are not talking anymore about Mexico and so on, here...You need to change your mindset. You need to move from being specific into being global...Leadership here, it really means...How can you convince or drive really the agenda across different functions or different zones? For me, that's the most complicated part. It's something that you learn when you're here in the headquarters. You really need to manage your stakeholders and understand what are their needs, understand what are their constraints, and trying to figure out and connect the different functions, the different expectations and put everything into one table and make it happen. For me, that's the kind of leadership you develop here.

GL13 also spoke about her role change as a source of development,

The scope and the strategic impact that I can have was amplified...For me it's been a tremendous learning. I was ready for a move up...for additional responsibility, additional strategic opportunity...I had been asking for that growth opportunity for a while.

GL12 similarly stated,

It was the first time I was stepping up to that level where I was working with stakeholders from very senior stakeholders, and it was a very strategic and important initiative. I think myself and some other people around me was like, "Are you ready for this?" when I stepped up to the role...I managed to drive that program really effectively and came to really good results...That was a big step for me, stepping out of my comfort zone, starting to really lead.

Lack of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities made international experiences less developmentally challenging and, thus, less likely to result in increased global leader self-complexity. In the absence of changes, leaders could rely on their existing roles as identity sources, reducing the need to construct new leader identities. GL9 described how role similarities could provide an identity “base” in the same way that family members do, making it significantly easier to adjust:

When you get transferred to a different country in a completely new company, completely new role, everything is new. It's a lot more difficult to find a base, to find something to relate to...you change your life, you change the way you work, you change everything. I think that we, as human beings, need some base to relate to. Either you move to the other country with your family...to represent that base, or you move with the same company like I did. Even if everything else is new, at least you have the same boss.

You do more or less the same things every day...from day one, you still have some of your old connections to your old life. It really helps very much.

Thus, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities contributed to the developmental potential of international experiences, making leaders more likely to construct new leader identities to adapt to their host country leadership environments successfully. Stated differently, the positive link between the categories interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity also depends on the category of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities.

Proposition 3: New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities positively moderate the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this relationship will be stronger when new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities are greater.

However, leaders didn't enter their international experiences as blank slates – they had previous experience, which impacted the degree of challenge they experienced, as GL17 described,

I see that the things that I've done, the places that I've lived, the people that I have worked with over the years before moving to the US about four or five years ago, all of that, I think has prepared me to be a successful leader in the US now. I think it would be very difficult to land in the US without that luxury of previous experience.

As illustrated by this quote, past experience, including international and leadership experience, influences global leader development during international experiences. I now turn to these experience categories, beginning with previous international experience.

Previous International Experience

The fifth main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experience is previous international experience, defined as the amount of prior experience leaders had with living and working in countries other than their countries of origin in terms of number of years, number of different countries, and number of years in countries perceived as similar to the current host country. For some leaders, it was their first time living in another country, but it was far from a first time experience for others like GL14, “When I moved to Spain, now I've already lived in five or six different countries before that.” Other leaders, including GL3, emphasized the total number of years they had already spent living and working in other countries before their current international experiences, “When I moved to Singapore, that was 9 years into a 10 or a 11-year period of working overseas.”

Leaders who had a lot of previous international experience at the time of their relocations experienced fewer developmental challenges because they had already developed confidence and skills related to moving, adapting, and interacting across cultures. As GL11 described,

In all my career, 22 years that I've been working...every three and a half, four years, I've been moving from different countries. Somehow I lose that feeling that I used to have at the beginning of changing a completely different culture and so on.

GL15 similarly remarked, “For me, it was very familiar. It was my fourth or fifth time moving abroad. It's like you keep in your brain, the process that you know what you have to do when you move to a new place.” GL1 went so far as to describe moving to new countries and cultures as “business as usual,”

I moved very young to France, then from France back to Switzerland, to France, from France to Italy, from Italy to the UK, from the UK to Austria, from Austria to Italy, from

Italy to the UK, from the UK to Hong Kong, Hong Kong to the UK, UK to the UAE, so business as usual.

GL15 went on to say,

Now I know that whenever I move to a new country, I know you're going to find your places where you buy your stuff. If you want to meet, you're going to find meetup groups or things like that with common clubs...to meet people with similar interests...That was pretty rehearsed by the time I got to the Netherlands.

GL6 also spoke about preparation from previous international experiences,

I took those experiences with me to South Africa. That's why those things where people struggle were the easiest for me...settling down, finding an apartment, finding the restaurant to go to, getting a hospital, a dentist in place, finding a car, or figuring out your way around town, or getting a scooter. All of those things were something which came very naturally to me.

In addition to a general sense of comfort with living and working in other countries, previous international experience provided leaders with skills needed to lead across cultures, including skills around situational awareness and adaptability, as GL16 described,

Living in a few different countries or different cities...you become a bit more adaptable, and you can adapt either your style of communication or just the way you act. I'm a little bit more sensitive to how things are around me.

Other skills included self-awareness and self-efficacy, as GL12 said,

Just by traveling and by experiencing different cultures, I think you learn a lot about yourself...I've met a lot of...difficulties or challenges that I needed to solve, things that you encounter that you may not encounter in your home environment...When you

overcome these challenges...I feel I gained a lot of self-confidence. I know that if I encounter something like this when living in a new foreign country...I can handle it because I've done it before.

Previous international experience in a culturally similar environment (e.g., in a country located on the same continent or in the same region as the current host country) was especially preparatory. GL3 described how his experience in the Philippines prepared him for his relocation to Singapore, "I don't think I've felt unsure or uneasy about working in a different culture. It's probably because I've already been working in the Philippines." GL10 similarly described her experiences in Tanzania and Uganda as preparing her for her relocation to Kenya,

I am a veteran in East Africa because I started my journey in Tanzania...I lived in Tanzania for a considerable amount of years...almost five years I lived there...when we moved to Kenya, I already had exposure to the East African culture. They share the common language...We heard a lot about Kenya before when we were in the neighboring countries...I already had the exposure of living in the similar environment.

In contrast, leaders who lacked previous international experience found their relocations very developmentally challenging. For example, GL8 described her adjustment to leading in Sweden, the first country she had lived and worked in other than her home country,

I had to make huge adjustments in my leadership style or the direction that I gave, the way that I worked with the team, the goals that we set, the reporting relationship was different, the motivation I discovered was entirely different, the way you reward as well as give constructive direction, it was different...everything was different that had worked for me in the past.

Leaders provided additional illustrations of the heightened challenge and learning associated with international experiences without previous experience when recalling their first relocations. GL3 said, “I think, naturally, at first when you work in those sorts of environments, you’re operating a little bit outside your comfort zone... You haven’t been exposed to that many experiences.” GL15 similarly noted, “The first time I moved... Everything felt very, very unfamiliar. It’s frustrating even.” Leaders also recognized their first international experiences as significant sources of learning and development, as GL21 stated, “None any of my other moves were as hard as the initial one... it built resilience for my entire career.” GL22 described his first international experience in Panama as “a point of inflection,”

I must say that this is the point of inflection in my life... to be more open-minded... These new skills that I might say I have. The [GL22] before going out of Mexico, the [GL22] once arrived in Panama, and the one who’s in Colombia, it is completely shaped by my experience in Panama.

Thus, leaders were less likely to experience the change in the cultural context and perceived cultural distance between their home and host countries as developmentally challenging when they had a lot of previous international experience, compared to when they lacked previous international experience. Furthermore, leaders with more previous international experience were less likely to need to develop new leader identities and skillsets to meet their host country leadership role requirements, compared to leaders with less previous international experience. Taken together, the category of previous international experience weakens the positive moderating effect of the category perceived cultural distance on the positive relationship between the categories interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity.

Proposition 4: Previous international experience negatively moderates the positive moderating impact of perceived cultural distance on the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this moderating relationship will be weaker when previous international experience is greater.

Another important kind of experience that impacted global leaders' development was previous leadership experience.

Previous Leadership Experience

Previous leadership experience, the sixth main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experience, is the amount of prior experience leaders had with leadership in terms of number of years, number of different leadership positions, and relevance of those positions to current roles. Some leaders like GL19 had no previous leadership experience, as they became first-time leaders during their international experiences, "I started with my role as a leader in Singapore." Other leaders like GL27 had already occupied many leadership roles in the past, "I've been a leader in a lot of roles." Additionally, some leaders like GL24 had years of experience in roles that afforded specific expertise relevant to their host country positions, "The company offered me the position of Country Manager for a country that I have been working with for 10 years already."

Leaders who had a lot of previous leadership experience at the time of their relocations experienced less developmental challenge because they had already developed leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities. As GL27 said, "A lot of my ability to lead and manage comes from the experiences I've had in the past." GL11 similarly noted, "Definitely, all the experience I had in the past, it really helped me to do better at my job place here in Switzerland." GL8 described using existing leadership skills, "I was able to take some of my old success formulas."

Previous leadership experience in roles leaders viewed as relevant to their host country leadership positions (e.g., a leadership role in the same company) was especially preparatory. GL25 described how her previous experience leading a multicultural team prepared her for her current role, “In Luxembourg, it was a much bigger mix of cultures. That definitely prepared me and maybe made it a little bit easier to have a team with people from Denmark, from Finland from the US.” GL13 spoke about the value of her previous leadership experience as a local hotel leader in preparing her for a corporate leadership role in a hotel company,

It was tremendously beneficial for me to learn about hotels specifically because I was new to the industry...just from day to day, I was working at one of the hotels from there, and understanding what those dynamics of those leaders are like, and how they feel about the corporate leadership helps to understand how that dynamic goes...In terms of job execution also, a lot of what I do involves an understanding of what is a hotel going to want to do in this situation? I make decisions that impact all of those hotels. Being able to look at it from their shoes makes a huge difference in my job.

Leaders who had previous leadership experience within their same global organizations felt somewhat at ease with their role transitions because they had already adjusted to their organizational cultural contexts, meaning they only had to adapt to their new national cultural contexts when they relocated, as GL26 described,

This is the nice thing about global companies because the company culture itself and the values that a company like [global organization] has based on, they're valid for the entirety of the organization. In that context, it makes not so much difference where you work...for [global organization] because there's always going to be...this feeling that you get...when you walk in, you forget what country you're in...because the offices and the

feeling is just so much the same...That anchors you, I guess, to a certain extent, and makes it easier, from a change perspective, for yourself to adapt if you have this continuity.

She went on to say, "Coming to Sweden with [global organization], I feel I probably already knew what I was doing when I started here. Maybe the learning curve happened before." GL25 similarly said,

The company culture is the same, whether you're in Luxembourg or in Sweden or in Spain or the US...each office has their own personality, but in terms of what's expected and how you work, it's very consistent across all the different countries. At work, it's a very comfortable environment for me because I know how to navigate that. It's probably a lot easier for me than some of the other international people that are coming in from all over the world that have never worked in that company. It's a much bigger adjustment to them, adjustment to Sweden, and then also adjustment to an entirely new working environment. I think I definitely had it easier in that sense.

Leaders who entered their international experiences without any previous leadership experience experienced a greater developmental challenge, and thus, greater learning. GL19 describes the difficult transition he underwent from individual contributor to leader,

As an individual, I am primarily responsible for my own career...I knew when I delivered something...it was my success. That move to a team, now, I felt responsible for everyone's successes and failures. That was so much anxiety. "Oh my God, we are not able to achieve this. Oh my God, we're not able to achieve that." I completely began to lose my head and I started declining at the beginning.

GL21 described similar feelings of challenge, which she says motivated her learning and development, “Having no experience...pushed me to learn how to navigate the organization...From where I started, I had to either learn or go.”

Therefore, leaders were less likely to experience changes in their leadership role and related new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities as developmentally challenging when they had a lot of previous leadership experience, compared to when they lacked previous leadership experience. Additionally, leaders with more previous leadership experience were less likely to need to develop new leader identities and skillsets to meet their host country leadership role requirements, compared to leaders with less previous leadership experience. Thus, the category of previous leadership experience weakens the positive moderating effect of the category new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on the positive relationship between the categories interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity.

Proposition 5: Previous leadership experience negatively moderates the positive moderating impact of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this moderating relationship will be weaker when previous leadership experience is greater.

A final form of experience relevant to global leader development during international experience is leaders’ experience with their current host countries.

International Experience Duration

International experience duration, the seventh main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experience, is defined as the number of years spent in current host country. For example, on the low end of the spectrum, at the time of his email

interview, GL3's international experience duration was "Almost 1.5 years, since Feb 2019," compared to GL23's international experience duration, the longest of all participating leaders, "I have lived in Sweden for almost 23 years and am a dual citizen of the US and Sweden."

Leaders were more likely to demonstrate increased self-complexity following interacting with locals and local culture when they had been in their host countries for more extended periods than leaders who had spent less time in their host countries. Part of the explanation for this relationship is the initial adjustment period leaders must first endure, as they brave logistical moving challenges and feelings of cultural shock after the "honeymoon" phase dissipates, before leader development can begin, as GL12 describes,

Well, for me, it took quite a while before I felt that, "Okay, I actually feel like this is my home." I think, for at least six months, I was thinking that I was on an extended trip. It takes a while until you find your way around. There's something if I would go back to myself and give myself advice, this is it, take your time. After six months to a year, you might feel more comfortable both in terms of work, in terms of the culture here, understanding these sometimes weird Dutch manners. It's just like it takes time.

As GL12 mentioned, another part of the explanation for the impact of international experience duration relates to the reality that leader development takes time. Leaders repeatedly cited time as a key contributing factor to their growth, as GL14 noted, "I've not stayed the same because it's been 18 years." GL8 describes how her leader development journey unfolded over a 23-year long international experience, resulting in self-concept changes,

I realized I went through the transition of being Swedish, where I actually started to change from trying that way to becoming a way that was an amalgamation almost, of the two which just evolved naturally because after 20 years, eventually, you're going to

absorb that culture, you're going through osmosis and time and desire. Then I don't know where I changed, but somewhere along the line...At some point, I became this hybrid that was completely comfortable in those shoes. It just takes time...Once you get past that difficult initiation period...The first two years of international work is hell. It's like a honeymoon too. You're in that beautiful, exciting, romantic, "Oh, this is so great. I'm going to Prague for the weekend." You tell all your friends and they all think that's the coolest thing in the world. It is cool. We can be there in two hours and you're so excited and it's great...Then, all of a sudden one day, you realize that you're not the same person you were. It's not a role anymore. That's where I am today.

Leaders also described their leadership development as ongoing and evolving with more time and experience interacting with locals and local culture in their host countries. As GL14 said,

This is not something that I've done throughout the last two or three years...No, this is a long process. Year after year after year, you learn more things and understand it differently, and you operate and you take decisions differently, and lead the teams differently.

GL20 similarly stated, "My leadership style is really evolving...from learning, from feedback, you constantly adapt and evolve." GL20 also said, "Every day I gain new perspectives, observe different behavioral and leadership styles and learn new approaches," suggesting that continual learning and development over time during international experiences predicts further increases in global leader self-complexity, as leaders acquire additional ways of thinking and behaving that they then incorporate into their self-concepts. Thus, the category of international

experience duration strengthens the positive relationship between the categories interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity.

Proposition 6: International experience duration positively moderates the positive relationship between interacting with locals and local culture on global leader self-complexity, such that the strength of this relationship will be stronger when international experience duration is longer.

The motivating force underlying the process of global leader identity construction during international experience through interacting with locals and local culture is an appreciation of cultural differences.

Appreciation of Cultural Differences

Appreciation of cultural differences, the eighth and final main category involved in global leader identity construction during international experience, is defined as an intrinsic sense of curiosity, excitement, and openness towards interactions with other cultures and confidence in one's ability to do so effectively. As GL8 described,

I think that's one of the joys of my life, I would say, and one of the things I feel gives me a lot of inspiration. Different cultural backgrounds, different experiences, different people, I will relish it, I enjoy it and feel pretty comfortable...I think I always had that interest, studied geography...I had my eyes out to the horizon of the world my whole life.

When describing his views on interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds, GL16 said, "I enjoy it, and I find it interesting, and get some energy from it." GL27 similarly said, "I actually really enjoy meeting people in different cultures and I very much look forward to it." GL23 commented, "I've always been curious about other cultures." Relatedly, when recalling how she felt going into her current international experience, GL12

remarked, “I felt just like curious and wanted to understand what the culture is, and wanted to experience the city and working environment as well. Yes, 100% curious and excited.” GL18 also noted, “It was exciting and actually it was one of my dreams.”

Leaders like GL18 provided illustrations of lack of appreciation of cultural differences when contrasting themselves with other expatriates they have encountered during their international experiences,

Especially here in Dubai, many people arrive and they start to complain about the situation. For example, the fact that they cannot go and buy a beer at the supermarket, because it's a Muslim country. The alcohol is in the hotel, so of course, the price – it's not the same in Italy or in Europe, where you go and buy a beer for one euro at the supermarket. It's not like that. If you think...that these aspects are important for you, then, of course, you don't like it, but it means, again, that you have your mind in a box. For me, I will accept whatever the country's giving to me, and I'll try to get the best from the country. I cannot drink a beer on the street? Fine. It means I want to change my habits and I go to the hotel. We cannot try to live as Italian in another country. You cannot pretend to have the same cappuccino and the same croissant at the bar like in Italy. You complain that the cappuccino is not good, because if this is your mindset then it's better you don't even go out from Italy. Don't even send CV [curriculum vitae] abroad then try to come in another part of the world. That's my personal point of view. I arrived with the mindset that I wanted to discover everything. The beautiful, the positive things, the negative things, whatever it is, and accept for what the country is giving to me.

Leaders were more likely to demonstrate high levels of interacting with locals and local culture, and in turn, increased global leader self-complexity, when they had a lot of appreciation

for cultural differences. Appreciation of cultural differences motivated leaders to pursue international experiences (i.e., chances to interact with locals and local culture). As GL9 stated,

I always looked for some sort of an opportunity to work or to study abroad in order to just broaden my knowledge of the world and different kinds of people, and I always like that very much as a concept. I wanted to make it real. I was really, very drawn to the idea.

GL18 went so far as to leave his previous job when his company did not provide him with the opportunity to relocate, “One of the things that led me to resign from that company was the fact that there was no possibility to transfer in between the globe.”

After relocation, appreciation of cultural differences motivated leaders to seek out interactions with locals and local culture. It equipped them to interact successfully, as GL4 stated, “I’m a very open person, and I think that has helped me being here to be able to interact with different people.” Thus, appreciation of cultural differences made leaders more likely to achieve higher levels of interacting with local people and culture. As GL24 said, “I like their culture and I respect that... When you like something, it’s easier to understand it.” GL2 similarly described the positive impact of the appreciation of cultural differences on his ability to build relationships with local people,

If I do my best to show interest in local culture, I feel that the response that I get is usually pretty enthusiastic. People are excited that I, as a foreigner, try to kind of learn about how things work. And so it helps me even build relationships with people over here by just showing some interest.

As a result of their capacity to achieve higher levels of interacting with locals and local culture, leaders high in appreciation of cultural differences also experience greater learning and

development following their interactions, compared to leaders who are low in appreciation of cultural differences, as GL2 also said,

I've always found it really interesting to learn about people with different backgrounds and people that weren't born and raised in a similar fashion, so that kind of openness, or maybe even curiosity towards different cultures, has helped me also to learn more.

GL24's remarks similarly illustrate how interest in and openness towards cultural differences predict high-quality interactions with people from other cultural backgrounds, leading to new perspectives,

I think it's very interesting because people from different backgrounds, they give you different points of view on everything, so it is an experience that will enrich you if you are open to listen to them and to put yourself in their shoes.

GL14 also commented on how her appreciation of cultural differences motivated her pursuit of interactions with different cultures and subsequent learning and development,

It's always been something that has inspired me because it's a richness in itself to be able to speak to other people who have different backgrounds, who have different values, different religions, and so on. For me, that has broadened my perspective as a person...Since I started traveling when I was 17, I've looked for that.

Thus, appreciation of cultural differences led to interacting with locals and local culture, which led to learning and development. As leaders broadened their perspectives and expanded their behavioral repertoires through interacting, their self-complexity increased. As GL9 said, "I think that the more you change lives, ways of life...interact with different cultures, it just makes you a more complete person and professional." Therefore, the appreciation of cultural differences positively predicts increases in the category interacting with locals and local culture.

Proposition 7: Appreciation of cultural differences positively relates to interacting with locals and local culture.

Participants offered additional insights on the effects of the categories international experience duration and appreciation of cultural differences during the follow-up interviews. First, GL2 wondered if global leader development during international experiences reaches a plateau. In other words, is the moderating effect of international experience duration curvilinear? Second, GL2 and GL3 suggested that global leader development during international experiences may require less time when leaders are highly motivated to adapt to their new cultural contexts, meaning the relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity is less dependent upon international experience duration for these individuals. Stated differently, does the positive moderating impact of international experience duration on the development of global leader self-complexity depend on appreciation of cultural differences? In addition to empirically testing the theoretical propositions offered above, I will test these suggested relationships using exploratory analyses in Study 2.

Although not included in the theoretical model because they came up less frequently (see *Table 3*), three other categories that emerged as relevant to global leader identity construction during international experience are language ability, social support, and paradox mindset.

Language Ability

Some participants described language ability, or lack thereof, as having a significant impact on the extent to which they were able to interact with locals and local culture. Language ability is defined as proficiency in the national or most widely spoken language in participants' host countries, as well as proficiency in the primary language spoken within their workplaces, which was often English, as it is commonly the language in which business is conducted in

global organizations. Participants entered their international experiences with varying degrees of language ability. GL21 described her struggle to communicate in English when she first relocated, “At that time in Spain, we learn English, we study all our life but we are unable to even put a phrase together... You can read, you can write, but you cannot speak.” She went on to describe the barrier that presented to interacting with locals, “It was really, really, really hard... if somebody speaks to you, you don't get anything. It was really hard at the beginning, and it was a truly cultural shock when I got there.” GL11 similarly remarked, “It was really hard going into a country where you don't speak the language... It's really hard to communicate.”

Communication challenges stemming from a lack of language ability impacted some leaders' professional and personal lives in their host countries. As GL20 said, “It creates an obstacle, the fact that I don't speak their language.” GL8 described the negative effects on her work as she was still learning Swedish, “You can have misunderstandings and you can have confusion or wrong signals. That took a lot of energy and probably affected my job.” GL26 described the impact on her ability to immerse herself in the local culture outside of work,

That's actually the biggest hurdle that I see because there are so many amazing offers here in Copenhagen... There's a lot of social events taking place... They offer yoga classes and they offer bingo and they offer singalongs, and all of that is in Danish. I go, “I got to learn the language to be able to partake in this.”... There's actually where I go, “I'd be joining that a lot more if I was more fluent in the language.”

In contrast, leaders high in language ability achieved high levels of interacting with locals and local culture. They were equipped to make sense of their surroundings and learn from observing. GL13 said, “I spoke the language, so it wasn't like I was moving somewhere where I just had no idea what's going on.” Additionally, leaders high in language ability were able to

engage in dialogue and relationship building with locals, resulting in learning and development, as GL8 described experiencing when her language ability improved, “Truthfully it took me to be fluent in the language to really understand Swedes culturally and more nuanced. Once I had the language down...I found my interactions, trust gained and real growth improved.” GL5 similarly noted the relationship-building benefits of language ability, “I think they appreciate that I understand Spanish...For me, that's a shortcut for trust...they feel good about the fact that I understand what they say in their own language...This is how I gain respect and credibility.”

Thus, for some leaders, language ability positively impacted the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences by enabling interactions with the local people and culture. Another variable that contributed significantly to some participants’ capacity to interact with local people and culture during international experiences was social support.

Social Support

Social support is defined as the extent to which leaders have access to relationships (e.g., family, friendship, and expatriate networks) that can provide social and emotional comfort, as well as informational resources. Some leaders were on their own, as they relocated without family or friends, leaving them without personal sources of social support in their immediate surroundings. As GL22 said, “I moved myself, alone.” Other leaders like GL8 described being without professional sources of social support as they adjusted to their host country leadership roles, “I honestly didn't have anybody because there was nobody...You just had to figure it out.”

For some leaders, low levels of social support negatively impacted interactions with locals and local culture by tempting them to return home, leaving interaction opportunities behind, as GL22 described,

Now, I'm just living by myself. I have to manage by myself...My professional wish is maybe going back to Mexico to have another role there, because I think I need to be in my country to fulfill myself with everything, with all my culture, be close to my family. I think this is a bit challenging...always this question, is everything worth it? Is being here 3,000 kilometers away from my family and my best friends worthy enough?

In contrast, other leaders spoke about having sufficient access to social support. Some relocated together with their partners and families, as GL25 said, "My husband was coming with me. We were going to be together." Leaders also received social support from their friends, as GL20 noted, "Friends. It's always my circle of friends...For me, that's always been the biggest anchor in a place. To have this group of friends that I can actually do stuff with and talk to." However, it was not necessary for friends and family to physically accompany them to their host countries for leaders to feel their support, as GL14 said, "My friends are very spread out worldwide these days because I met them in different places and we all move around...but we still keep in contact. We still have that closeness." Leaders described their family and friends at home and other places throughout the world as a kind of secure base from which they could explore the world. As GL2 explained,

Where I've always been able to draw strength from is...I knew when I moved to London, as well as I knew when I moved to China, and I still know it...I've got a really good bond with my family back home, and I think that has always been like, "Okay, whatever happens, no matter if something goes wrong, worst-case scenario, I always had this support group that I can fall back on." And I think that's been an area where I've always been able to draw a lot of strengths from, and that hasn't changed. I think that's always given me some peace of mind or some sort of sense of security that I can always go back.

A source of social support that appeared particularly beneficial for some leaders was expatriate networks, which provided both friendships and valued information that facilitated interacting with locals and local culture. As GL15 said, “Expats and former colleagues within the Netherlands and just for personal life, but also for the advice and everything else.” He went on to say, “You compare notes on, ‘Okay, how did you go apartment hunting?’ Or again, back to the supermarket and personal life situation. They can short circuit that in one day...The network of expats...they can accelerate your integration...They've been through it.” Leaders repeatedly mentioned spending time with fellow expatriates, suggesting that expatriates are drawn to each other as sources of social support, which may be because individuals high in self-complexity are attracted to others who are also high in self-complexity. As GL13 noted, “I have always felt that I related better to people who felt like they had two identities.” GL14 similarly said, “That international profile and those people who are also in that international profile, those are the people that I would really identify with...Those are the people that I really, really connect with.”

Therefore, social support positively impacted the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences for some leaders by providing them with social resources that both motivated and facilitated their interactions with locals and local culture. Finally, another variable that impacted some participants’ capacity for global leader identity construction during international experiences was paradox mindset.

Paradox Mindset

Participants expressed varying degrees of comfort with the notion of developing a new leader identity for their host country cultural contexts, which meaningfully impacted the development of global leader self-complexity for some. Participants with a paradox mindset, defined as thinking in terms of *both/and* rather than *either/or*, embraced the idea of being *both* a

particular kind of leader in their home country *and* a particular kind of leader in their host country. They described feeling comfortable with and accepting of differences in who they are when leading people across those contexts, as GL20 said, “It's just different. That's all. Differences don't make a zero. They don't make us bad people or anything like that.” Leaders with a paradox mindset also recognized that people from differing cultural backgrounds could be *both* similar *and* different, as GL5 described,

All cultures are very similar and very different. So maybe the ambition or the dreams are the same, however, how they interpreted them is very different...Again, the dreams, the concerns, the fears are the same. However, the way they maneuver themselves in the culture is very different.

GL13 similarly said, “Everyone speaks a different language...has a different perspective, but really at core, no one's that different.” In other words, paradox mindset enabled the recognition of cultural complexity, which like global leader self-complexity, contains both differentiation (e.g., different languages, norms, traditions) and integration (e.g., common underlying dreams, ambitions, fears).

Leaders with a paradox mindset did not perceive a conflict between adaptability and authenticity, making it easier for them to develop global leader self-complexity. As GL16 remarked, “I don't think it's a matter of authenticity...It's just the approach might be a little bit different.” GL15 similarly said, “You have a style that tailors to who you're leading. You can't just do the same thing with different people...I think it's fair to say that the approaches will be different, and that's fine for me to admit that.” GL25 also noted a lack of conflict that facilitated her development, “I'm able to adapt while still remaining myself.” GL26 expressed similar thoughts, using cooking as a metaphor for leadership, “I actually feel very authentic in changing

my approach...It's maybe like cooking dishes for guests. I'm German – that does not mean that I cook sauerkraut and bratwurst for my guests.”

In contrast, leaders without a paradox mindset described feeling uncomfortable with differences in who they are when leading people in their host versus home countries, as they experienced tension between adaptability and authenticity. As GL2 described, “I hope that I am still kind of the same person...I hope that I don't drastically change my behaviors, or my ways based on who happens to be in the room, or where they happen to be from.” Leaders lacking a paradox mindset were more likely to describe adhering to existing leader identities, rather than increasing their self-complexity by developing additional identities, as GL1 said, “I will not be a different person in one room and the other one. I am who I am.” GL7 similarly asserted, “My approach to leadership doesn't change from country to country or job title to job title.” This thinking seemed to reflect beliefs that it's only possible to be one kind of leader – *either* the leader they are in their home country *or* the leader they are in their host country.

However, participants lacking language ability, social support, and paradox mindset still developed global leader self-complexity, as they described increased self-differentiation and self-integration. Therefore, the absence of these variables does not necessarily prohibit the development of global leader self-complexity, but it seems to make it more challenging or less likely for some. Thus, although they are not included in the theoretical model, these variables may still be necessary to control when testing the theorized relationships.

Summary of Results

Taken together, the results of Study 1 provide insight into the answers to the research questions, “What are the characteristics of the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences that may result in changes in global leader self-complexity?”

and “What factors enable versus constrain global leaders’ capacity for identity construction during international experiences?” Specifically, the results suggest that the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences occurs through interacting with locals and local culture, which involves mental and physical presence, observing and learning, relationship building and experimentation, and arriving at new perspectives. Regarding the enabling factors, appreciation of cultural differences contributes to the development of global leader self-complexity through motivating interacting with locals and local culture. Additionally, interacting with locals and local culture is more likely to increase global leader self-complexity when perceived cultural distance is high and when new and unfamiliar role responsibilities accompany a change in the cultural context.

However, the developmental potential of these enabling factors is constrained by previous experience – previous international experience reduces the impact of perceived cultural distance, and previous leadership experience minimizes the effects of new and unfamiliar role responsibilities. Related to the role of experience, the duration of current international experience is another enabling factor, acknowledging that leader development, including global leader identity construction, takes time. Finally, language ability, social support, and paradox mindset may also enable global leader identity construction during international experiences.

Study 1 Discussion

I now briefly discuss the primary implications of the Study 1 results – the theoretical model of global leader identity construction during international experiences. Consistent with prior research, the results suggest that global leader development through international experience predicts self-concept changes, resulting in increased self-complexity, and that this process occurs through identity construction in the context of interacting with locals and local

culture (Day & Harrison, 2007; Herman, 2012; Kohonen, 2005). Furthermore, interacting with locals and local culture was especially likely to predict increases in global leader self-complexity when perceived cultural distance between home and host countries was high. This finding aligns with research showing that experience in a culture that is highly dissimilar from the leader's home country culture prompts the development of more complex schemas, as they confront situations that are at odds with their expectations (Black & Gregersen, 2000; Dragoni et al., 2014). The developmental potential of interacting with local people and culture was also heightened when the change in cultural context was coupled with new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, concurring with research arguing that role transitions often bring about identity changes (McCauley et al., 1994; Miscenko & Day, 2016). However, leaders do not enter their international experiences as blank slates; they have detailed personal and professional histories already etched into their self-concepts.

The Study 1 results suggest that the process of global leader identity construction during international experience depends on past experience. Global leaders with long histories of experience with leadership in numerous roles and living in many different countries, appeared to experience less developmental challenge in response to perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities. These results are in accordance with theories arguing that leaders acquire leadership expertise and cultural understanding through experience, as they form increasingly nuanced schemas related to leading or acting in a culturally appropriate manner, which are then cued automatically when they encounter similar situations in the future (e.g., Lord & Hall, 2005; McCall, 2010; McCauley et al., 2010; Osland & Bird, 2000). Thus, leaders with a lot of previous international and leadership experience are more likely to have knowledge and skills relevant to fulfilling their leadership roles in their host countries within

their existing self-concepts, compared to leaders with less experience, making it easier for them to adjust. Related to their current international experiences, leaders who had been in their host countries for more extended periods tended to show more significant increases in global leader self-complexity than leaders who had been in their host countries for shorter periods. This finding is in agreement with the plethora of existing research asserting that leader development occurs over time (e.g., Day, 2011; Day et al., 2004), as leaders gain experience practicing leadership in the context of specific roles and cultures (Day & Dragoni, 2015; Day et al., 2014; Lord & Hall, 2005; Osland & Bird, 2000).

Finally, leaders who described reaching higher levels of interacting with locals and local, and in turn, obtaining the greatest development gains in global leader self-complexity, were high in appreciation of cultural differences – curious about cultural differences, and confident in their abilities to navigate them. This result adds to existing theories that motivation to interact with people from other cultural backgrounds predicts development during international experiences (Ng et al., 2009). I continue to study global leader identity construction during international experiences in Study 2. Additionally, I elaborate on the implications of Study 1 in the general discussion, where I integrate the findings with those of Study 2.

Chapter 4: Study 2

Study 2 Methods

The purpose of Study 2 was to test the theoretical model of global leader self-complexity development through international experience that I developed using the Study 1 results. Thus, the theoretical propositions resulting from Study 1 were the Study 2 hypotheses (see *Table 3*).

Participants and Recruitment

The participants were 610 leaders at global organizations with one or more years of international experience spread across six continents.³ As shown in *Table 4*, 90 different home countries and 74 different host countries were represented among participants. Regarding gender, 371 (61%) participants identified as male, 232 (38%) as female, and 7 (1%) preferred not to say. When asked about race, 372 participants (61%) identified as Caucasian or White, 81 (13%) as Asian, 66 (11%) as Hispanic or Latinx, 21 (3%) as multiracial, and 17 (3%) as African American or Black. Thirty-eight (6%) selected “other” and 15 (2%) preferred not to say. The average age was 41.63 years. Participants reported working in a variety of different industries, with the most frequently cited being technology ($N = 135$; 22%), manufacturing ($N = 113$; 19%), transportation ($N = 94$; 15%), finance ($N = 53$; 9%), and business ($N = 48$; 8%). As in the Study 1 sample, many participants were employed at Fortune Global 500 companies (Fortune, 2020). The inclusion criteria were identical to that of Study 1.

³ To minimize bias due to sampling, none of the Study 1 participants were included in the Study 2 sample.

Table 4*Study 2 Participant Home and Host Countries*

Home Country	Participants	Home Country cont'd	Participants	Host Country	Participants	Host Country cont'd	Participants
Albania	1	Kosovo	1	Afghanistan	1	Oman	2
Angola	1	Lebanon	6	Angola	2	Panama	1
Argentina	5	Lithuania	2	Argentina	3	Peru	1
Armenia	1	Madagascar	2	Australia	7	Philippines	2
Australia	4	Malaysia	5	Austria	5	Poland	7
Austria	6	Mauritius	1	Belgium	14	Portugal	1
Bahrain	1	Mexico	17	Brazil	9	Puerto Rico	1
Bangladesh	1	Moldova	2	Bulgaria	2	Qatar	1
Belarus	1	Morocco	1	Burkina Faso	1	Romania	3
Belgium	13	Netherlands	24	Canada	11	Russia	5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	New Zealand	1	Chile	4	Saudi Arabia	5
Brazil	23	Nigeria	5	China	27	Senegal	1
Bulgaria	6	North Macedonia	5	Colombia	4	Singapore	29
Cameroon	1	Pakistan	6	Costa Rica	3	Slovakia	2
Canada	9	Peru	4	Cote D'Ivoire	2	South Africa	5
Chile	1	The Philippines	5	Croatia	1	South Korea	1
China	2	Poland	4	Czech Republic	11	Spain	20
Colombia	15	Portugal	12	Denmark	5	Sri Lanka	1
Costa Rica	4	Romania	17	Egypt	1	Sweden	26
Cote D'Ivoire	1	Russia	19	Estonia	1	Switzerland	36
Croatia	4	Senegal	2	France	13	Taiwan	1
Czech Republic	2	Serbia	3	Gabon	2	Thailand	13
Denmark	2	Singapore	1	Germany	94	Turkey	3
Ecuador	1	Slovakia	2	Ghana	2	United Arab Emirates	28
Egypt	8	Slovenia	1	Guatemala	2	Uganda	1
El Salvador	1	South Africa	10	Hong Kong	13	United Kingdom	28
Estonia	2	Spain	17	Hungary	8	United States	45

Finland	2	Sri Lanka	2	India	6	Vietnam	1
France	23	Sudan	1	Indonesia	4	Zambia	1
French Guyana	1	Sweden	7	Ireland	7		
Germany	60	Switzerland	3	Israel	2		
Greece	6	Taiwan	2	Italy	3		
Guatemala	3	Tajikistan	1	Japan	11		
Hong Kong	1	Thailand	2	Kazakhstan	1		
Hungary	5	Tunisia	3	Kenya	3		
India	44	Turkey	19	Laos	2		
Indonesia	3	Uganda	1	Liberia	1		
Iran	3	Ukraine	2	Luxembourg	2		
Iraq	1	United Kingdom	25	Malaysia	6		
Ireland	2	United States	39	Malta	2		
Italy	36	Uruguay	2	Mexico	11		
Japan	1	Venezuela	7	Morocco	3		
Jordan	2	Vietnam	3	Mozambique	2		
Kazakhstan	1	West Bank	1	Netherlands	23		
Kenya	2	Zimbabwe	2	Nigeria	2		

The sample size was sufficient according to an a priori power analysis, which indicated that a sample size of at least 486 would be needed for detecting all hypothesized effects. I conducted the power analysis using G*Power with the desired power set at .80, α at .05., and effect size at .03. The effect size was determined based on the smallest anticipated effects in the theoretical model – the hypothesized interactions. The results of previous research on the interaction of similar variables predicting global leader development outcomes (e.g., the interaction of international work experience and cultural distance predicting strategic thinking) suggest that .03 is within the expected range of interaction effect sizes (Dragoni et al., 2014).

The recruitment strategy was also identical to that of Study 1. I identified and contacted potential participants through online communities and platforms for expatriates and professional networking, including InterNations and LinkedIn. The only differences were recruitment scale (i.e., I contacted thousands of individuals to participate in Study 2 and only about one hundred for Study 1) and recruitment message (see Appendix A) due to differences in sample size requirements and the nature of participation in each study.

Design and Procedure

I used a correlational, non-experimental research design in which participants completed an online survey at one time point. To minimize common method bias, I temporally separated the predictor and outcome variable measures with a distraction task (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Based on the distraction task used in studies with a similar research design and online mode of survey administration, I asked participants to sort a list of major cities into their rightful countries – Japan, the United Arab Emirates, Sweden, or Kenya (e.g., Pitichat et al., 2018). Additionally, given that all measures were self-report, I controlled for social desirability bias, the tendency to give socially desirable responses (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Controlling for this anticipated source

of common method bias is a statistical remedy to prevent the bias from contaminating the results and thus, threatening validity (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

I assessed the effectiveness of these actions in minimizing common method bias using Harman’s single-factor test, which entailed conducting an exploratory factor analysis to determine if a single factor could account for the results (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 1984). A single factor did not emerge from the analysis, indicating a lack of substantial common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The parallel analysis suggested a 14-factor solution (see *Figure 3*), and there are 14 variables in this study (9 main variables and 5 control variables).

Figure 3

Parallel Analysis for Study 2

Note. Eigenvalues are plotted on the y-axis and the factors plotted on the x-axis. The number of factors above the dotted red line for “FA resampled data” (14) is the number of factors that are unlikely to have emerged by chance.

Measures

The measures included scales for all variables in the theoretical model and for control variables. Complete copies of all measures are provided in Appendix D.

Global Leader Self-Complexity

I measured global leader self-complexity using Cotter's (2019) 15-item Global Leader Self-Complexity Scale, which is comprised of the 7-item global leader self-differentiation subscale and the 8-item global leader self-integration subscale. To capture change in global leader self-complexity, and in line with the survey research recommendations of cognitive psychologists, the instructions prompted participants to consider the leader they were before relocation as a comparison other (Sudman et al., 1996). Participants were asked to rate the extent to which each item describes the leader they are now, compared to the leader they were before they moved to their current host countries. The overall scale and both the global leader self-differentiation and self-integration subscales have shown strong internal consistency in previous research: $\alpha = .79$, $.93$, and $.86$, respectively. Scale validation studies also provide support for test-retest reliability and convergent, divergent, and predictive validity (Cotter, 2019).

Some example items are “When fulfilling my leadership roles, my behavior depends on the cultural context” (global leader self-differentiation), and “Regardless of the cultural context, my approach to my leadership roles is grounded in the same set of values” (global leader self-integration). All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*. In the present study, the global leader self-differentiation subscale showed strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .90$), as did the self-integration subscale ($\alpha = .87$).

Interacting with Locals and Local Culture

I measured interacting with locals and local culture using a 20-item scale – a modified version of Cotter and Reichard’s (2019) 12-item Cross-Cultural Engagement Questionnaire (CCEQ). The levels of interacting with locals and local culture parallel the levels of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, as defined by Reichard et al. (2015) and assessed by the CCEQ scale items, making it an appropriate measure. However, the CCEQ was developed to reflect the experiences of undergraduate students in the context of study abroad. Therefore, to increase the validity of the scale for use in the present study, I adapted the measure to fit the experiences of global leaders in the context of international work experiences. For example, “I only talked to people from my culture” was changed to “Most of my interactions outside of work were with non-members of the local culture (e.g., other expatriates)” based on the reality that talking to people outside of one’s home country culture is likely inevitable when employed in another country. I also added items to capture interactions and subsequent insights specifically related to leadership, including “I observed local leaders” and “I gained new perspectives on leadership as a result of my interactions in this culture.” All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*.

Previous research provides support for the reliability and validity of the original 12-item scale (Cotter & Reichard, 2019). In a previous study, the scale demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .81$) and was significantly positively correlated with another measure of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, the 7-item subscale of Chen and Starosta’s (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, providing evidence for the measure’s convergent validity. The measure was also a significant predictor of theoretically supported outcome variables (e.g., cultural intelligence), offering support for predictive validity (Cotter & Reichard, 2019).

Pilot Test. To evaluate the reliability and validity of the modified scale before use in the present study, I pilot tested it using a convenience sample obtained through MTurk ($N = 284$).⁴ I used the following inclusion criteria to ensure the scale items were relevant and applicable to participants: (1) participants had to have experience living and working in a country other than their country of origin for at least one year, and (2) participants had to have had leadership responsibilities during that time. Participants also had to pass three attention checks and successfully complete a captcha to be included in the final sample.

I analyzed participant responses to the scale items using confirmatory factor analysis. I began with 23 scale items, including 10 of the original CCEQ items, 2 modified items, and 11 newly created items. Based on the original scale's factor structure, a one-factor solution was expected to fit. I used the following model fit indices and cutoffs to evaluate the results: $p < .05$ for χ^2 , χ^2 to degrees of freedom ratio ≤ 3 , CFI $\geq .95$, RMSEA $\leq .06$, and SRMR $\leq .08$ (Kline, 2016; Schreiber et al., 2006). Additionally, .30 served as the factor loading cutoff value, and .70 was the threshold for adequate internal consistency (Hinkin, 1998; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The results supported a one-factor solution, with factor loadings for all but three items meeting the .30 cutoff. The three poorly loading items were reverse coded, coinciding with previous findings that reverse coded items can compromise psychometric quality (e.g., Hughes, 2009). After removing those three items, fit for a one-factor solution for the 20-item measure was acceptable. With the exception of Chi-squared, which was significant, all model fit cutoffs were satisfied: $\chi^2(170) = 290.93$ ($p < .001$), χ^2/df ratio = 1.71, CFI = .953, RMSEA = .050, and SRMR

⁴ Sample characteristics: When asked about gender, 176 participants (62%) identified as male, 105 (37%) as female, two (0.7%) as non-binary, and one (0.3%) preferred not to say. Regarding race, 181 participants (64%) identified as Caucasian or White, 36 (13%) as Asian, 27 (10%) as African American or Black, 18 (6%) as Hispanic or Latinx, 15 (5%) as multiracial, 1 (0.4%) as American Indian or Alaska Native, 1 (0.4%) as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 5 (2%) preferred not to say. The average age was 36.35 years.

= .046. Furthermore, internal consistency was strong ($\alpha = .93$). Thus, the pilot study results supported the reliability and validity of the modified scale, making it suitable for use in the present study, in which the internal consistency of this measure was similarly strong ($\alpha = .88$).

Perceived Cultural Distance

I measured perceived cultural distance using Chen et al.'s (2010) 6-item scale, which asks participants to compare their home and host countries along six cultural characteristics (e.g., values). The authors created the scale to overcome the limitations of existing measures, such as Kogut and Singh's (1988) cultural distance index, which is computed using cultural dimension data from the GLOBE project (House et al., 2004) or Hofstede's (1980) studies. The limitations of such measures include assumptions of within-country cultural homogeneity and the absence of data for every country (e.g., only 62 of the world's 195 countries are included in the GLOBE studies; Chen et al., 2010). However, Chen et al. (2010) found that participant scores on their cultural distance scale were significantly positively correlated with scores on Kogut and Singh's (1988) cultural distance index (calculated with the GLOBE dimensions), providing evidence for the scale's convergent validity. Furthermore, Chen et al.'s (2010) scale demonstrated strong internal consistency: $\alpha = .91$. An example item is "Ways of conducting business (e.g., networking, leader-subordinate relationships, interacting with customers)." All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Highly similar* to (7) *Not at all similar*. As in previous research, the measure showed strong internal consistency in the present study ($\alpha = .87$).

New and Unfamiliar Leadership Role Responsibilities

I measured new and unfamiliar role responsibilities with the 7-item unfamiliar responsibilities subscale of McCauley et al.'s (1994) Developmental Challenge Profile. The subscale has demonstrated strong internal consistency in prior research: $\alpha = .77$. Additionally,

scale validation studies provide support for test-retest reliability and criterion validity (i.e., significant positive correlations with measures of on-the-job learning; McCauley et al., 1994). An example item is “You lacked experience important to carrying out some aspect of your job (e.g., financial or market analysis, negotiation, budgeting).” All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Highly similar* to (7) *Not at all similar*. The measure yielded acceptable internal consistency in the present study ($\alpha = .77$).

Previous International Experience

In line with the Study 1 results and in recognition that experience is a multifaceted construct (Quinones et al., 1995), I measured previous international experience in three ways: total number of years of international experience prior to relocation, number of different countries lived in before relocating to current host country, and number of years spent in a country that is culturally similar to their current host country. First, I asked participants to report the total number of years they had spent living in a country, or countries, other than their country of origin prior to relocating to their host countries. I then asked participants to list each of the countries in which they had lived up until relocation, and how long they lived there. Next, I asked participants to indicate the extent to which they disagreed or agreed with the following statement for each country they listed, “This country is culturally similar to [host country]” on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*. I then summed the number of years participants had spent living in countries that they at least somewhat agreed were culturally similar to their current host countries (i.e., countries they rated as 5 or higher). The averages, standard deviations, and ranges for these measures are provided in *Table 5*. As an exploratory analysis, I tested the theoretical model using each measure (in separate analyses) to

see which facet of previous international experience had the greatest impact on the development of global leader self-complexity.

Table 5

<i>Previous Experience Measures</i>					
Measure			<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
Previous International Experience	1.	Total years of experience	4.66	7.02	0-45
	2.	Number of different countries lived in	1.44	1.49	0-11
	3.	Years in a country that is culturally similar to current host country	1.14	3.03	0-22
Previous Leadership Experience	1.	Total years of experience	5.41	6.27	0-37
	2.	Number of different leadership jobs held	1.58	1.58	0-11
	3.	Years in a leadership job requiring knowledge, skills, and abilities similar to those needed for current job in host country	4.45	6.48	0-35

Previous Leadership Experience

The previous leadership experience measures and measurement procedure mirrored that of previous international experience. The three measures were: total number of years of leadership experience prior to relocation, number of different jobs with leadership responsibilities held up until relocation, and number of years spent in jobs with leadership responsibilities requiring some of the same knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their jobs as leaders in their host countries. First, I asked participants to report the total number of years they had spent in jobs with leadership responsibilities prior to relocating to their host countries. I then asked participants to list all of the jobs with leadership responsibilities they had held up until relocation, and how long they occupied each one. Next, I asked participants to indicate the

extent to which they disagreed or agreed with the following statement for each job they listed, “This job required some of the same knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for my job as a leader in [host country]” on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*. I then summed the number of years participants had spent in jobs that they at least somewhat agreed required some of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their jobs as leaders in their host countries (i.e., jobs they rated as 5 or higher). The averages, standard deviations, and ranges for these measures are also provided in *Table 5*. Again, I conducted an exploratory analysis, and tested the theoretical model using each of these measures to see which dimension of previous leadership experience had the greatest impact on the development of global leader self-complexity.

International Experience Duration

I measured international experience duration by asking participants to report the total number of years they had lived in their current international experience host countries.

Appreciation of Cultural Differences

I measured appreciation of cultural differences using the 5-item motivational CQ subscale of Van Dyne et al.’s (2008) Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS). The subscale has shown strong internal consistency in previous research: $\alpha = .75$ (Van Dyne et al., 2008). Scale validation studies also provide support for test-retest reliability and convergent, discriminant, criterion, incremental, and generalization (across samples, countries/cultures, and sources) validity (Van Dyne et al., 2008). An example item is “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.” All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*. As in past research, the measure showed acceptable internal consistency in the present study ($\alpha = .71$).

Control Variables

Based on the Study 1 findings, as well as previous research on cross-cultural adjustment (e.g., Dollwet, 2013; Mendenhall & Oddou) and self-report measures (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2012), I included language ability, social support, paradox mindset, and social desirability bias as control variables.

Language Ability. Language ability refers to fluency in the national or most widely spoken language in participants' host countries, as well as fluency in the primary language within their workplaces (i.e., the language in which the majority of workplace communications such as emails and meetings are conducted), which may or may not be the same language. For example, a participant may work in the Netherlands, where the national language is Dutch, at an American global organization, in which the primary language in the workplace is English. The Study 1 results indicated that language ability can impact the extent to which global leaders are able to interact with the local people and culture, and in turn, develop increased self-complexity during their international experiences. Previous research suggests that language skills are necessary for relationship building and communication, which lends further support for language ability as a control variable (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). I measured language ability by first asking participants to list the national or most widely spoken language in their host countries, and if it differs, the primary language within their workplaces. Next, following the measurement procedure of Reichard et al. (2014), I asked participants to rate their speaking ability, listening comprehension, reading proficiency, and writing proficiency in each language on a scale ranging from (1) *Minimal* to (7) *Completely fluent*. I then calculated two language ability scores by averaging their responses for each language. Both were included as controls.

Social Support. Social support is the extent to which individuals perceive their interpersonal networks as being supportive (Hobfoll, 2002). Findings from Study 1 suggest that social support can also positively contribute to global leaders' capacity to interact with the local people and culture during their international experiences, leading to increased self-complexity. Additional support for the inclusion of social support as a control variable comes from prior research indicating that social support positively impacts an individual's ability to adapt to new cultural environments by enhancing overall well-being (Turner, 1981), capacity to cope with change and uncertainty (Albrecht & Adelman, 1984), and resilience to stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). I measured social support using Zimet et al.'s (1988) 12-item Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), which is made up of three 4-item subscales reflecting different sources of social support. The overall scale and significant other, family, and friends subscales have shown strong internal consistency in previous research: $\alpha = .88, .91, .87$, and $.85$, respectively. Furthermore, scale validation studies offer support for test-retest reliability and construct, structural, and generalization (across samples) validity (Zimet et al., 1988; 1990).

A few sample items are "There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings" (Significant Other), "I get the emotional help and support I need from my family" (Family), and "My friends really try to help me" (Friends). All items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*. In the present study, all subscales demonstrated strong internal consistency (significant other: $\alpha = .94$, family: $\alpha = .90$, friends: $\alpha = .88$), and so did the overall scale: $\alpha = .89$.

Paradox Mindset. Paradox mindset reflects an individual's tendency to accept, feel comfortable with, and value tensions (Miron-Spektor et al., 2017). The Study 1 results suggest that global leaders with a paradox mindset develop increased self-complexity with greater ease,

compared to global leaders who lack a paradox mindset, because they are able to simultaneously embrace being *both* a certain kind of leader in their home country *and* a certain kind of leader in their host country. This finding aligns with previous empirical research showing the positive impact of paradox mindset on navigating tensions (Miron-Spektor et al., 2017), as well as theoretical research positing that paradox mindset is beneficial for identity construction, as it allows leaders to embrace the coexistence of potentially conflicting identities in their self-concepts (e.g., “woman” and “leader”; Zheng et al., 2018). I measured paradox mindset with Miron-Spektor et al.’s (2017) 9-item Paradox Mindset scale. The scale has yielded strong internal consistency in previous research: $\alpha = .87$. Additionally, scale validation studies provide support for test-retest reliability and discriminant, convergent, criterion, and generalization (across samples and countries/cultures) validity (Miron-Spektor et al., 2017). A sample item is “I am comfortable dealing with conflicting demands at the same time.” All items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Highly similar* to (7) *Not at all similar*. The measure showed strong internal consistency in the present study ($\alpha = .87$).

Social Desirability Bias. I measured social desirability with Reynolds’ (1982) 13-item version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability scale, which I selected over the complete version to minimize participant burden. However, scale validation research indicates that this shortened version is significantly positively correlated with the complete 33-item scale (Reynolds, 1982), providing evidence for the scale’s convergent validity. The shortened version has also demonstrated acceptable reliability (Reynolds, 1982), as well as internal consistency in previous research (e.g., $\alpha = .79$; Cotter, 2019). An example item is “I’m always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.” All items were rated on a true/false response scale, and following Reynolds’ (1982) scoring procedure, I created social desirability scores by summing socially

desirable responses. For example, participants received one point for responding “true” to the example item. Given the scale consists of 13 items, the maximum possible social desirability score was 13 (see Appendix D for complete scoring instructions). The measure showed somewhat poor internal consistency in the present study ($\alpha = .63$), as it fell below the desired .70 threshold for acceptable internal consistency (Hinkin, 1998). Given the lack of an alternative means of controlling for social desirability bias, I decided to include the measure as planned.⁵

Study 2 Results

Data Cleaning

I began data cleaning procedures with a sample of 654 participants. Data cleaning included the identification and removal of participants who were erroneously included in the study, as they did not meet the inclusion criteria (e.g., those who did not report having had an international experience of at least one year; $N = 15$), as well as participants who did not follow instructions, which invalidated their responses for one or more measures ($N = 11$).⁶ Removal of these participants reduced the sample size to 628.

Data cleaning also involved the treatment of missing data and outliers. I began missing data treatment by comparing participants with complete data ($N = 614$) to participants with missing data ($N = 14$) on the main study variables, control variables, and demographics using a series of nonparametric, independent groups t -tests (Mann-Whitney U tests) and Chi-squared tests of independence. I found no significant between-groups differences, indicating that the data were missing completely at random (MCAR). Therefore, I elected to remove participants with

⁵ To improve internal consistency, I tried removing the item with the lowest item-total correlation (item 7; $r = .32$), but item removal actually reduced internal consistency from $\alpha = .63$ to .61. Therefore, I retained all scale items.

⁶ Participants removed for not following instructions included: (1) those who entered multiple home and/or current countries, invalidating their responses to the perceived cultural distance measure, which is intended to compare a single home and host country ($N = 9$), and (2) those who indicated that they did not answer parts of the survey accurately in their comments at the end ($N = 2$).

missing data using listwise deletion (Allison, 2002), bringing the sample size from 628 to 614. I defined univariate outliers as scores that fell outside three standard deviations of the mean ($N = 54$), and multivariate outliers as scores that fell outside three standard deviations of Mahalanobis distance ($N = 4$; Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). Given their prevalence in the data, I treated univariate outliers with winsorization, which involved changing extreme scores without removing any participants to eliminate bias without compromising statistical power (Field, 2018). Multivariate outliers were removed, resulting in a final sample size of 610.

Descriptives, Correlations, and Normality

I then inspected the descriptive statistics, correlation matrix, and normality before proceeding to the analyses. Skew and kurtosis values were within the normal ranges (greater than -2 and less than 2 for skew, and less than 5 for kurtosis) for all variables, providing support univariate normality (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007), except one language ability score (skew = -2.04) and one measure of previous international experience (skew = 2.31). I applied log transformations to both variables, which successfully brought their skewness into the normal range. The log-transformed variables were used in hypothesis testing.

Next, I examined the correlation matrix (see *Table 6*) to see if the variables related as expected, and they did. For example, appreciation of cultural differences was significantly positively correlated with interacting with locals and local culture ($r = .43, p < .001$). I also observed that the control variables demonstrated significant relationships as theorized, verifying the need to control for their effects in hypothesis testing. Language ability in the national or most widely spoken language was significantly positively correlated with interacting with locals and local culture ($r = .16, p < .001$). Language ability in the primary workplace language was also significantly positively correlated with interacting with locals and local culture ($r = .10, p = .01$),

as well as global leader self-differentiation ($r = .11, p = .01$) and self-integration ($r = .09, p = .02$). Social support was significantly positively correlated with interacting with locals and local culture ($r = .22, p < .001$) and global leader self-integration ($r = .17, p < .001$). Similarly, paradox mindset was significantly positively correlated with interacting with locals and local culture ($r = .19, p < .001$) and global leader self-integration ($r = .23, p < .001$).

Table 6*Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13
1. GLSD	5.26	1.04	-												
2. GLSI	5.96	.72	.11**	-											
3. Interacting	5.88	.57	.36***	.27***	-										
4. PCD	4.24	1.19	.09*	-.02	-.10*	-									
5. New resp.	3.62	1.21	.07	-.04	.07	.06	-								
6. Previous IE 1	4.27	5.25	.06	.01	-.05	-.01	-.12*	-							
7. Previous LE 1	5.15	5.60	.02	.12**	.03	-.09*	-.19***	.32***	-						
8. IE duration	6.97	5.02	-.03	.01	.08	.05	.06	-.21**	-.23***	-					
9. Appreciation	6.28	.54	.21***	.30***	.43***	-.09*	-.01	.13**	.12**	-.04	-				
10. Lang. ability 1	4.63	2.29	.04	.06	.16***	-.12**	.01	-.11**	-.10*	.22***	.08*	-			
11. Lang. ability 2	6.38	1.08	.11*	.09*	.10*	-.09*	-.01	-.01	-.10*	.10*	.10*	.19***	-		
12. Social support	5.48	1.09	.05	.17***	.22***	-.03	.08	-.03	-.04	-.02	.11**	.10*	.04	-	
13. Paradox mind.	5.20	.94	.06	.23***	.19***	-.06	.03	.05	.12**	.01	.32***	-.01	.03	.04	-
14. SDB	8.26	2.36	-.03	.12**	.03	-.02	-.13**	.06	.11**	-.05	.22***	-.06	.01	-.003	.08

Note. GLSD = global leader self-differentiation, GLSI = global leader self-integration, Interacting = interacting with locals and local culture, PCD = perceived cultural distance, New resp. = new and unfamiliar role responsibilities, Previous IE 1 = previous international experience (total number of years of international experience prior to relocation), Previous LE 1 = previous leadership experience (total number of years of leadership experience prior to relocation), IE duration = international experience duration, Appreciation = appreciation of cultural differences, Lang. ability 1 = language ability (national/most widely spoken language), Lang. ability 2 = language ability (primary workplace language), Paradox mind. = paradox mindset, SDB = social desirability bias. For the log transformed variable language ability 2, descriptives are reported pre-transformation and correlations are reported post-transformation. Only one measure of previous international and leadership experience is included to conserve space, but the other two measures demonstrated a similar pattern of relationships with the other study variables.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

I also examined the relationships among the main study variables and participant demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender). Perhaps unsurprisingly, age was significantly positively correlated with variables reflecting years of experience, including previous international experience ($r = .22, p < .001$), previous leadership experience ($r = .22, p < .001$), and international experience duration ($r = .22, p < .001$). The results of nonparametric ANOVA analyses (Kruskal-Wallis tests) revealed significant between gender group (male, female, prefer not to say) differences on interacting with locals and local culture ($H = 8.48, p = .01$) and global leader self-integration ($H = 7.37, p = .03$). I followed up these analyses with post-hoc pairwise comparisons using Dunn's test, and found that participants who identified as female were significantly higher in interacting with locals and local culture than participants who identified as male ($p = .01$), and participants who preferred not to say their gender were significantly lower in global leader self-integration than participants who identified as female ($p = .046$). Based on these findings, I decided to control for gender in hypothesis testing for relationships involving interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-integration. Because gender is a categorical variable with three levels, it was entered into the model as two dummy-coded variables (1 = male, 2 = prefer not to say), with female as the reference group.

Lastly, I assessed multivariate normality using Henze-Zirkler's and Royston's tests to determine the appropriate estimator for structural equation modeling (Korkmaz et al., 2014). The results indicated that the data were not multivariate normal, so I selected the diagonally weighted least squares estimator, as it does not require multivariate normality (Li, 2016).

Hypothesis Testing

Structural Equation Modeling

I analyzed the data using structural equation modeling (SEM) because it allowed me to test all hypothesized relationships simultaneously and control for the inflation of Type 1 error, as well as measurement error through the use of multiple indicators (Li, 2011). Furthermore, researchers argue that SEM is the statistical analysis that best captures the reality to which we aim to generalize (Li, 2011). Regarding statistical software, I used the lavaan package in R version 3.6.1 (Rosseel, 2012).

I conducted structural equation modeling using a two-step procedure. In the first step, I tested the measurement model, which included all of the latent factors (i.e., global leader self-differentiation, self-integration, interacting with locals and local culture, perceived cultural distance, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, appreciation of cultural differences, social support, and paradox mindset) and their respective manifest variables, as well as the correlations among factors (see *Table 7*). The factor loadings for all manifest variables exceeded the .30 cutoff, with p values all less than .001, except item 2 of the interacting with locals and local culture measure – the only remaining reverse-coded item. As previously noted, the psychometric issues with reverse coded items are well documented in the existing literature (e.g., Hughes, 2009); therefore, item 2 was removed. With the exception of Chi-square, model fit indices satisfied all cutoffs: $\chi^2(2537) = 3729.91$ ($p < .001$), χ^2/df ratio = 1.47, CFI = .970, RMSEA = .028, and SRMR = .049. Thus, the measurement model was considered acceptable.

Table 7*Correlation Matrix for Latent Factors in Measurement Model*

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5
1. GLSD	-				
2. GLSI	.14***	-			
3. Interacting	.39***	.35***	-		
4. Appreciation	.25***	.41***	.55***	-	
5. Social support	.07***	.25***	.31***	.16***	-
6. Paradox mindset	.06***	.28***	.25***	.40***	.09***

Note. GLSD = global leader self-differentiation, GLSI = global leader self-integration, Interacting = interacting with locals and local culture, PCD = perceived cultural distance, New resp. = new and unfamiliar role responsibilities, Appreciation = appreciation of cultural differences.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

I used the standardized factor pattern for the measurement model to calculate the interaction terms. Specifically, I predicted the factor scores for interacting with locals and local culture, perceived cultural distance, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, and then multiplied them to create the following two-way interaction terms: interacting with locals and local culture x perceived cultural distance and interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities. I then created the three-way interaction terms, interacting with locals and local culture x perceived cultural distance x previous international experience and interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities x previous leadership experience, by multiplying the relevant two-way interaction terms and observed experience variables. I repeated this process for all three international and leadership experience variables (i.e., the three different measures for each). I then multiplied the interacting with locals and local culture factor scores by international experience duration, an observed variable, to calculate the two-way interaction term interacting with locals and local culture x international experience duration. Lastly, I converted all of the manifest variables and interaction terms to z-scores because many of the measures are on vastly

different scales (e.g., current international experience duration ranged from 1.83 to 20 compared to global leader self-differentiation, which ranged from 3.09 to 7).

Next, I proceeded to the second step of the analysis and added the hypothesized paths (see *Table 3*), as well as the observed main study and control variables, and tested the full structural equation model. I repeated this step nine times to test every combination of the three different previous international and leadership experience measures⁷ and obtained a highly similar pattern of results each time (see *Table 8*). I provide model fit information for all nine models in *Table 8*, but here I limit my discussion to the best fitting model, model one, in which previous international and leadership experience are measured as the number of years of previous experience. As shown in *Table 8*, with the exceptions of Chi-square and CFI, model fit indices satisfied all cutoffs: $\chi^2(3408) = 7234.83$ ($p < .001$), χ^2/df ratio = 2.12, CFI = .914, RMSEA = .043, and SRMR = .063. However, CFI was fairly close to meeting the desired .95 cutoff (Schreiber et al., 2006), so model fit was considered acceptable.

⁷ I explored the option of including all three indicators for previous international and leadership experience in the model organized under previous international and leadership experience latent factors, but it negatively impacted measurement model fit and the full structural model did not converge, so I proceeded to conduct separate analyses.

Table 8*Model Fit Indices*

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Measurement model	3729.91	2537	1.47	.970	.028	.049
Structural model 1	7234.83	3408	2.12	.914	.043	.063
Structural model 2	7307.55	3408	2.14	.912	.043	.063
Structural model 3	7244.03	3408	2.13	.914	.043	.063
Structural model 4	7323.71	3408	2.15	.912	.043	.064
Structural model 5	7251.53	3408	2.13	.914	.043	.063
Structural model 6	7401.68	3408	2.17	.911	.044	.064
Structural model 7	7327.35	3408	2.15	.912	.043	.063
Structural model 8	7329.76	3408	2.15	.912	.043	.063
Structural model 9	7273.01	3408	2.13	.913	.043	.063
Exploratory model 1	6640.40	3090	2.15	.920	.043	.062
Exploratory model 2	7650.92	3095	2.47	.897	.049	.066

Note. Structural model 1 = previous international experience measure one⁸, previous leadership experience measure one⁹, Structural model 2 = previous international experience measure two¹⁰, previous leadership experience measure one, Structural model 3 = previous international experience measure three¹¹, previous leadership experience measure one, Structural model 4 = previous international experience measure one, previous leadership experience measure two¹², Structural model 5 = previous international experience measure one, previous leadership experience measure three¹³, Structural model 6 = previous international experience measure two, previous leadership experience measure two, Structural model 7 = previous international experience measure two, previous leadership experience measure three, Structural model 8 = previous international experience measure three, previous leadership experience measure two, and Structural model 9 = previous international experience measure three, previous leadership experience measure three. Exploratory model includes measure one for both previous international and leadership experience.

I proceeded to examine the results for the hypothesized paths as illustrated in *Figure 4*.

The paths from interacting with locals and local culture to global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = .42, p < .001$) and self-integration ($\beta = .28, p < .001$) were significant, providing support for Hypothesis 1. However, the paths from interacting with locals and local culture x perceived cultural distance to global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = -.02, p = .53$) and self-integration ($\beta <$

⁸ Number of years of international experience prior to relocation

⁹ Number of years of leadership experience prior to relocation

¹⁰ Number of different countries lived in before relocating to current host country

¹¹ Number of years spent in a country that is culturally similar to their current host country

¹² Number of different jobs with leadership responsibilities held up until relocation

¹³ Number of years spent in leadership jobs requiring some of the same knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their jobs in their host countries

.001, $p = .99$) were not significant, failing to support Hypothesis 2. The path from interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities to global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = -.07$, $p = .002$) was significant, but not in the predicted direction, and the path to self-integration ($\beta = .02$, $p = .44$) was not significant, failing to support for Hypothesis 3. The paths from interacting with locals and local culture x perceived cultural distance x previous international experience to global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = -.01$, $p = .57$) and self-integration ($\beta = .02$, $p = .36$) were not significant, failing to support Hypothesis 4. The path from interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities x previous leadership experience to global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = -.12$, $p = .001$) was significant, and in the hypothesized direction, but with an unexpected interpretation given the lack of support for Hypothesis 3. The path from interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities x previous leadership experience to global leader self-integration ($\beta = .04$, $p = .053$) was not significant; therefore, Hypothesis 5 is partially supported. The paths from interacting with locals and local culture x international experience duration to global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = .30$, $p < .001$) and self-integration ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$) were significant, supporting Hypothesis 6 (see *Figure 5*). Finally, the path from appreciation of cultural differences to interacting with locals and local culture ($\beta = .58$, $p < .001$) was significant, supporting Hypothesis 7.

Figure 4

Results of Structural Equation Modeling Analyses of the Hypothesized Model

Note. For all paths leading to global leader self-complexity, the beta weights above and to the left of the arrows lead to global leader self-differentiation, and the beta weights below and to the right of the arrows lead to global leader self-integration. Previous leadership and international experience are measured as number of years of experience. Model fit: $\chi^2(3408) = 7234.83$ ($p < .001$), $\chi^2/df = 2.12$, CFI = .914, RMSEA = .043, SRMR = .063.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 5

Results of Structural Equation Modeling Analysis of the Hypothesized Interaction between Interacting with Locals and Local Culture and International Experience Duration Predicting Global Leader Self-Differentiation (left) and Self-Integration (right)

Note. The graphs illustrate that the slope of the linear regression line describing the relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation/self-integration is higher at higher levels of international experience duration. Scores for all variables are in z-scores. sd = standard deviation.

Some of the paths involving the controls variables were also significant. However, the effect sizes were smaller than the supported hypothesized paths, and some relationships observed in the correlation matrix disappeared or changed signs in the presence of the main study variables. Significant paths to global leader self-differentiation included paths from language ability in the primary workplace language ($\beta = -.10, p < .001$), social support ($\beta = -.05, p < .001$), and paradox mindset ($\beta = -.05, p = .001$). Significant paths to global leader self-integration included paths from language ability in the primary workplace language ($\beta = .15, p < .001$), social support ($\beta = .15, p < .001$), paradox mindset ($\beta = .18, p < .001$), social desirability bias ($\beta = -.05, p < .001$), and gender, dummy-coded variable two (prefer not to say; $\beta = -.10, p = .04$), indicating that participants who preferred not to say their gender were significantly lower in global leader self-integration than the reference group (female). Significant paths to interacting with locals and local culture included paths from language ability in the national or most widely spoken language ($\beta = .16, p < .001$), social support ($\beta = .20, p < .001$), social desirability bias ($\beta = -.18, p < .001$), and gender, dummy-coded variable one (male; $\beta = -.08, p < .001$), indicating that male participants were significantly lower in interacting with locals and local culture than the reference group (female). Thus, the designation of language ability, social support, paradox mindset, social desirability bias, and gender as important control variables, rather than part of the theoretical model, was affirmed.

Although interactions predicted in Hypotheses 2-5 were not supported, many of the main effects were significant. The significant main effects on global leader self-differentiation included perceived cultural distance ($\beta = .11, p < .001$), new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities ($\beta = .07, p < .001$), and previous international experience ($\beta = .07, p = .001$). Additionally, the significant main effects on global leader self-integration included new and

unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities ($\beta = -.08, p < .001$) and previous leadership experience ($\beta = .12, p < .001$). Informed by these results, I proceeded with some exploratory analyses.

Exploratory Analyses

I devised and tested an alternative model based on the results of hypothesis testing and the relationships in the correlation matrix (see *Figure 6*). Importantly, this model is also consistent with the theory of global leader self-complexity development through international experience developed in Study 1, as I will describe in the forthcoming discussion. Modifications from the hypothesized model include main effects from perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities to global leader self-differentiation and self-integration, rather than moderating effects. The moderating effects of previous international and leadership experience were also removed. These variables demonstrated significant main effects on global leader self-differentiation and self-integration, and according to the correlation matrix, both have significant positive associations with appreciation of cultural differences. Thus, it seems previous international and leadership experience may positively impact global leader self-differentiation and self-integration by increasing appreciation of cultural differences.

Figure 6

Results of Structural Equation Modeling Analyses of the Exploratory Model

Note. For all paths leading to global leader self-complexity, the beta weights above and to the left of the arrows lead to global leader self-differentiation, and the beta weights below and to the right of the arrows lead to global leader self-integration. Previous leadership and international experience are measured as number of years of experience. Model fit: $\chi^2(3090) = 6640.40$ ($p < .001$), $\chi^2/df = 2.15$, CFI = .920, RMSEA = .043, SRMR = .062.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

The results indicated that fit for this exploratory model was better than fit for the hypothesized model across most indices: $\chi^2(3090) = 6640.40$ ($p < .001$), χ^2/df ratio = 2.15, CFI = .920, RMSEA = .043, and SRMR = .062. As shown in *Figure 6*, the paths were all significant. Additionally, all the implied indirect effects were significant, including the indirect effect of appreciation of cultural differences on global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$) and self-integration ($\beta = .16$, $p < .001$) through interacting with locals and local culture, the indirect effect of previous international experience on global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = .02$, $p = .01$) and self-integration ($\beta = .01$, $p = .01$) through appreciation of cultural differences and interacting with locals and local culture, and the indirect effect of previous leadership experience on global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = .02$, $p = .001$) and self-integration ($\beta = .01$, $p = .002$) through appreciation of cultural differences and interacting with locals and local culture.

I then tested a second exploratory model to examine another possible role for previous international and leadership experience that is also consistent with the theory developed in Study 1. According to the theory, previous international and leadership experience reduces the developmental challenge associated with perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities. The hypothesized moderating effects were not supported; however, there may be direct negative relationships instead. Thus, I added paths from previous international experience to perceived cultural distance and from previous leadership experience to new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities (and removed the paths to appreciation of cultural differences). As shown in *Table 8*, the results indicated that fit for this second exploratory model was worse than fit for both the hypothesized model and the first exploratory model: $\chi^2(3095) = 7650.92$ ($p < .001$), χ^2/df ratio = 2.47, CFI = .897, RMSEA = .049, and SRMR = .066. Furthermore, the path from previous leadership experience to new and unfamiliar

leadership role responsibilities ($\beta = -.20, p < .001$) was significant, but the path from previous international experience to perceived cultural distance ($\beta = -.01, p = .76$) was not. Therefore, the first exploratory model, depicted in *Figure 6*, was deemed the preferred final structural model.

Also, as part of the exploratory analyses, I completed the analyses Study 1 participants suggested in the follow-up interviews. Specifically, I examined if the relationships between the interaction term, interacting with locals and local culture x international experience duration, and the dimensions of global leader self-complexity are curvilinear. I plotted the variables and assessed their relationships visually, and the results suggested that the relationships between interacting with locals and local culture x international experience duration and global leader self-differentiation and self-integration are linear. Furthermore, as previously noted, the linear relationships are significant as hypothesized. I also tested if the three-way interaction among interacting with locals and local culture, international experience duration, and appreciation of cultural differences is a significant predictor of global leader self-complexity. I calculated the interaction term using the same procedure described above, and added it to the best fitting model (the first exploratory model; see *Table 8*) as a predictor of global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. The paths between interacting with locals and local culture x international experience duration x appreciation of cultural differences and global leader self-differentiation ($\beta = -.02, p = .31$) and self-integration ($\beta = -.01, p = .56$) were not significant, suggesting that the moderating effect of international experience duration on the relationships between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity does not depend on appreciation of cultural differences.

Summary of Results

In summary, the results provide full support for Hypotheses 1, 6, and 7, partial support for Hypothesis 5, and no support for Hypotheses 2-4. Interacting with locals and local culture was a significant positive predictor of global leader self-differentiation and self-integration (H1). However, neither perceived cultural distance nor new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities positively moderated these relationships. The interaction between perceived cultural distance and interacting with locals and local culture did not significantly predict global leader self-differentiation or self-integration (H2). The interaction between new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities and interacting with locals and local culture did not significantly predict global leader self-integration; it did significantly predict self-differentiation, but in the negative direction, which was unexpected (H3). Given the lack of support for these hypothesized moderating relationships, it follows that the hypothesized moderations of these moderations (i.e., the three-way interactions) were mostly unsupported. The interaction among perceived cultural distance, interacting with locals and local culture, and previous international experience did not significantly predict global leader self-differentiation or self-integration (H4). The interaction among new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, interacting with locals and local culture, and previous leadership experience did not significantly predict global leader self-integration; it did significantly predict self-differentiation (H5), but with a different interpretation than hypothesized. The positive moderating effect of international experience duration on the relationships between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation and self-integration was supported (H6), and appreciation of cultural differences was a significant positive predictor of interacting with locals and local culture (H7).

Some of the control variables were also significant predictors of global leader self-complexity and interacting with locals and local culture. Significant positive predictors of global

leader self-integration included language ability in the primary workplace language, social support, and paradox mindset, though their predictive power was not as strong as interacting with locals and local culture, the hypothesized predictor. Significant positive predictors of interacting with locals and local culture included language ability in the national or most widely spoken language and social support, but their predictive power was similarly not as strong as the hypothesized predictor, appreciation of cultural differences. Gender was also a significant predictor of interacting with locals and local culture: male participants were significantly lower in interacting with locals and local culture than female participants.

The exploratory analyses suggested alternative roles for perceived cultural distance, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, and previous international and leadership experience in the development of global leader self-differentiation and self-integration during international experiences. Perceived cultural distance had a significant positive main effect on global leader self-differentiation and self-integration, and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities had a significant positive main effect on global leader self-differentiation, and a significant negative main effect on self-integration. Previous international and leadership experience both positively predicted appreciation of cultural differences, and indirectly, interacting with locals and local culture, and ultimately, global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. I now turn to the discussion in which I compare and contrast the Study 2 results with those of Study 1 and describe the theoretical implications for global leader development through international experience.

Study 2 Discussion

Overall the Study 2 results are largely consistent with the theory of global leader self-complexity development through international experience developed in Study 1. Specifically, the

Study 2 findings offer support for the central role of interacting with locals and local culture in developing the dimensions of global leader self-complexity, self-differentiation and self-integration, during international experiences. The Study 2 findings further support the assertion that global leader identity construction through interacting with locals and local culture is a long-term process – the relationships between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation and self-integration are stronger when leaders have been in their international experience host countries for a more extended period. Additionally, the Study 2 results support the idea that leaders who are high in appreciation of cultural differences are more likely to seek opportunities for interacting with locals and local culture, and in turn, to develop global leader self-complexity. The Study 2 findings also support the positive impact of language ability, social support, and paradox mindset on the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences. However, just as in Study 1, these variables accounted for less variance in interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-complexity than variables included in the theoretical model. Thus, the Study 2 results align with the Study 1 findings that the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences is characterized by interacting with locals and local culture, and that enabling factors include appreciation of cultural differences, international experience duration, language ability, social support, and paradox mindset.

The Study 2 results differ from the Study 1 results regarding the roles of perceived cultural distance, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, and previous international and leadership experience. In the Study 2 findings, the relationships between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation and self-integration did not depend on perceived cultural distance as theorized in Study 1. The relationship between interacting with

locals and local culture and global leader self-integration similarly did not depend on new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, contrary to what I found in Study 1. The implication is that leaders can develop global leader self-complexity through interacting with local and local culture during their international experiences, regardless of perceived cultural distance or new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities.

However, the relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation did depend on new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, such that this relationship was weaker when new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities was higher – the opposite direction of effect hypothesized based on Study 1. An interpretation of this result is that the amount of developmental challenge may be overwhelming when interacting with locals and local culture is combined with new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, culminating in a negative impact on development. The Study 2 results further suggested that previous leadership experience buffers against this negative effect, weakening the impact of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on the relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation. These findings are in line with Sanford's (1966) challenge-support hypothesis, which asserts that developmental challenge must be balanced with support for development to occur. Previous leadership experience may be viewed as a personal resource for developing leaders, helping to restore a balance of challenge and support optimal for the development of global leader self-differentiation when they face new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities while interacting with locals and local culture during their international experiences.

Both previous leadership and international experience also demonstrated significant positive main effects on global leader self-differentiation and self-integration in Study 2,

suggesting that contrary to what I hypothesized based on the results of Study 1, previous experiences enables, rather than constrains, the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences. The Study 2 exploratory analyses further suggest that previous leadership and international experience positively impact global leader self-differentiation and self-integration through appreciation of cultural differences and interacting with locals and local culture. These results are consistent with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which states that individuals build efficacy through mastery experiences, gaining confidence in their abilities to succeed in a given domain as they accumulate relevant practice over time. Leaders with many years of previous leadership and international experience have had more opportunities to master the experience of living, working, and leading in another cultural environment, compared to leaders with fewer years of experience.

Thus, more experienced leaders are likely to have more confidence in their capacity for cross-cultural leadership in their host countries, an indicator of appreciation of cultural differences, which motivates interacting with locals and local culture and ultimately predicts global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. Theories of leader development in general (e.g., Day & Dragoni, 2015; Day, 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005), and global leader development in particular (e.g., Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012), emphasizing the necessity of practice in obtaining desired development outcomes provide additional support for the positive effects of previous international and leadership experience in the development of global leader self-complexity. Although I predicted that previous international and leadership experience would constrain the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences based on the Study 1 results, and did not find support for these effects in Study 2, the rationale for the predicted relationships holds: the results of both studies indicate that previous international and leadership

experience reduces developmental challenge. I interpreted this finding to mean the outcome would be *less* development in Study 1, but Study 2 suggests it actually amounts to *more* development – an enabling, rather than constraining, effect.

The results of Study 2 also suggest that perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities have main effects on global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. Specifically, perceived cultural distance is a significant positive predictor of both global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. Additionally, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities is a significant positive predictor of global leader self-differentiation, but a significant negative predictor of global leader self-integration. The positive impact of perceived cultural distance on global leader self-differentiation and self-integration is consistent with the theory put forth in Study 1 that cultural distance contributes to the developmental potential of international experiences. Furthermore, the positive impact of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on global leader self-differentiation is consistent with the theory described in Study 1 that challenges associated with role transitions also contribute to the developmental potential of international experiences. These findings align with the propositions that perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities are enabling factors in the development of global leader self-complexity. However, unlike I theorized in Study 1, the Study 2 results suggest that these positive effects are separate from interacting with locals and local culture, forming two additional pathways to global leader self-differentiation and self-integration, as I will describe in the general discussion.

The observed negative impact of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on global leader self-integration in Study 2 was also unexpected. Considering this finding, as well as the negative moderating effect of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities on the

relationship between interacting with locals and local culture and global leader self-differentiation, the effects of this variable on the development of global leader self-complexity appear more nuanced than initially theorized in Study 1. It seems new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities negatively impact global leader self-integration, and negatively impact global leader self-differentiation when combined with interacting with locals and local culture, but in the absence of interacting with locals and local culture, the effect on global leader self-differentiation is positive. Thus, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities may be either an enabling or constraining factor in the development of global leader self-complexity.

Finally, it's worth acknowledging potential measurement issues in Study 2, particularly when interpreting the results for all hypotheses involving perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities (i.e., Hypotheses 2-5). Given the cross-sectional study design, all variables were measured simultaneously – at least one year into participants' international experiences. Without the cognitive recall assistance provided by an interviewer asking probing questions, as participants in Study 1 received, it may have been difficult for the Study 2 participants to fully remember how different their host country cultures initially felt, or the difficulty they experienced in the early days of their role transitions. Perhaps it is hard for leaders to remember a time when leadership roles or cultural perspectives were foreign or unfamiliar after they have internalized those roles and cultures in their self-concepts. These potential measurement issues inform an idea for future research I put forth in the general discussion, but first, I turn to the combined implications of Studies 1 and 2.

Chapter 5: General Discussion

The purpose of this research was to contribute insight into the outcomes and underlying processes of global leader development through international experience. In other words, this research adds to understanding of *what* develops during global leader development and *how* it develops, which can inform the strategies organizations use to develop global leaders. Given the immense challenges associated with globalization (e.g., heightened complexity and ambiguity; Osland et al., 2013), as well as the essential function of leadership processes (e.g., setting direction, initiating structure; Day et al., 2004) in an organization's adaptive response to its environment (Lord et al., 2011), global leader development initiatives will equip organizations for success in the globalized world. Current efforts to develop global leaders are insufficient, resulting in a global leadership void that researchers have been urged to help address (Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). Thus, an evidence-based approach to global leader development is needed.

In addition to the clear practical applications, the findings represent a significant contribution to the existing global leader development literature. Specifically, the research answers calls from Kohonen (2005) to study global leader development during international experiences from an identity construction perspective, and Herman and Zaccaro (2014) to empirically study and specify the important, yet poorly understood, construct of global leader self-complexity. The Study 1 findings led to the creation of a theoretical model describing how the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences leads to increased global leader self-complexity, as well as the factors that may enable or constrain this process. The Study 2 findings provide empirical evidence for some of the theorized relationships and suggest a few additional associations. Taken together, the present research adds to the growing body of literature that recognizes the central role that changes in leader self-concept and

identity play in leader development (e.g., Lord & Hall, 2005). Such scholarly work is a necessary complement to the field's current myopic focus on the development of leadership competencies (Herman & Zaccaro, 2014). Furthermore, the present research advances a theory describing how these self-concept changes occur specifically for global leaders during international experiences. This theory fills a particular theoretical gap in the literature, as existing theories of learning and identity development provide only limited insight into the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences.

I now turn to a more detailed discussion of the theoretical implications of this research, organized into three central themes related to the outcomes and processes of global leader development through international experience.

Global Leader Identity Construction Involves Change *and* Stability

The results of both Studies 1 and 2 indicate that the process of global leader identity construction during international experiences, which occurs through interacting with locals and local culture, predicts increased global leader self-complexity – *what* develops. Qualitative findings from Study 1 contribute definitions of the dimensions of global leader self-complexity, self-differentiation and self-integration, grounded in rich descriptions of the experiences of global leaders in their own words. Additionally, the Study 1 findings identified global leader self-differentiation and self-integration as outcomes of global leader development through international experience. The results of the quantitative investigation in Study 2, arrived at through insights from hundreds of global leaders around the world, lend empirical support for the notion that global leader development through international experience is associated with increased global leader self-complexity. Increased global leader self-differentiation reflects an expansion of leaders' self-concept contents, as they learn new ways of thinking and behaving in

their host country cultures. At the same time, increased global leader self-integration entails enhanced unification of existing self-concept contents, as cultural contrasts provide clarity on deeply held values, beliefs, and principles. Thus, the present research suggests that global leader development through international experience results in both change and stability as leaders increase in self-complexity.

Prior research supports global leader self-complexity as an outcome of global leader development through international experience. According to theories of leader development, leaders increase in complexity as they progress in their leader development journeys (Day & Lance, 2004). For global leaders, international experiences are the centerpieces of their development (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017). Challenging experiences (e.g., moving to another country, transitioning into a new role) predict increased self-complexity, as leaders gain self-related knowledge and incorporate it into their self-concepts through identity construction (Day & Harrison, 2007; Herman, 2012, Kohonen, 2005; Miscenko & Day, 2016; Yip & Wilson, 2010). For global leaders in the context of international experiences, the identities they construct represent who they are as leaders in their host countries – the ways in which they think and behave when enacting their leadership roles in those cultural environments. The addition of such identities to global leaders' self-concepts increases their adaptability, as they are equipped to demonstrate a culturally appropriate approach to leadership in their host countries. The newly constructed identities also increase global leaders' authenticity, as core self-concept aspects remain unchanged, regardless of the context, allowing leaders to experience a consistent sense of self in which they can ground their host country leadership. In the words of Kohonen (2005, p. 24), "In the post-modern, globalized world, people are searching and continuously working on their identities...However, this does not mean an entire alteration

of one's self-conception (or identity). There is a need of coherence and continuity within individuals, as well."

Thus, global leaders don't have to choose between being cultural chameleons and authentic leaders when seeking to develop through international experiences. When in Rome, global leaders can "do as they would do after a long-term international experience in Rome" – leadership made possible through increased self-complexity that reflects both change in response to the host country culture and stability in foundational self-aspects (e.g., values, purpose). However, international experiences don't always lead to increased global leader self-complexity; development seems to require following at least one of three pathways.

Global Leader Identity Construction May Occur through Three Pathways

The combined study findings uncovered three pathways to global leader self-complexity in the context of international experiences. The first and most important pathway is interacting with locals and local culture, which explained the most variance in global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. Thus, the absence of increases in global leader self-complexity following international experiences may be largely attributed to low levels of interacting with locals and local culture. Past research supports the idea that international experiences have a varying impact on global leader development outcomes, and that interacting with locals and local culture is a central process for global leader development during international experiences. The results of Mol et al.'s (2005) meta-analysis indicated that international experience was not a significant predictor of expatriate job performance. Relatedly, Osland and Bird (2000) argue that time spent in a country does not necessarily predict the accuracy and depth of cultural understanding, which, instead, depends on the level of involvement with the culture. Providing empirical support for this idea, Cotter and Reichard

(2019) found that study abroad students demonstrated varying degrees of cultural competence, and that variance was partly explained by engagement in cross-cultural interactions.

Originally conceptualized by Reichard et al. (2015), engagement in cross-cultural interactions exists across four levels that parallel the levels of interacting with locals and local culture. Similar to leaders who are lacking mental and physical presence, at the lowest level of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, *no engagement*, individuals are oblivious to cultural norms, values, and beliefs, possibly because they aren't paying sufficient attention to their surroundings (i.e., lacking mental presence; Reichard et al., 2015). A lack of physical presence would similarly deny the opportunity to engage with the culture. The next level of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, *observing/ learning*, is identical to the next level of interacting with locals and local culture, as it also involves learning about the culture through observing local people (Reichard et al., 2015). Like individuals who proceed to *interacting* with local people, the third level of engagement in cross-cultural interactions (Reichard et al., 2015), leaders take interacting with locals and local culture to the next level when they begin building relationships with local people and experimenting with different approaches to leadership in that cultural context. Finally, individuals reach the highest level of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, *integrating/ changing*, when they arrive at new ways of thinking and behaving after internalizing cultural knowledge gained from interactions (Reichard et al., 2015). Similarly, leaders achieve the highest level of interacting with locals and local culture when they gain additional perspectives on leadership and the wider world based on an understanding of their host cultures.

Furthermore, just as I identified interacting with locals and local culture as a central category in global leader identity construction during international experiences, Reichard et al. (2015) identified engagement in cross-cultural interactions as a central category in the

development of cultural competence. The present research builds upon Reichard et al.'s (2015) theory of engagement in cross-cultural interactions by refining the theory through in-depth interviews and rigorous qualitative data analysis using grounded theory methodology, resulting in more detailed descriptions of the four levels. Additionally, as previously noted, Reichard et al.'s (2015) theory of engagement in cross-cultural interactions was based on the experiences of undergraduate students in the context of study abroad. The present theory of interacting with locals and local culture extends this learning process to global leaders in the context of international experiences. Although researchers have long recognized that global leader development occurs through international experience (e.g., Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2017), the details of this process have remained largely unknown (Kohonen, 2005). The theory of global leader identity construction through interacting with locals and local culture contributes to opening up the “blackbox” of global leader development during international experiences (Kohonen, 2005; Ng et al., 2009, p. 228).

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory offers insight into the essential role of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, as well as interacting with locals and local culture, in the development of global leadership outcomes during international experiences, such as cultural competence and self-complexity (Cotter & Reichard, 2019). Individuals at higher levels of engagement in cross-cultural interactions, and interactions with locals and local culture, are more immersed in their international experiences, compared to individuals at lower levels, enabling the creation of detailed cultural knowledge (Cotter & Reichard, 2019; Kolb, 1984).

Leaders then incorporate that knowledge into their self-concepts, increasing their self-complexity, by constructing a culturally-appropriate leader identity, reflecting the leader they are in that cultural context (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Day & Harrison, 2007; Kohonen, 2005). The

absence of high levels of interactions with locals and local culture inhibits the process of global leader identity construction, as leaders lack the knowledge necessary to form a leader identity that fits the cultural environment. The absence of enough time to interact with locals and local culture can further obstruct development, as the results of both studies indicated that the positive impact of interacting on global leader self-complexity depends on international experience duration. Like other leader development processes (e.g., Day et al., 2004), global leader identity construction during international experiences through interacting with locals and local culture takes time. Although the results suggest that interacting with locals and local culture over a sustained period of time is the primary mechanism of global leader development through international experience, the results also identified two additional pathways to global leader self-complexity. The variables involved in these pathways emerged in both studies, but with different interpretations – the Study 1 results suggested they enhance the developmental potential of interacting with locals and local culture; whereas, the Study 2 results suggested they predict global leader self-complexity through separate pathways, which I turn to now.

The second pathway is immersion in a cultural context that developing leaders perceive as highly different from their home cultures. In both studies leaders who reported a greater degree of cultural difference between their host countries and countries of origin also reported higher global leader self-differentiation and self-integration. International experiences in more culturally distant countries are likely to trigger greater development because these experiences are more challenging, compared to international experiences in less culturally distant countries (Dragoni et al., 2014). Offering support for this notion, Dragoni and colleagues (2014) found that international experiences were more likely to predict the global leadership competency strategic thinking when cultural distance was higher. When exposed to more culturally distant countries,

global leaders are likely to experience cultural differences that their existing schemas for concepts like leadership and business cannot accommodate. As a result, they are likely to develop more sophisticated schemas to reconcile these differences, contributing to the enhancement of the information-processing capabilities that characterize expert-level global leadership (Dragoni et al., 2014; Lord & Hall, 2005). Included in global leaders' leadership schemas is who they are as leaders and how they enact their leadership roles. Immersed in a culture where leadership is defined and performed in a vastly different way, global leaders are likely to acquire new ways of thinking and behaving, leading to increased self-complexity.

The third pathway is stepping into a leadership role with new and unfamiliar responsibilities. International experiences are often associated with role transitions, as leaders have opportunities to work in a more global capacity than they have in previous roles, and to take on additional responsibilities (Suutari, 2002). Similar to changes in cultural context, role transitions trigger self-concept changes as leaders adapt to their new roles by acquiring new skillsets and broadening their leader identity repertoires (Miscenko & Day, 2016; Yip & Wilson, 2010). Consistent with previous research, in both studies leaders who indicated that their host country leadership roles involved new and unfamiliar responsibilities also reported higher global leader self-differentiation. However, new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities had an inverse relationship with global leader self-integration in Study 2. Thus, it seems new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities may both expand global leaders' self-concepts, as they develop new role identities, and make it more difficult to integrate those identities with the contents of their existing self-concepts, suggesting that additional support for self-integration may be necessary. For example, prior research suggests that coaches can facilitate self-integration by helping leaders to make sense of their experiences, allowing them to form a

coherent self-narrative (Yip et al., 2020). Furthermore, findings pointing to differences in the predictors of global leader self-differentiation versus self-integration underscore the importance of treating the dimensions of self-complexity as distinct when studying this construct, as other researchers have advocated (e.g., Herman & Zaccaro, 2014).

Taken together, all three pathways to global leader self-differentiation and self-integration, including interacting with locals and local culture, perceived cultural distance, and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, take place in social environments. Interactions, culture, and leadership all involve interpersonal dynamics, suggesting that global leader identity construction during international experiences is a social process.

Global Leader Identity Construction is a Social Process Motivated by Appreciation

Constructing an identity fit for demonstrating new leadership roles in a novel cultural context requires other people. Other people, particularly local people in their host countries, act as important information sources for developing leaders on effective host country leadership. They may convey this information by modeling host country leadership behaviors that developing leaders can adopt themselves, or by providing feedback on leaders' attempts at host country leadership. It is primarily in the context of these interactions that leaders construct new leader identities fit for fulfilling their leadership roles in their host countries.

Previous research on leader identity construction and development supports the social nature of global leader identity construction during international experiences. According to Lindgren and Wåhlin (2001), identity construction occurs through continuous cycles of social interaction and self-reflection, which aligns with the notion that global leaders construct new identities through interacting with local people and subsequently internalizing information related to who they are as leaders in that culture. Initially, in the early days of their international

experiences, when interactions with locals and local culture are still at a lower level, leaders gain this information through observing local people, including local leaders, which, as Bandura's (1977) social learning theory asserts, is a valuable source of leadership learning.

Later on, when interactions with locals and local culture have progressed to a higher level, leaders continually refine their understanding of the culture, as well as their identities as leaders within that culture, through feedback and dialogue in the context of relationships with local people (e.g., leader-follower, mentor-mentee, peer-peer). Ibarra et al. (2010) and Ibarra (1999) similarly argue that leaders form new identities based on performance-related feedback from others, which provides needed insight into the results of experiments with different leadership approaches – a key part of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). However, as I observed in Study 1 and then incorporated into the interacting with locals and local culture measure in Study 2, Ibarra et al. (2010) and Ibarra (1999) also point to internal assessments of authenticity as another critical form of feedback when experimenting with different leader identities. Thus, the results of the present studies are in alignment with previous research, and expand upon it by detailing the specific roles that other people play in global leader identity construction during international experience, further contributing to the understanding of *how* global leaders develop.

The results of the present research further suggest that the developmental potential of international experiences is more likely to be realized when leaders are high in appreciation of cultural differences, meaning they have interest in and curiosity towards people from other cultural backgrounds, as well as confidence in their abilities to navigate cross-cultural interactions. Leaders high in appreciation of cultural differences are likely to develop increased self-complexity during their international experiences because they are inclined to seek out interactions with local people and culture.

Thus, the concept of appreciation of cultural differences mirrors the concept of motivational cultural intelligence (CQ), which Van Dyne et al. (2008, p. 17) define as “a special kind of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation in cross-cultural situations.” Similar to appreciation of cultural differences, motivational CQ energizes individuals to seek high-quality interactions with people from other cultural backgrounds, enabling greater learning and development during international experiences (Ng et al., 2009). Furthermore, it sustains effort in overcoming the challenges of international experiences (e.g., new culture and role), enabling work adjustment (Chen et al., 2010). Research provides evidence for the link between intrinsic motivation and the integration of a given identity with the other contents of an individual’s self-concept (Ryan & Deci, 2012), supporting the idea that appreciation of cultural differences predicts identity construction and subsequent increases in self-complexity.

Consistent with theories highlighting the pivotal role of sustained practice and experience in leader development (e.g., Bandura, 1977; Lord & Hall, 2005), the exploratory results in Study 2 suggest that previous international and leadership experience positively predicts appreciation in cultural differences, and ultimately, the development of global leader self-complexity. More experienced leaders are likely to have confidence and expertise related to leading across cultures – motivation and foundational knowledge for identity construction during their international experiences. Moreover, given that experience predicts self-complexity (Day & Lance, 2004), highly experienced leaders are likely to begin their international experiences with higher levels of global leader self-complexity, compared to less experienced leaders. Researchers argue that leader identity development is triggered when leaders notice similarities and differences in who they are as leaders in different leadership domains (Hammond et al., 2017). Leaders with greater self-complexity are aware of both distinctions and overlap in who they are and how they lead in

different contexts (i.e., self-differentiation and self-integration), which may increase their abilities to recognize additional connections and disconnections after stepping into their host country leadership roles. As Hannah et al. (2013, p. 395) state, self-complexity provides leaders with a “rich perceptual lens.” In other words, existing global leader self-complexity may predict future increases in global leader self-complexity.

Lastly, the results suggest that the developmental potential of international experiences is also more likely to be realized when leaders have sufficient language ability, social support, and a paradox mindset. In agreement with Mendenhall and Oddou’s (1985) assertion that language skills facilitate communication and relationship-building with local people, in both studies, I found evidence that leaders with proficiency in the national or most widely spoken language, as well as the primary language spoken in their workplaces, are able to attain higher levels of interacting with locals and local culture, compared to leaders who lack proficiency. Additionally, feelings of support from family and friends seem to further fuel interactions with locals and local culture, concurring with research indicating that relationships can act as a secure base, providing energy for exploration (Luke et al., 2012), as well as theory that social resources predict engagement in cross-cultural interactions (Reichard et al., 2015). Finally, the present research results suggest that leaders with a paradox mindset, who view it as possible to be *both* the leader they are in their home countries *and* the leader they are in their host countries, may have less difficulty developing self-complexity, compared to leaders who lack a paradox mindset. This finding aligns with Hammond et al.’s (2017, p. 488) theory that dialectical processing, characterized by “both/and” thinking, facilitates leader identity development in response to challenging trigger events.

Thus, the present research suggests that appreciation of cultural differences, language ability, social support, and paradox mindset contribute to global leader developmental readiness for international experiences. Leaders who possess these enabling factors may be more likely to benefit from the opportunity to develop through international experiences, as they possess the needed motivation, abilities, and support for development (Avolio & Hannah, 2008).

Specifically, appreciation of cultural differences contributes to motivation, language ability and paradox mindset to abilities, and social support to support for development. Extending the construct of developmental readiness to this specific leader population and method of development (i.e., global leaders and international experiences) is another contribution of the present research to the leader development literature. I now discuss the practical implications.

Managerial Implications

The theory of global leader development has practical implications for organizations seeking to enhance their global business capabilities by developing global leaders through international experiences. Insights from the present paper can inform the design of, and selection for, international experiences, as well as the preparation of developing global leaders, and how organizations can support their development during their international experiences.

First, organizations can design international experiences for developing global leaders that have an appropriate timeline. The results of both studies suggest that organizations assume a long-term timeline for global leader identity developing during international experiences (i.e., one or more years; Suutari, 2002) – a suggestion that is in alignment with evidence that leader development takes time (Day et al., 2004; Dragoni et al., 2014; McCauley et al., 1994).

Second, organizations can secure leaders' access to the variables identified as factors that enable global leader development during their international experiences. Organizations can

facilitate global leader identity construction by creating the conditions for developing global leaders to have routine, high-quality interactions with local people and culture, both outside and within the office. Specifically, they can ensure developing leaders have time to explore the surrounding area, and opportunities to observe, collaborate, and build relationships with local colleagues. For the greatest impact on development, these interactions should include modeling of culturally appropriate leadership, feedback on leadership attempts, and dialogue about the culture. These recommendations are in agreement with previous research pointing to the importance of granting developing leaders time and space for exploration during international assignments (Oddou et al., 2000), as well as cultural mentorship from host country nationals, who can help socialize them into their new cultural environments (Adler & Aycan, 2018). Considering the other two pathways identified, organizations can also facilitate global leader self-complexity development through international experience by selecting culturally distant host countries, and giving leaders new and unfamiliar role responsibilities (Dragoni et al., 2014; Miscenko & Day, 2016). To support the development of both global leader self-differentiation and self-integration in response to new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities, organizations can provide leaders with access to coaching (Yip et al., 2020).

Third, organizations can select developing leaders for international experiences based on their previous experience and/or appreciation of cultural differences. In Study 2, the exploratory results suggest that the developmental potential of international experiences is higher for leaders who have more previous international and leadership experience because they are more likely to be high in appreciation of cultural differences, compared to leaders who have less experience. Additionally, previous leadership experience may help to buffer against the potentially overwhelming impact of taking on new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities in addition

to interacting with locals and local culture. Thus, organizations may see a higher return on investment in international experiences when they choose to send leaders with more experience; however, they can also directly select for appreciation of cultural differences. The results of both studies suggest that global leaders higher in appreciation of cultural differences are more likely to develop increased self-complexity during their international experiences, compared to leaders who lack appreciation of cultural differences, implying that organizations should select the former group for participation in international experiences. Although they may not be as confident interacting across cultures as highly experienced leaders, less experienced leaders may still be high in appreciation of cultural differences if they have an interest in and curiosity toward cultural differences. Moreover, previous research has shown that confidence in ability to interact across cultures is open to development (Reichard et al., 2014; 2015), suggesting that in addition to being selected for, appreciation of cultural differences can at least partly be trained.

Fourth, organizations can also train participating leaders to develop skills related to language ability and assuming a paradox mindset in preparation for their international experiences. Specifically, global leaders can practice dialectical, “both/and” thinking (e.g., that it possible for them to *both* adapt to their host countries *and* remain their authentic selves), which the results of the present studies, as well as previous research (Hammond et al., 2017) suggest is beneficial for leader identity development. Together with previous research (e.g., Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985), the present research findings also indicate that proficiency in the national or most widely spoken language promotes global leader development by allowing leaders to reach higher levels of interacting with locals and local culture. Additionally, meta-analytic research indicates that the ability to speak the local language is a positive predictor of cross-cultural adjustment for individuals on international assignments (Mol et al., 2005).

Fifth, organizations can ensure gender balance when selecting developing leaders for international assignments. Historically, women have been underrepresented in international assignments, despite the growing body of evidence that women are more skilled in adapting to cross-cultural business environments than their male counterparts (Altman & Shortland, 2008). Adding to that evidence, the present research findings indicate that women demonstrated higher levels of interacting with locals and local culture than men. Given that interacting with locals and local culture is the primary mechanism through which leaders develop global leader self-complexity, organizations may see a greater return on investment when they send women leaders abroad. That is not to say that organizations should exclude male leaders from international experiences; rather, organizations should take particular care to *include* female leaders.

The present research also has practical implications for the individual leaders. The results of both studies identified social support as an important resource for development, as it contributes to leaders' capacity for interacting with locals and local culture. The implication of this finding is that leaders can enable their own development during international experiences by either bringing their loved ones with them when relocating if possible (Dollwet, 2013), or by staying in close contact with them (e.g., through phone calls, videoconferencing, etc.). Leaders can also seek out and join expatriate networks to receive access to both friendships with other complex individuals and information that can expedite their adjustment process.

Limitations

The present studies have a few important limitations. First, the convenience sampling approach for both studies may have introduced bias that limits generalizability. For example, global leaders had to have InterNations and LinkedIn profiles to be identified and recruited to participate. Second, within each study, the data is self-report and from a single source, which

presents issues like common method variance and social desirability bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Although I took steps to minimize these threats to validity (e.g., separating the measurement of the predictor and outcome variables with a distraction task and controlling for social desirability bias in Study 2; Podsakoff et al., 2012), it is possible that they still impacted the results. Third, the cross-sectional study design prevented me from measuring change over time and determining directionality, which limits the conclusions I can draw about development. I cannot make any causal claims about the relationships I observed among the variables theorized as development predictors and outcomes. Fourth, given the fallibility of human memory, the retrospective nature of the study methods is also a limitation. Although leader development researchers recommend the use of retrospective methods to measure change (e.g., Day, 2000), participant recall of past events (e.g., relocation to their host countries) and associated thoughts and feelings may be imperfect. As noted in the discussion of the Study 2 findings, participants may have had difficulty remembering the full extent of the challenge they experienced when adjusting to new cultural environments and leadership roles, potentially introducing error to the measurement of perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities. With these limitations in mind, I now offer some suggestions for future research.

Future Research

Future researchers can build upon the results of the present paper in a few ways. First, researchers can explore the relationships in the theoretical model with different samples, including global leaders operating in cultural environments not represented in this research, and with different study designs (e.g., longitudinal). Such research will bolster the present paper findings and ensure generalizability to a diverse global leader population. One specific idea for study design that would address some of the measurement issues and allow for determining

direction of effect, as well as the measurement of change, is to measure global leader self-complexity, previous international and leadership experience, and appreciation of cultural differences prior to departure, perceived cultural distance and new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities at the beginning of the international experience, followed by interacting with locals and local culture, and global leader self-complexity again after the experience.

Second, researchers can clarify the role of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities in global leader development during international experiences because the results of the present research were inconclusive as to whether this variable enables or constrains development. Such research would contribute to understanding how the challenge of transitioning into a new role adds to or detracts from the developmental potential of moving to another country. This information is highly useful for global organizations utilizing international experiences to develop their leaders – if new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities enhance development, they can ensure leaders are assigned to a position with which they have limited familiarity and vice versa. There may also be unmeasured moderating variables of the effects of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities that researchers could identify. For example, researchers could explore the potential buffering effect of coaching in the negative relationship between new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities and global leader self-integration, as previously suggested (Yip et al., 2020).

Third, researchers can extend the process of global leader identity construction and the outcome of global leader self-complexity to other leader populations facing different kinds of changes (i.e., trigger events), such as leaders undergoing a transition in their personal lives (e.g., becoming a parent) and leaders from monoracial environments learning to lead a multiracial team. Uncovering how these leaders adapt to their new roles and contexts through identity

construction and the subsequent impact on self-complexity, as uniquely defined for each leader population, will add to our understanding of *how* leaders develop and *what* develops.

Fourth, researchers can test Day and Dragoni's (2015) proposition that leader identity changes are a proximal indicator of leader development by examining the long-term impact of global leader self-complexity on the development of outcomes associated with leadership expertise (e.g., dynamic skills and complex knowledge structures; Lord & Hall, 2005) through longitudinal research.

Finally, in light of current (and potentially continued) international travel restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it would be valuable to research interacting with locals and local culture in a virtual context. Some specific research questions include: how, if at all, do the levels of virtually interacting with locals and local culture differ from interacting in-person, and are the outcomes the same (i.e., increased global leader self-differentiation and self-integration)? If the development of global leader self-complexity can successfully occur through virtual interactions with locals and local culture, leader development through international experience could be made much more accessible – both for those seeking development opportunities during a pandemic, and for those who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to relocate for other reasons, such as the financial burden or complications related to moving one's family. It would also be worthwhile to examine the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic for in-person interactions with locals and local culture after travel restrictions have been lifted. For example, researchers could study the ways in which developing global leaders build relationships with locals in the post-pandemic world, where locals may, understandably, be more hesitant to share food with newcomers or to open up their homes to them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the combined results of a qualitative and a quantitative investigation, obtained with input from hundreds of global leaders from around the world, indicate that global leader identity construction during international experiences primarily occurs through interacting with locals and local culture, resulting in increased global leader self-complexity. Furthermore, global leader identity construction during international experiences is a long-term process motivated by appreciation of cultural differences. With implications for leader development in general, this research advances understanding of global leader development in particular. Specifically, global leader self-differentiation and self-integration are *what* develops during international experiences, and global leader identity construction through interacting with locals and local culture is *how*. By increasing their self-differentiation and self-integration as they construct new leader identities through their interactions, global leaders develop new, culturally-appropriate ways of enacting their leadership roles. Moreover, global leaders can ground these leadership enactments in their core values and principles, allowing them to be adaptable to their new cultural environments without losing touch with their sense of self. In turn, global leaders' increased self-complexity enables them to effectively demonstrate global leadership, increasing their organizations' capacity to compete in the globalized world.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Participant Recruitment Messages

Study 1:

Dear [global leader],

My name is Katherine Cotter and I'm a Ph.D. student at Claremont Graduate University. I'm researching global leadership for my doctoral dissertation, and from the information I can gather from your LinkedIn and InterNations profiles, you are an ideal candidate for participation.

Your participation would involve first answering some questions through email, and then, a few weeks later, a virtual interview with me, lasting approximately one hour. The emailed and interview questions would be related to your experience living and working in [host country], and how it has impacted you as a leader.

I'd greatly appreciate your time and insights! Your participation would really help me out personally as I complete my doctoral degree, and more broadly, this research will contribute to understanding of global leadership and global leadership development – an increasingly important topic for academics and practitioners alike in the globalized world.

I hope you will consider participating. If there is any further information you would like about this research before coming to a decision, please don't hesitate to contact me.

All the best,
Katherine Cotter

Study 2:

Dear [global leader],

My name is Katherine Cotter and I'm a Ph.D. student at Claremont Graduate University. I'm researching global leadership for my doctoral dissertation, and from the information I can gather from your LinkedIn and InterNations profiles, you are an ideal candidate for participation.

Your participation would involve completing an anonymous online questionnaire (linked below), which takes about 30 minutes. The questions are related to your experience living and working in [host country], and how it has impacted you as a leader.

https://cgu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_00zSxmZRAqktigR

I'd greatly appreciate your time and insights! Your participation would really help me out personally as I complete my doctoral degree, and more broadly, this research will contribute to understanding of global leadership and global leadership development – an increasingly important topic for academics and practitioners alike in the globalized world.

I hope you will consider participating. If there is any further information you would like about this research before coming to a decision, please don't hesitate to contact me.

All the best,
Katherine Cotter

Appendix B

Study 1 Interview Protocols

	Purpose/Concept	Questions	Potential probes
Email interview	Background information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many total years of leadership experience do you have? • Where are you from originally? • Other than the country you are from, where have you lived? • What brought you to [host country]? • How long have you been in [host country]? • Discuss the extent to which your current responsibilities at work involve regular interactions with people from cultural backgrounds that are different from yours. 	N/A
	Open coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your experience in [host country] changed the way you see yourself as a leader? • How has the way you interact with people at work (e.g., followers, peers, supervisors, clients) changed since your relocation to [host country]? • How did you learn how to be a leader in [host country]? 	N/A
One-one-one virtual interview (V1): Developed after email interviews	Appreciation of cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking back to when you first moved to [host country], how did you feel about going to live and work in another culture? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe your attitude towards interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds?
	New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe some specific ways that your role as a leader has changed since your relocation to [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about some leadership responsibilities you have now that you didn't have before you moved to [host country]?

Interacting with locals and local culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you describe the extent to which you spend time interacting with the local people and culture in [host country], both at work and outside of work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have those interactions affected who you are as a leader in [host country]?
Global leader self-differentiation	<p>Please imagine you are in a two room house. A group of your followers from [home country] are sitting in one room, and a group of your followers from [host country] are sitting in the other. Both are waiting patiently for you, their leader, to lead them in a task. You go back and forth between the room with your [home country] followers and the room with your [host country]. How would you compare and contrast the leader you are in the room with your [home country] followers with the leader you are in the room with your [host country] followers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you compare and contrast how you see yourself as a leader and as an individual in [host country] and [home country]?
Learning/ adaptation strategies, including leader role models & mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you say describe the strategies you used to learn how to fulfill your leadership roles in [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did other people (e.g., managers, followers, peers, coaches) contribute to your learning about leadership in [host country]? Can you tell me about a particular experience that taught you a lot about leadership in [host country]?
Perceived identity compatibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would you describe the relationship between the leader you are now, after your experience in [host country], with the leader you were before you relocated there, as being in harmony, in conflict, or neutral and why? 	
Global leader self-integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has the way you think about leadership and your role as a leader stayed the same since your relocation to [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think that is?
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in [host country]? 	

One-one-one virtual interview (V2): Developed after five interviews	Appreciation of cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking back to when you first moved to [host country], how did you feel about going to live and work in another culture? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe your attitude towards interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds?
	Perceived cultural* distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How culturally different does [host country] feel from [home country]?* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How culturally different does [host country] feel from other places you've lived?* To what extent do you think your previous international experiences prepared you for your relocation to [host country]?*
	New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you describe some specific ways that your role as a leader has changed since your relocation to [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you tell me about some leadership responsibilities you have now that you didn't have before you moved to [host country]? To what extent do you think your previous leadership experiences prepared you for your role as a leader in [host country]?*
	Interacting with locals and local culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you describe the extent to which you spend time interacting with the local people and culture in [host country], both at work and outside of work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have those interactions affected who you are as a leader in [host country]?
	Global leader self-differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please imagine you are in a two room house. A group of your followers from [home country] are sitting in one room, and a group of your followers from [host country] are sitting in the other. Both are waiting patiently for you, their leader, to lead them in a task. You go back and forth between the room with your [home country] followers and the room with your [host country]. How would you compare and contrast the leader you are in the room with your [home country] followers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you compare and contrast how you see yourself as a leader and as an individual in [host country] and [home country]?

One-one-one virtual interview (V3): Developed after 14 interviews	Learning/ adaptation strategies	<p>with the leader you are in the room with your [host country] followers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe the strategies you used to learn how to fulfill your leadership roles in [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did other people (e.g., managers, followers, peers, coaches) contribute to your learning about leadership in [host country]? • Can you tell me about a particular experience that taught you a lot about leadership in [host country]?
	Global leader self-integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the way you think about leadership and your role as a leader stayed the same since your relocation to [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think that is?
	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in [host country]? 	
	Appreciation of cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking back to when you first moved to [host country], how did you feel about going to live and work in another culture? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe your attitude towards interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds?
	Perceived cultural distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How culturally different does [host country] feel from [home country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How culturally different does [host country] feel from other places you've lived? • To what extent do you think your previous international experiences prepared you for your relocation to [host country]?
	New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe some specific ways that your role as a leader has changed since your relocation to [host country]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about some leadership responsibilities you have now that you didn't have before you moved to [host country]? • To what extent do you think your previous leadership experiences prepared you for your role as a leader in [host country]?

Interacting with locals and local culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe the extent to which you spend time interacting with the local people and culture in [host country], both at work and outside of work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How, if at all, have language differences impacted your ability to interact with local people in [host country]?* • How have those interactions affected who you are as a leader in [host country]?
Global leader self-differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please imagine you are in a two room house. A group of your followers from [home country] are sitting in one room, and a group of your followers from [host country] are sitting in the other. Both are waiting patiently for you, their leader, to lead them in a task. You go back and forth between the room with your [home country] followers and the room with your [host country]. How would you compare and contrast the leader you are in the room with your [home country] followers with the leader you are in the room with your [host country] followers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In previous interviews I've done, I've noticed that some people are comfortable talking about differences in who they are as a leader in the different rooms, and other people are uncomfortable. How do you feel about it?*
Learning/ adaptation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In previous interview I've done, people describe the strategies they used to learn how to be leaders in their new cultural environments as: (1) observing local people and leaders, and possibly emulating their behaviors, (2) building relationships with local people and engaging in conversations with them to deepen understanding of the culture, (3) experimenting with different leadership approaches, and (4) making adjustments based on feedback. How do those compare to the strategies you used to learn how to be a leader in [host country]?* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the similarities and differences between those strategies and the strategies that you used to learn how to be a leader in [host country]?*

Global leader self-
integration

- How has the way you think about leadership and your role as a leader stayed the same since your relocation to [host country]?

- Why do you think that is?

Other

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in [host country]?

- What have been your sources of support?*

*Question modified from previous version of interview protocol.

Appendix C

Key Quotes Illustrating Study 1 Results: Concept Definitions and Relationships

Category/Relationship	Interview Excerpts ¹⁴
Global leader self-differentiation: Examples of adaptation via increased self-differentiation through development of leader identities to fulfill leadership roles in host country cultural contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I do think I’ve become a little bit more subtle in the sense that I wouldn’t necessarily give feedback in a public space. I’m more sensitive to like, “Let’s pull somebody on the side, let’s make sure that no other people hear it,” because losing face is really a big thing in China. You wouldn’t want anyone to lose face in public.” –GL2 • “In Nigeria, I could walk up to someone at his desk and say, “Oh, I have this topic I want to discuss with you quickly” and then he would say, “Okay, then let’s quickly have the conversation about it.” In the Netherlands, it’s different. If I walk up to someone’s table and say, “Oh, I’d like to discuss something with you quickly,” he would say, “Oh, sorry, did you put this in my agenda?”...Completely different. They want it very planned...And I’ve...had to learn it in how I interact with people here. That things are more planned...than where I’m coming from.” –GL4 • “In Australia, it would be perfectly okay as a leader to go in a room and say, “Okay, here’s the problem. Here’s what I think the best idea. Let’s go and do it.” Everyone will go, “Yes, boss, that sounds good. We’re with you.” In Denmark, that would not be the approach. It would be, “Here’s the problem. I’ve been thinking this could be an idea, but what do you guys think?” You’d have to come up with the idea together, and you have to get consensus and get everyone to do it. Then once it’s all agreed that, yes, this is how we’re going to fix it, and it’s a group decision, then you move forward.” –GL16 • “I think there will be some music, there will be some games, some way of engagement, energy, laughter singing, dancing, that would maybe not be the comfort zone of the Swedish people...There I think it would be a little bit more formal or educational, or Q&A type of thing. I think with the Iranian...they’re much more experiential...it needs to be much more interactive and more energy and demonstration.” –GL23 • “The way of communication is very different. In the Netherlands, people tend to be very direct. Here people are much more implicit...It took me awhile to first of all, realize that, but then also to understand that, and to change my way, and the way I was used to doing things and communicating...So that was a big shift or a big learn for me.” –GL2 • “It’s completely different. The Germans, you’d go in and go “Do this until then,” and they go, “Okay,” and get it done by then. As with Sweden, I’d have to go in and suggest that they maybe come up with a task. Come up with a deadline that they maybe can all agree on.” –GL26

¹⁴ Quotes have been “cleaned up” for clarity. I have inserted “...” anywhere words are removed. Removal did not lead to any substantive changes in meaning.

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- “I had to adapt my way of leading people to find the right approach to fit my company culture and style. I had to study Turkey's history and culture, their relationship with authority and leadership, and their way of communicating.” –GL24
 - “But being here, learning how things work in the Netherlands, if I was going to call anyone in any market or any country, I would, first of all, send a message. "Oh, can I call you in 30 minutes?", "Can I call you for 10 minutes in the next one hour?" So I've become more deliberate about how I also respect people's time so, that has changed me...and I think it's helped me to also develop a bit.” –GL4
 - “With the Swedes, I would be a little bit more hesitant to not step on any toes...I would really want to ensure that they're all on board, that really understand the task and ask if any of them want to take charge...Get that type of leadership where, "Okay, let's stick together as a team." I think if I would go to the Dutch people, I would actually be more sharp in my style. I would say, "Okay, we're going to do this. This is the way I see that how we're going to do it." Then I would probably expect some of them to speak up. Instead of the Swedish room, I would probably have to ask them to speak up. Well, I would be in the Dutch room, and then I would be waiting for just someone to speak up without even being finished.” –GL12
 - “With the Italians maybe not surprisingly, there is a component of relations that comes into play, and what I mean by that is you do want to build that rapport and trust...You need to not jump into the task too quickly...With the Dutch, again, generalizing a bit they're much more task-oriented and goal-oriented...I wouldn't be sitting around too much. You would just get into it more quickly...another difference between the two...there's more need for consensus. I think with the Dutch, we would have to agree a bit more on the course of action rather than just giving the direction.” –GL15
 - “I think with the American followers, I could be a little bit more direct, I would probably create some competition, and also maybe be more enthusiastic because Americans are much more enthusiastic and excited...sometimes Swedes are like, "Well, that's a little bit too much for us." I would maybe be a little bit more directive in the American room like, "Okay, this is what I think we should do. Everyone agree, let's go, let's get started." Maybe in the Swedish room, I would try to be a little bit more consensus-driven. "Does anyone have any ideas?" Okay, these are the ideas. I think, like, "Let's go with these two. What do you think?" Then get the project or whatever started...It might also take a little bit longer to get things up and running in the Swedish room.” –GL25
 - “In New Zealand, I would stand back and understand and observe the group dynamics, and let them sort out who's going to be owning what. I would only interject if I felt like things weren't going that way...In contrast...based on my experience in Asia, you would need to kind of give direction and give structure. I think I'd get involved quite early and say, "Okay, guys, based on the exercise, here's what it sounds like, needs to happen." I would probably assign ownership rather than ask for ownership...the level of input would probably be a lot stronger from me within the team from Singapore rather than in New Zealand

<p>Automatic activation of specific leader identity based on context, enabling swift adaptation</p> <p>Testaments to the value of global leader self-differentiation for effective global leadership</p>	<p>and just giving much more specific direction, and probably delegating ownership a lot more rather than that coming from within the team.” –GL3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The way that I interact with you as an American is going to be different than how I interact with somebody who’s a Brazilian...whether it’s the cultural references that you make or an understanding of the commonality that you share from a cultural perspective that allows you to engage slightly differently, but in your brain, you got to turn that on and off. It’s that shifting gears, it’s the change of references, it’s the change of tone. I don’t think that meaning of what I would say would necessarily be different, but the way that you say it changes.” –GL13 • “I would probably try to involve every single person to the extent possible. I will ask for their opinion, get their input, and try to gauge what the room wants or thinks, and try to come to a conclusion jointly, collectively with the Canadian group. With the Swiss group, my impression based on my experience is that yes, they also want to be heard, of course, and to provide their opinion, but also, they would much rather you, as their leader...have a stance, and more like start with how you would do things and how you think you should do things, and then maybe see if the others are agreeable to this or not, and why not if not.” –GL20 • “Working here has added more “tools” to my “leadership arsenal.” –GL15 • “It would be natural, it would totally be natural because you just feel it, you know it’s like that there.” –GL9 • “I navigate very smoothly between both cultures...I can just code switch very easily.” –GL13 • “It’s automatic, it’s auto-pilot.” –GL13 • “You need to adapt to your current reality. Being in touch with multiple countries all the time keeps you always switching your mind to adapt to their needs and reality.” –GL11 • “I have learned that there is no one-size-fits all approach or communication style. One needs to adapt to the particular situation, and also to the individual. If I am not successful in a situation, I need to change my approach if I expect different results.” –GL20 • “Rather than my authority, I would use...my experiences of being this global citizen as a way to build trust.” –GL6 • “I was trying to be, as much as possible, one of them...so they could relate to me.” –GL24 • “As leaders, we have always to ask ourselves, “How I would explain a certain thing if I would not be an Italian/ European, but an Indian?” for example...In terms of communication skills, the must, is to keep changing the communication based on the person you have in front of you.” –GL18 • “I always try to adapt to who I’m with or where I am...I need to think how I should act there in order to be honest, and be myself, to not be fake, but at the same time, respect people’s boundaries, which they can be very different from one culture to the other.” –GL9
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- “As a leader, I try to represent as many or everyone as much as possible...I think the best leaders, as I see it, try to mirror as much as possible of their team. Taking on some styles from everyone...so that everyone can feel that they understand.” –GL12
 - “If you want to get the most out of people, you will need to use different approaches because there are some things that culturally, they might not feel comfortable to voice their opinion or to express their opinion. Unless you are aware of those dynamics, and you are able to get people to get involved and to open up, I don't think it's going to work, or it's going to work partially.” –GL21
 - “I would say that your mind works without borders, without mental limitations, and you learn to mold your mind to fit with people's wishes and needs.” –GL22
 - “Now my approach is different because I know where the challenges are...Where the communication gap can happen, that I know...Now it is more effective communication.” –GL10
 - “My leadership style, I make a conscious effort to adapt all of the time.” –GL20
 - “I usually try to understand their thinking process and I try to understand where they are coming from. Especially on the sense of when you need to get a project done, when you need to get people to work in a different way, to adapt to different things, how you come across, it can make a very, very big difference.” –GL21
 - “It does require a lot of flexibility. Just like mental flexibility to understand who it is that you're talking about, how they need to be engaged with, and adjust.” –GL13
 - “I may not be intimately familiar with every single culture, but the ability to empathize or adapt to that perspective, I think is really helpful...the need to localize as needed to say, "This works from an American perspective or an American lens, but consider even for Canadians, which culturally are fairly aligned, but there are differences – what would need to change from a marketer's perspective?" I think there are a lot of nuances there that the global mindset certainly helped with.” –GL13
 - “I've always considered myself a little bit of a chameleon culturally, just because I can adjust...The adapting to whatever cultural context I'm in, I think has always been very strong for me. I do think that that enables me to read the room and understand how I need to be in a given context to be effective, and to build those relationships, to influence in a way that people will respond to, if that makes sense. You can't be the same way in all these different contexts.” –GL13
 - “You need to adapt. Every time you need to be adapting...You know that if you're working with Latin-American people, and so on, you can do certain things. You know that if you're working with more Europeans, you can do some other things. If there are some more from Asia, you need to change, you really need to change depending on who's in the room and how they work because there are really a lot of big, cultural differences in the way we work.” –GL11
 - “I'll adapt as much as I can to make sure that the team and also customers that I'm interacting with feel comfortable and don't feel like I'm coming in and being like, "All right, well, this is how we're going to
-

do it. I don't really care about how you're doing things." I think you have to do that no matter what country you're working in." –GL25

- "I'm doing everyone a favor by adapting to their way of working. I'm not doing this for me. It's the process that's important, to get everyone on board and make everyone comfortable to work together on this to achieve a certain result. At the end of the day, a leader is a facilitator. The facilitation needs to obviously be catered to the audience or your people. I see this as a role, as a leader, to be able to adapt to those different scenarios." –GL26
- "You cannot be always the same because otherwise, they will not listen to you or they will not interact with you the way you want...To lead, you need to find a way in which you have to deliver the message that you want, and you cannot change the audience...Can I change Turkish culture? No. On that way, the only thing I can change is the I way interact with them." –GL24

Global leader self-integration:

Examples of increased self-integration through stability of core values, beliefs, and personal qualities across leadership roles and cultural contexts

- "When you go deeper – your values, your moral compass, and things like that – they tend to stick. They may evolve over time, but I would say that there are some things that you think they are right now, and they were right before...The components, I would say, go deeper about who you are...there are some things that I believe are part of my background...I don't want to rough the edges...you don't want to smoothen them all and become overly a blend of everything else, so there are some things which are you as part of who you are and where you grow up, which I think you want to retain." –GL15
- "This is me. I'm always [GL22], the empathetic one. The human one. The transparent one...Of course, I would say not all the details, but the [GL22] as a whole is always there, as he is. I'm never expecting to be someone else...This is what remains always with me in my journey." –GL22
- "Looking at my core values and skills I would say that "kindness" is at the top of all the attributes that you need to become a leader. This is something that always has defined me." –GL22
- "When you ask me the things which have not changed, they're all about my own beliefs and values." –GL6
- "I try to build up brand of who [GL12] is. I do think that brand is similar both when I was working in Sweden and where I work now, in terms that I try to be trustworthy and stand up for people." –GL12
- "There are some things about leadership that fundamentally remain stable no matter where you are or what you do...One of them that is very, very instrumental to me is the concept of earning trust. Earning trust is core to being a good leader...That does not change from leadership positions that I have had before coming to the US or versus being in the US...The other real constant...is the notion of coaching...refraining from giving the solution and instead trying to give options and stimulate the thinking of the other person to come up with that solution, so that it's their solution and they are engaged with it. That is a constant, and it was like that in Dubai, and it was very much like that in my sales experience in Prague with the sales team members that I led, and it was the same thing when I had my managerial job in Madrid, and I was working with professionals across the Southwest of Europe." –GL17

Existing beliefs, values, and personal qualities become more visible in leaders' self-concepts, promoting authentic leadership

- “I think my personality is pretty much the same, I'm very motivated, I want my team to be the best team no matter where we are. I'm ambitious, passionate about developing people. I want to be able to develop my team no matter what country I'm in. I like to own a lot of projects outside of my scope, so that's remained the same no matter what country I'm in.” –GL25
- “I have some basic pillars, which is very difficult for me to remove from it or find compromise on these pillars...I work in finance, and so, I like to be honest and clear and report to the CEO, the reality, even if it's positive...Respect for the colleagues and the employees. I try to be fair, I understand the problem every day, and help them as much as I can. This one for me, it's important. I cannot do different things.” –GL18
- “I, as a leader, and I guess this transcends the cultural differences, I try to be very transparent and real. I don't try to be a very formal leader. I try to tell it like it is. I feel like that's consistent.” –GL13
- “I think, in essence, core values have really not changed in work. For example, I think honesty is really important and probably it's even grown a little bit more to the forefront. I think my idea around it hasn't changed, but it's maybe become a little bit more visible...How important I think that it is, just to be honest with your peers and say what it is and not...what's the status of the work, if it's good news, great. If it's bad news, also great but let me know and inform people.” –GL2
- “Living somewhere else boils down what's important and what's not to an extent that I had not considered before at all...It's streamlined a lot of things inside me, I think, and then made it possible probably for me to lead better.” –GL26
- “I was always open-minded, but I guess it just kept on evolving and it just keeps on evolving every day. In a way, that trait remains the same, but the magnitude keeps on increasing every day.” –GL6
- “Maybe it's just shaved off layers of me that were inauthentic or that I had learned, "To be a leader, you need to be like this," or I did this, but it was never actually me, and maybe now I realized that that's not needed. I've shed that layer and the inside leader that was there is just emerging...it is completely different, but not different at all in a way. Maybe I've just come into me more because of this move.” –GL26
- “I think inside me, I would always have liked to lead the way I do now. Not saying that the way I lead now is good or perfect or anything, but it feels more authentically me.” –GL26
- “Throughout my career, the one constant has been I've been tried to stay true to myself. For me to lead for, me to sell something, I have to believe in what I'm doing...The big constant is being true to my values and to myself.” –GL21
- “A lot of things are going to remain consistent because it's who I am. If you change that, then your team will never trust you because they can tell if you're pretending to be a different person.” –GL25
- “Be honest with yourself, be transparent. I think have some ethics. It helps because you have some principles and you transmit them all the time. The situation can change, but if one of your ethics is to be transparent, you will always transparent...When people understand that you have some blocks, that's a

Testaments to the value of global leader self-integration for effective global leadership

part of yourself, and you believe in it and you will not compromise...people will feel safe and will be safe in an environment to follow you, because at the end, it's following an idea for your vision and doing something together.” –GL1

- “I think some basic pillars must remain. Be honest, respect the people, respect your colleagues and do the best every day. This is mandatory. Then as soon as you have the base stable, you can build up whatever you want on the top.” –GL18
- “I think the one thing that I've tried to do though is regardless of the culture I'm managing, it's just to be myself...people really liked working on my team...there's a lot of stereotypes and how you should manage and how you shouldn't. I didn't follow any of those stereotypes. I think that helped me a lot.” –GL27
- “I am who I am, I know my negatives and my positives. If you try to fake it, it doesn't really work.” –GL1

Global leader self-complexity:

Illustration of simultaneous increase in global leader self-differentiation and self-integration – the ultimate outcome of global leader identity construction during international experiences

- “I do really believe that people can change, right? I think, especially in a work environment, you can obtain new skills. You can learn new things, change your mindset, but I think there are still really internal things, such as what is it deep down inside that drives you? Or what are your personal traits? ...Those things I think are hard to change, and when it comes to those more solid, non-changeable things, I'm pretty much the same person as I was when I was in high school. I think I've always been an optimist, for example. That hasn't changed. The work life balance is another one. That's never changed. So, I think attitudes, skills, openness to change approach, all those things, have maybe developed and changed. But then the layer that goes under that is not so much changed.” –GL2
- “I adapted a bit in terms of how I work with people but...always still retain my own authentic self.” –GL4
- “My personality has not changed...But how I approach people and work with people in terms of leadership has changed significantly.” –GL4
- “You cannot change, too much, yourself, and you need to be...consistent with your values. In a different environment in which people are used to have a different kind of leadership, sometimes you have to speak their language...in the sense of the way in which they perceive you as a leader, that is different from the way they perceive you as a leader in other countries.” –GL24
- “You adapt in some ways to make people comfortable, but of course, there's aspects of just who you are that are not going to change no matter where you are.” –GL20
- “The things that are not changed are values like my motivation, my core strength, my style, the way I think big picture. The essence, the core values of me as a person...it's hard to change. What changes actually is just some skills and some insights that you can build on and rephrase or reframe, but the core, I think it will not change. I have a deep feeling that it's very hard to change the values, these core principles...The core beliefs are very hard to change even if you want to change them.” –GL5
- “I think I learned to adapt more to new things. Who I am is still there, and it's the same. It's just that maybe I learned to use it in a different way in different situations.” –GL9

Testaments to the value of overall global leader self-complexity for effective global leadership

Global leader self-complexity facilitates reconciliation of complex global versus local tensions in global organizations

- “I don't think I changed as a person. My base is still the same. I'm still the same person, but I think that maybe I learned how to use my characteristics in different ways, or just how to adapt them to different situations or people...people change along their lives, they don't stay the same, of course. I think, a certain base, it's always there. You just build on it.” –GL9
- “I think having fun and celebrating as a team is something that I've always been big on...in Australia, people are having fun and drinks every single week...Whereas here, there isn't like a Friday night drink culture. The principle is still to have fun and celebrate wins, but instead of going out for Friday night drinks, maybe going out for lunch, doing a team activity, go play mini-golf, or whatnot.” –GL3
- “I think a lot of the processes and the focus on leadership development, talent development, our foundation of our company values, including feedback and so on, I think they remained the same. It's just the way I deliver it has changed...I had to take a different way, have much more demonstration, explanation, stories, experience. I had to adjust the way I deliver things and how I go about it, and that it may take a longer journey. The foundation has stayed the same, coaching and feedback, and setting direction. I think I'm known for having very high expectations for myself and others, and I still continue to do that...in general, the foundation the core has been the same...I listen...I care, and I'm authentic. I'm not trying to pretend being someone else.” –GL23
- “You cannot pretend, going to a different place...” “I know the truth and everybody has to work under my style because it's the right style.” Not at all. You have to understand and you have to adapt to where you are going and use the experience that you are bringing of seeing things in a different way to actually even challenge, in a positive way, the themes in the different countries.” –GL21
- “I don't think my approach in terms of promoting collaboration and “Let's think this through,” and “What do you think?” I don't think that changes, but it's more the “how.” It's more – how do you get there? How do you engage? How do you build that?” –GL13
- “As a leader that works in an international environment, you have to adapt the way you communicate to different team members that's going to resonate with them...You still have to be yourself and be authentic. You can't pretend to be a completely different person because then no one's really going to trust you. As long as you're being authentic to yourself, to some extent, you have to adapt...you need to adapt how you're going to motivate people because everyone is motivated in different ways, and as a leader, that's your job to motivate your team to deliver for you.” –GL25
- “When you deal with someone that is from a different culture, especially in business, especially in an organization, you need to be able to find a compromise between the way people work locally and the way in which your organization works...to look at Turkish leaders, how they lead their team, I also was aware that that leadership style would not work for my company...I had to find a way in which, knowing the way in which they are used to be led, I could adjust...the organization using some of their strength.” –GL24

Interacting with locals and local culture: Mental and physical presence:

High presence possibly due to frequent opportunities for interaction at work and/or outside of work

- “If you want to get into the culture, and if you want to know how they work, how they interact, you have to be in the culture...I might say 22 hours of my daily life are completely given to the Colombian citizens...If I go to another country and interact with people of my same country, it's just going to be another trip that I might have there with some surprises, but that's it, because everything will be the same...My best friend is from Colombia. All my group actually...all are Colombian.” –GL22
- “We're mainly Spanish people in the office...even though it's a big company and it's an international company, here you see more like of a local culture.” –GL14
- “Turkey is a very local place in which all my team was Turkish... in Istanbul office, I had 40 Turkish people, only Turkish people. All the clients I was dealing with were mainly Turkish. Not all of them, but mainly, yes, Turkish.” –GL24
- “On a daily basis at work, where we are only speaking Spanish, and we are here interacting with the teams who are, I would say 99% Spanish...Then at home...my husband is from Majorca. Yes, it's constant. The interaction with the local culture and values is constant on a daily basis.” –GL14
- “I really tried to make an intentional effort to not really associate with other expats but to really integrate myself with the Indian culture. All my friends started becoming Indians, I used to hang out with them, go to the local clubs, local restaurants instead of all the expat places.” –GL27
- “Outside of the company, I was interacting with the local people. When you are an expat in a city like Istanbul that is huge, there are a lot of expats that if you want, you can spend your time without interacting with other people. I tried to avoid that at all because I wanted to have a local experience and to learn, and so on, so I was interacting with local people. I had a lot of Turkish friends and I decided not to live in a compound in a secluded area. I was living in the middle of the city with my landlord who was Turkish, and I used to shop by myself. I didn't have any bodyguard, I was driving in the city. Istanbul is big and the traffic sometimes can be difficult, but I decided to take that as a challenge. I was there, and I was acting like a local...This helped a lot because you learn a lot of things when you are in the middle of the community. That was my way in which I could enter in very direct contact with them.” –GL24
- “It's a daily interaction...most of my colleagues are Dutch.” –GL15
- “Each time I change country, I try to...immerse myself into the market.” –GL1
- “I'd say 80% of people I hang out with I'd say are long-term UK residents that were not necessarily born here.” –GL27
- “I have a bunch of friends who I will say are Singaporean now, because they Singapore citizens, but they have come from, let's say, China, Malaysia, but lived in Singapore for the past 20 years.” –GL19
- “My German friend has lived here for 20 years. To me, she feels Danish, and whenever I have a Danish question I'll ask her.” –GL26
- “My husband...he has been in...East Africa for the last 20 years...He has...learned and learned a lot of things even before me because he came before me. He started learning much before...He has really

In addition to host country nationals, locals include long-term residents who can act as cultural insiders

guided me, mentored me, counseled me, days after days, evening after evening, how to deal with, how to get over, and how to manage things.” –GL10

Presence provides opportunities for leadership learning and development

- “Whenever you're in the same physical location as someone that you report to, you absorb and you learn a lot more. Up until I moved to London, I've been a leader in a lot of roles, but I've also had a manager who was never too far away, helping me, learning from them...When I moved to London, my manager was in San Francisco, so I had a long-distance thing there and then I changed managers, two years ago, even so, my new manager's based in Atlanta. From that regard, the relationship becomes a lot more transactional between me and my manager. Because of that, a lot of my ability to lead and manage comes from the experiences I've had in the past where I've learned a lot from my then managers who were in the same office as me, I think that plays a big role.” –GL27

Low presence possibly due to lack of interaction opportunities as a result of frequent travel, remote collaboration with people based in other countries, living and working alongside fellow expats, rather than locals, and other barriers

- “I spend weekends mostly here or a maximum of three days a week in Spain...For me, I don't interact much on the business level with the Spanish market because it's not one of the biggest. I mean, I have interaction, but it's not on a daily basis...I'm based in Spain, but I'm like a long-term tourist. I'm here on the weekend.” –GL5
- “[global organization] being a big global company, there's a lot of expats working there...I do live in a bit of a bubble, both at work and then at home. My partner, she's Australian. I would say 90% of our friends are expats of some sort.” –GL16
- “The UK or London especially is so big, there's so many people that it's actually very easy to escape into micro-cultures and live in that micro-culture without seeing the rest of the culture so to speak. I think London is big enough where there's a big enough expatriate community or there's a big enough whatever community you're looking for, where you can live in that culture and be oblivious to any other culture around you.” –GL27
- “This being the global headquarter...I'd say that about now maybe it's 60% international to 40% Swedes working in the office...those are actually only Swedes that I work with or interact with are the ones in the office.” –GL26
- “Most of my reports are not based in London...In fact, I just have one direct report and in London, the rest are everywhere else.” –GL27
- “My time here is just being with the kids, do some activities, go to the restaurant, relax a bit, and visit someone so I'm not really engaged in the Spanish...” –GL5
- “Local people actually, in five years and a half, I have met one person...and that's it, because 99% of the population here are expats. We live in areas which are completely different from them...I have never had the opportunity to interact with the locals.” –GL18

Interacting with locals and local culture: Observing and learning:

Observing members of the local culture to learn about the cultural context before attempting leadership

- “Miami, I think is almost an exceptional place. It's not like I'm in Nashville or somewhere where most people are American...most people are bilingual...or bicultural because they're either born somewhere else or were born here, but have families who are from somewhere else.” –GL13
- “My interaction with Swiss people at work and personally is quite limited. Maybe I should do an effort to really understand, but I guess it's the fact that you're here in this area of Switzerland close to the lake, where basically all multinationals are, limits you a little bit the ways you can interact with Swiss people.” –GL11
- “Where I live, all my neighbors are not from Switzerland.” –GL11
- “Not by choice. It just happened. You meet friends, they introduce you to other friends. Basically, our circle is super international. There's people from all over the place, from Holland, from Australia, from the US, from Canada, from Germany tons of people...It's a very international circle of friends we have here. Again, not on purpose. We're not isolating Swiss people per se.” –GL20
- “In the personal life, I'd say most of my mates are expats...Being an expat in another city, you meet people, foreign people. If you're already mixing or your closest friends are expats, they're going to introduce you to other expats.” –GL3
- “It's not easy at all, especially when you're in a set up where you're a foreigner and you end up finding other foreigners...Especially in London, where 90% of the people are not even British. It's not a culture where it is easy to integrate in the culture.” –GL21
- “The personal network is mostly internationals and expats...Most of my interaction with the Dutch is either in the service industry like restaurants, supermarkets, like that and at work...I actually don't have really close friends that are Dutch.” –GL15
- “The first month I try to observe and to learn as much as I can, and to soak in to how people are thinking.” –GL1
- “The first thing I think you need to do is to really understand the environment where you are at, and trying to understand what are the rules.” –GL11
- “When I first start any role I do like to sit back a little bit. As much as I think like I've learned from my experience, I don't want to go in and be like, "Hey, guys, here's exactly what we need to do." I'd rather take two months to be able to take everything in and learn about the company, and learn about the people. That gives me time to formalize what my strategy is going to be for the team.” –GL3
- “I try to see how they act with me or with each other.” –GL9
- “This is how I deduce. I observe little things.” –GL5
- “I think I spent so much time listening because I tried to understand what was going on and then listen how they would all talk together...I had to become more introspective and more analytical here just to figure out what was going on...I spent so much time trying to understand.” –GL8
- “I think everything comes to listening. I think you need to listen to learn before being understood.” –GL23

Learning how to be a leader in host country cultural context via observing local leaders, emulating their behaviors when perceived as effective, and avoiding behaviors when perceived as ineffective

- “I think, unconsciously, I observe behaviors of people. I think that's how we work. You see how people behave on the streets, at a cafe, when you out at a bar, I see how Dutch people interact with each other.” – GL12
- “Well, I think you can find somebody inspiring, you mimic some of the behaviors or some of the things that you witness...I mostly look at inspiration also from Dutch leaders I had an opportunity to interact with. Some of the traits that I appreciated, for example, was they're mostly very poised and calm, which I think is a very important trait as a leader in general. Some of the people that I've had the chance to work with, it's something that I model after I would say.” –GL15
- “You have some mentors that's going to help you see how this works because otherwise, you want to come here and change the world. It's going to be just impossible. It's just a dream. You need to understand, you need to understand how it really operates, how is the structure.” –GL11
- “In Singapore, I could look at the person I look up to...see their behaviors and try to either emulate them or learn something and get there.” –GL19
- “Every time I looked at their behaviors, examples, whatever they have done, it not just inspired me, but it also influenced me to not take certain decisions. That's how I used those experiences, and it greatly changed the way I am as a leader.” –GL19
- “The other strategy, and this has been a constant throughout my professional life, but definitely over the five years in the US...has been really paying attention to internal role models, managers, or other senior leaders around me that I felt were doing a great job in managing their teams. I have very intentionally observed the way they were doing things and I have also checked with them and used them as...mentors to some of the issues that I would be having with my own teams.” –GL17
- “I would say for me, the predominant one has been observing and so to speak, emulating, especially from people that you learn to trust and appreciate...not everybody necessarily, but people that you can see that you identify and that you have a trusting relationship with.” –GL15
- “I had also someone within the team, who, we don't work directly together, but I have observed how he worked with his team. He was the kind of person that was very loved by his team, and everybody really liked him. I saw that his team had a lot of Dutch people, so I observed him a lot, to say, "Okay, how exactly is he working with his team and how does he do it?" –GL4
- “I always try to look at other leaders and take inspiration from leaders that I think are doing the right thing, that are showing the values that I would like to show and that are inspiring to me... just by looking at my own workplace, and the leadership team that we have there and other leaders around me and try to see how can I also adopt similar behaviors in my style.” –GL12
- “Dutch women are fierce...I've seen that they don't think about themselves as the minority. I think that it definitely inspired me as well to become a stronger leader in that sense that I'm a strong woman, as well.” –GL12

Observing local leader role models recognized as an effective leadership learning strategy, even when unavailable

Observing members of the local culture and emulating their behaviors positively impacts leadership in host country because it leads to acceptance by locals

Interacting with locals and local culture: Relationship building and experimentation:

- “I wouldn't say that I would look and try to copy any behaviors. I think unconsciously, that's an actual thing that you do and you take on different styles and try. I think maybe that I've also become a little bit more direct because I see that these people are very direct in interactions.” –GL12
- “One way for me has always been copying styles or certain behaviors from leaders that I've had, and that I really respect and admire from my perspective. I take those and implement them in my leadership style.” –GL20
- “My leadership approach was formed based on the leaders I had been exposed to and the qualities in them I appreciated or disliked.” –GL19
- “I can almost look at any manager I've had throughout my career and I can see elements of what I've liked about how they've done things that I've picked up for myself, or at the same time, there's things about them that I didn't like that I make sure that I don't have as well.” –GL27
- “I think that my leadership style, I have always tried to be...very real. I've had leaders who were both that and then who were not, who tried to be much more rigid or formal or whatever. I respond much better to a more informal style that's focused on trust, that's focused on collaboration. I am very collaborative myself and so I try to build that context.” –GL13
- “I basically learned from others' mistakes.” –GL7
- “Observing what works and what didn't.” –GL25
- “I would love to say, and I can't say that, that I had a mentor, but I didn't. I think that's what would have been the easiest way. Somebody to have taught me, somebody to look up to somebody to see how she or he is doing it and just try to emulate them, but I didn't have that. This is something that I'm really sorry for because I would have really loved to see a bit more of an example.” –GL9
- “Our first kickoff was just a few months after I had moved there...the music started, everybody left their food, everybody, including the GM, was on the dance floor...I just joined them dancing. I'm pretty good at just observing and imitating, so they're like "Oh, you've taken Persian dance lessons?" "No, just looking at what you're doing." That was a really a great way of engaging with them because it's something they are passionate about, something they love. That was a way of getting accepted by them.” –GL23
- “I truly believe in building relationships, building trust has to be the first step in any initiative...I would get to know them. I would get to find out what are the challenges of their work environment, what needs to be at the priority. Basically, get or collect data from them, listen to them.” –GL7
- “When I first came to Singapore, I said, "Hey, guys, let's go out for a team outing, but I'll let you guys decide on what it is because obviously, I'm new here. Just show me something cool about the city or whatnot." ...it's a minor thing, but at least it shows an openness from me to want to learn from them and there's just certain things, which you can get to know about each other outside of work.” –GL3

Deepening understanding of culture and how to be a leader in that context through building relationships with local people, including peers, followers, and managers via dialogue

- “Talking to people and understanding the local culture and...what motivates them and what doesn't motivate them, and how to help them.” –GL14
- “I try to talk to them and see what they didn't like in their former leaders, what they would expect from me...with these answers I try to build my relationship with them.” –GL9
- “I spent a lot of time with people and I was trying to understand how I could help them to work with me...I was spending time with them and I was trying to understand how I could interact better with them. I showed, always, a lot of respect for their culture, interest for their culture. I was asking questions, I wanted them to explain to me their traditions.” –GL24
- “When I landed in South Africa, I tried to have multiple one-on-one stakeholder interviews...I highlighted in my list, who are the senior or critical people that I'm going to be working with?...I sat down with them and I tried to understand from them what are the do's and don'ts in the culture?...Then I tried to understand from them, what do they want from me?” –GL6
- “Last weekend it was Dragon Boat festival, which is a really important day for China, and I'm just generally quite interested in what are the stories behind that? And so I try and do my best to ask my local colleagues over here or people I meet outside, just like, "Tell me about this story."...I learn something from that. So where did these stories come from? How is that embedded in Chinese culture and Chinese thinking? Maybe to some extent, sometimes some of these stories kind of explain also certain behavior. For example, like relationships, guanxi, as it is called here in China, is really important, much more so than it is in places in the West, so it's interesting for me to get a bit of an insight into...why are people and things the way they are over here.” –GL2
- “When you start going out, when you start looking at all the people working your business, being on the floor, connecting with them...is where you see if what you have read is right or not. The more candid questions you ask, more answers you get, and the more quickly you frame your own understanding.” –GL1
- “I also think it's really important to discuss with peers. I have specifically one other person who has the same position as myself...if...we are having an issue...then I would probably go to her first and then see, "How would you have gone about this?" She's actually very Dutch, so sometimes I use her because she is often quite quick in not overthinking too much, but more taking that direct decision that I sometimes may be struggling with.” –GL12
- “For me, I was just discovering through being there and having [partner and member of local culture] explain things to me. “Why?” “Why don't people talk to me?” “Why aren't they friendly?” –GL8
- “That's the key...you get to know people and they trust you and they understand who you are. That was when I really was able to interact.” –GL8
- “I have a boss who is a great coach... she started coaching me on how to go about that, and I'm still learning that from her.” –GL4

Experimenting with culturally appropriate leadership in host country based on understanding of the context, and refining approach based on feedback

- “I have leaders on my team that are Swedish. Just talking to them and getting any tips not just about interacting with my team, but also how to interact with customers and what the business environment is like in Sweden.” –GL25
- “I made a lot of friends...They gave me a lot of tips about the do's and don'ts about culture, the sensitive points, things which you can't do and talk about...Interacting with them I learned a lot.” –GL6
- “The qualitative feed of information is in your own interactions as a leader with your team members.” –GL17
- “We had a very long dialogue, open, transparent...That was really a game-changer.” –GL23
- “It does get to the point where you have to then show and make yourself a visible leader. Once you've understood the people, once you've got their trust, hopefully just through interaction and understanding and talking to them, and you've been able to observe...and applied your experience, what you're brought into the role to do. I think two to three months, you have to actually draw a line in the sand and be like, "Okay, guys, here's what I'm going to do. Here's the leader I'm going to be." In each role...at that two or three-month mark, I've always shared who I'm going to be as a leader and allowed them to input on that as well.” –GL3
- “I generally have a really good relationship with my team...and because of that, I feel like I generally have a good perception or I definitely get told more or less the truth on how I'm doing. I feel like I get pretty direct feedback whenever I'm not doing a good job.” –GL27
- “There is no substitute for that time frame of making the mistakes, learning by experience, gradually adjusting, adapting, feeling more confident.” –GL8
- “I guess it's a matter of personal experience, once you understand how it works, what are the boundaries, I think it's a little bit of...it could be testing, you could try to do some of the stuff you were doing before and see how it works. Then when things are happening, you are adjusting...you can get some certain feedback.” –GL11
- “Just trying out different communication styles with different people and finding what's effective and what's less effective.” –GL16
- “Mostly watching and then failing lots of times. Just from not even thinking about this, I used to work in [German organization] as chief of staff. I was basically the leader and say, “You do this, you do this,” very German...Then I started working at [global organization], and that approach did not work at all...there I learned that that's not working. That was a lot of trial and error. A lot of then watching and learning, listening and learning, and adapting.” –GL26
- “I've learned from my own mistakes...You've got to make a decision, and sometimes you get it wrong.” –GL7
- “Not everything that I've done has worked, and I have seen those results also fluctuating, that's why they are informative. But all in all, as a strategy to succeed as a leader and here specifically in the US, using

feedback to inform your decisions and then being confident about those experimental ideas, I think it's really important.” –GL17

- “Some simple things like setting up contests that just failed abysmally...Money was not the most important thing, I found out. There wasn't that strict monetary goal that existed, wherein the US, they would have clawed each other to win the \$2,000 in a fun way. Then, be really excited for the person that won it. In Sweden, it didn't work.” –GL8
- “Learning by doing on the job and you adapt...If you receive certain feedback, then I definitely make the mental notes, so to speak, never to do something in this way, or to change it, or to adapt it.” –GL20
- “I try to do what locals are doing.” –GL1
- “Learn as you go, and experiment as you go.” –GL17
- “You need to get feedback...You need to try and do errors and learn from the errors. This is the only way for me, which is going to make a leader and make today a better leader tomorrow.” –GL18
- “We had this fika every Friday, and a lot of times I was just really busy, so I never went. When I was talking with one of the Swedish leaders, they said, "Okay, I know, this seems like not a very important thing, but this is where everyone on the team feels equal. Anyone can talk to anyone about anything, you can learn more about different people in the office." That was helpful. I started going.” –GL25
- “One of the principles I've always had is being open to giving and getting feedback. By communicating that and saying, "Hey, guys, I'm always going to be open to feedback." That's what I need to improve as a leader.” –GL3
- “I think the most valuable thing to fulfill these skills of a leader and develop yourself, is to have the feedback skill as a friend, as the best friend of you, and not as an enemy...these comments of development, when you're open to that, I think that's the first input, the first insight that you will need to develop yourself...Be open always to feedback...Be patient trying to understand. I always in my work, and this is something that I have developed...when something happens, trying to understand why it happened.” –GL22
- “You can see by facial expressions or body language or just the way people treat you from that moment on, it's different...So it's always a search...Maybe I've become much more sensitive to those nonverbal cues.” –GL2
- “You get feedback all the time because you do those experiments and you apply those changes with the aspiration of achieving certain results. So, there is a fundamental piece of feedback that comes from the results themselves...Then there are other ways that you become informed on what you're doing. We have constant and ongoing polls, surveys, to measure the level of engagement and well-being of the team members. So...you get a direct feed as to whether some of the things that you're doing are working or not, and I have been using those and I have been monitoring those survey results regularly.” –GL17
- “There is a much higher emphasis on consensus in Sweden, or if you ask your team to do something, they really want to understand why you're asking them to do that and why that's important. In the US, it's like

In addition to external feedback on performance, leaders also consider internal assessment of authenticity when refining leadership approach

Interacting with locals and local culture: Arriving at new perspectives:

Ultimately arriving at a new understanding of the host country culture and how to be a leader in that context

Example of specific perspective changes on job security, motivation, and work-life balance

if your boss tells you to do something, you do it...I understand that as a leader and as much as I can, I always try to explain the why's...That was feedback I got from one of the senior team members saying like, "You're throwing a lot of information at us in the team meetings, and sometimes we don't really understand why you're asking us to do things." I adjusted that, to make sure that as often as I can, I'm explaining why I'm asking the team to do things, and why that's important, and how it will impact them, and how it will impact the team." –GL25

- "That is definitely something that I took inspiration from by some of the leaders in the Netherlands...the poise and the professionalism, mixed with the directness, definitely has informed the way that I act and operate, but with my own interpretation of that, I would say." –GL15
- "As I tried to inculcate some of those behaviors while avoiding the others, I realized, tweaking some of those learnings while forming other approaches helped my approach be mine." –GL19
- "I think my perception of them was probably that they were more different than what they actually are...I see a lot more similarities than what I thought I would initially...It really showed the contradiction to what my beliefs were initially." –GL23
- "By getting to know better the culture and the city and the country, it helps me understand the people and how they want to be led...how I should lead them...so I think that it's really necessary to immerse in a culture when you have people from that culture in your team or working with you." –GL9
- "What could work in Norway wouldn't work in Italy. You don't know that until you come and...you're on the ground." –GL7
- "When you basically can't let go of somebody...There's a job security, but on the other hand, I found it led to job complacency and to a little bit of a mediocre level rather than what I was used to where you try to get your star performers to perform and others to reach there. Here in Sweden, I had to get everybody to level and then bring everybody up together. I felt like a lot of heavy lifting if you will, but at the end of the day, I learned to take each person's skills. I began to accept for what they did well, instead of trying to change what they weren't doing right. I just decided to stop kicking my head against the wall, say, "Hey, this person, she's a really good esthetician, does beautiful facials, customers love her, patients love her. She does it with safety. She's a beautiful ambassador. She shows up for work on time." I took the positive and stopped trying to maybe doing the way I was doing in the US, which worked really well by promoting certain superstars and then having everybody else trying to reach to that and me praising them...It was just totally different for me to begin to be more accepting and understand that life is not all about work in Sweden. If that's the case, I'm going to go leave at three o'clock, and it's really okay. We still managed and that does not mean they're not hard workers either. I began to understand that it's not a contest of who's there the latest and began to look into myself and wonder why have I done this all these years? Why haven't I learned life-work balance? I actually think they turned me a little around rather than me turning them around." –GL8

Interacting with locals and local culture → Global leader self-complexity:

Leaders incorporate new perspectives into their self-concepts, expanding their self-complexity and making it harder for them to relate to people they once felt close to, including family and friends, illustrating the difficulty of ever returning “home” again

As a result of their increased self-complexity, leaders can feel like they exist in between cultures

- “It has definitely changed who I am.” –GL12
- “There is a quote that “Before you come to Africa and after you come to Africa, you are not the same person.” It is very, very true.” –GL10
- “It's been very transformational, and definitely very defining both for me and for my girlfriend. It's definitely changed a lot of who we both are as people...it has changed how I am at work, and how I am a leader.” –GL16
- “I think I am, for sure, a different leader and a different person. Probably a better leader than what I used to be before. I learned a lot, and I made a lot of mistakes, as always, but I learned a lot from the mistakes I made. All those experience will, of course, shape the way in which I am today.” –GL24
- “When I went off to Panama, and now, that I'm in Colombia, I always say that, "If in my country all the people had the opportunity to have an international experience, just once in a lifetime, the country will be completely different." When you are abroad, you expand everything...When I go to Mexico and start to talk to my family, and some friends, some cousins, some aunts, uncles, even my father, the way they think is quite different right now from the one that I have...in Mexico, we have 60 million people. If somehow we managed for the 60 million to have this international experience one in their lifetime, I think the history of my country will be completely different. The mindset will be completely different, and I must say that we can be more developed than the way we are right now...Of course, I want to go back to Mexico to my family, but how to give to my country all these experiences that I have.” –GL22
- “You suddenly realize...you have adapted to different mentalities and it's quite difficult to go back and to be part again in the same way before you left...When I go back, I am trapped into this kind of thing that doesn't fit anymore.” –GL1
- “I stayed home for a few weeks and at first, it's wonderful just seeing everyone, but actually, in life, the experiences are quite different...It's hard to relate both for me, of their everyday life here, but also very much for them from my life in Amsterdam. I feel like that is sometimes pulling us apart a little bit because we have just different life experiences, and it's hard to relate to each other's life if you don't have that in common...when I go Stockholm, and it doesn't really feel my hometown anymore, and I really don't feel like this is the place that I will be happy. That has completely changed.” –GL12
- “When I go back to India...then you understand that since this has become our home now...We have started appreciating so many things here. When we go there, sometimes we are taken aback.” –GL10
- “Many times I fight with my parents because they look at Italian news and they think this is the reality. Reality is something else. Just listening to people coming from these areas, you'll understand what's going on around the world.” –GL18
- “Even after having been in China for five years, I still don't really feel at home, and I probably never will...whenever I join a group here that is full of locals and I am a foreigner then that's what it is. It gets that sort of tag to it...I'll always be the outsider here. And with people that are Dutch, and that kind of

	<p>look the same, and have the same language, and the same upbringing, that's probably always going to be a bit easier...though it does get harder the longer you're away from it.” –GL2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’m not Swedish anymore because I haven’t lived in Sweden for such a long time...I’m not also 100% Spanish.” –GL14
Perceived cultural distance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I think that Brazilians engage with Argentinians or Chileans in a very different way than they engage with Americans...I think they would look upon people who were from the UK in a similar way. It's just there are cultures that are closer and then they're cultures that are more distant.” –GL13
Illustration of concept of perceived cultural distance	
Examples of high perceived cultural distance between home and host countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Business-wise...everything is really different here...They do a lot of business over lunch, even sometimes over dinner. In Romania, this is not possible. You don't invite people, business-related people, not your colleagues, but your partners, your clients, you don't invite them to lunch...This is totally normal here. The personal conversation as well. You don't do that in Romania. It's even considered rude. While in Spain, it's rude not to tell them that you just got married, divorced, that you're pregnant, that you have three children and two dogs at home.” –GL9 • “It's pretty different...Especially the way in which they relate with authority and organization rules, and so on...Italians, they have their own way to look at the rules. Turkish culture, in general...is much more hierarchical and people are more respectful of the role, of the title, of the status, and, in general, of the authority. It is a different culture...There is a huge power distance perception in Turkey. It is a country in which if you are the boss, people, they respect you...Italy is not like that. Italy is more people horizontal, people are more able to express themselves freely...if you think differently from your boss, you will say it to him. In Turkey, no. This is, I would say, the major difference between the two cultures.” –GL24 • “Culturally, extraordinarily different. I think in many, many, many ways, it's a different mindset, a different attitude, a different way to look at things. It's very much of a “we,” community-based experience...where there's rules, and systems to cooperate are ingrained very deeply in the country, rather than this sort of individual experience of America where you know you have your rights. Here, it's the greater good...I think culturally for me, that was such a huge change, just how they look at things. I mean, everything.” –GL8 • “If you go to the office and you start at eight in the morning, people will start working at eight in the morning...in Mexico, you start at eight let's say, but then after one hour you go for a coffee. You spend 15, 20 minutes talking with people. Then you go back to work. Then you have, after a couple of hours, you have another coffee of discussion, people entering into your office to talk about whatever. In Switzerland it's really, I'm here to work. You work all the time. Then you finish your work. Then you have your life.” –GL11 • “If you want to meet a Swedish person, you need to plan two, three weeks ahead because they have a weekly schedule. It's like, they're going to work and then they are picking up the kids, and then they're doing spinning or then they do an excursion or they have to take the kids to some sport thing. It's just

very, very structured. If you want to meet someone to have dinner on a Saturday night, for example, you can't just call them up two days in advance and say, "Hey, let's go out for dinner". They're like, "No." While in Spain, if you would call someone three weeks in advance and say, "Hey, let's go for dinner in three weeks' time." They're like, "Yes, call me a couple of days in advance, and we'll see." It's a totally different, the whole planning scenario." –GL14

- "I would say the Netherlands compared to...Italy, it has a component of language directness, which is different...they have a certain way of talking, which is much more direct and to the point. Less careful in that regard. Regardless who had they may have in front of them at that point in time. The other difference, I would say...There is a much more respect of you work a certain time. You start early, you finish on time. You really stay focused during your working hours, compared to the Italians, who tend to expand their working time because they may get more distractions within the day...It really is more to the nine to five culture in that regard because they do want to go home and most of them have big families." –GL15
- "Generally, I would say it's more, the boss tells you what to do, compared to Sweden where it's more like, let's say, collective decision – "we're all in this together" philosophy...It's like the boss is taking the decision, this is what we're going to do, and now everyone is just going to roll in that direction as fast as we possibly can with the best results that we possibly can produce. While in Sweden, it's more like, "Is everyone okay with this?" ...Then everyone goes, "Yes, let's do it." Then you do it. It's like a different decision-making process." –GL14
- "I was shocked in a positive way." –GL21
- "There were a few surprises, like there's the sheer diversity that South Africa had...Having worked in Asia, Europe, and North America, I could never imagine calling someone Black, "Black" and White, "White." In South Africa, I realized that was the only way of referring to the variety of races, and they were very open about it. Those learnings came in very, very quickly. Some of them made me uncomfortable as well, because my team was made up of a wide variety of people from different backgrounds...There was a lot of focus on inclusivity of the majority of the population, which, when you're in a leadership role, in a director role, it becomes something which is more than an appreciation of the topic, but rather a responsibility...The understanding of the true sense of diversity that South Africa offers was an amazing thing." –GL6
- "For me, Spain is amazing...I'm from the Mediterranean, I know the culture. I'm used to four seasons, all of these things...People are warm, open, it's very similar to my culture. So moving to Spain was okay...Spain, for me, can be home easily." –GL5
- "I realized moving to Denmark and Sweden, I'm still tall blonde, so I don't stick out. My best friend from high school, he moved to India with his wife and two very blonde children in India and I went to stay with them a few times. That's a whole other ball game. I still feel I stayed within my culture or my cultural context." –GL26

High perceived cultural distance is not necessarily stressful or negative

Examples of low perceived cultural distance between home and host countries

- “A similarity thing I can tell you...would be family, and a sense of family-focused values. Rather than a kid leaving home as a teenager, trying to set up camp on his own, I found South Africa very similar to Pakistan. The families really support each other.” –GL6
- “I'd say it's extremely similar...the first thing is that they're both based off, I guess, British culture. I'm looking at my window right now, if I didn't know any better, I could be looking at Australia, like it's just the same. Everything's the same. We drive on the same side of the road. The food is very similar. There's a lot of immigrants in London and...While both Australia and England are like one British culture in Australia settled by White people, London's had a big influx of immigrants from all over across the world and so has Australia in general. They're both similar in terms of they come from predominantly a White background that has become a lot more multicultural, I'd say since the mid-'60s, '70s, '80s.” –GL27
- “I think actually there's quite a lot in common...Aussies and Danes...they tell you what they think. They're very direct, I guess, which is fairly similar. People are fairly relaxed.” –GL16
- “Completely. Like their local food. Tamil, which is an Indian language is one of the national languages. They have 10 official languages but Tamil is one of them. Secondly, Singapore, the name itself is Sanskrit. It's an Indian language because some Indian prince went there, thought he saw a lion and called it Singapore. “Singa” means lion in that language. When I think, 8% of Singaporeans are of Indian origin, I mean 8% of Singapore citizens, and then there is this whole other set of ex-pats. Overall Singapore has around 15% of Indian origin people, including expats if I look at that. That results in generally on the street when someone sees me, they don't assume that I'm not a Singapore citizen.” –GL19
- “On a personal level, the interaction here is quite easy...Opening up and sharing personal family stuff and how many kids, all of these kinds of things, and even more is appreciated in Spain. You cannot be a reserved person. You have to show it...Again, for me this is natural. I do this in my culture. We are open and we're one, we share family stuff. In business, it's okay. Even the colleagues become friends.” –GL5

Interacting with locals and local culture x perceived cultural distance → Global leader self-complexity:

High perceived cultural distance increases likelihood that leaders will develop a new leader identity because interactions with locals and local culture are very challenging, making it necessary to adapt

- “I think I've learned a lot about myself out here...and I think that comes just with hardship. I think it's really in times of hardship and when you go through things that are a bit out of the ordinary. It kind of pushes you to think about yourself and about your life in a different way. So, I think that coming out to a different place is probably the best thing somebody can do for their career and for their view on themselves. You really get to know yourself better if you put yourself in this tough...out of the ordinary experiences, in a culture that's totally weird and you have to actively think about what you...what your opinion is on these things and what your stance or feeling is. And having that conversation with yourself or listening to those feelings. Yeah, I think that is something I probably wouldn't have been able to get, if it wasn't for moving across the world.” –GL2
- “It's a lot of work because it requires a lot of energy...For me, it was difficult. I would be different, and I would have to try. I would actually have to play a little more of a role and be aware of myself taking that role on of being a consensus gathering versus just let's do it, which was so easy for me in the US side, I

have to say...and that's the beauty of it. I hope I'm a better person now because I had to labor through the Swedish side.” –GL8

- “With the people from Spain...I am going to be less careful about what I say, what I do, and I might be a lot more direct in setting up my expectations...with US team members...I will probably be thinking, what is the right way to approach this? I would be more conscious and more aware of what is a valid way to address that team and not a valid way...All in all, it will require a lot more effort from me...to be that leader in that role for the US citizens than the Spanish ones.” –GL17
- “There's a certain understanding of certain concepts or certain cultural norms that you can lean into to drive connections and to drive agreement that I don't have if I'm talking to an American...if I'm talking to this Brazilian about issues relating to the company, I can have that, "But we know how it is," with the Brazilian, which is almost something that binds you a little bit more than if I'm talking to an American. You don't have that same intimacy that comes with that common culture.” –GL13
- “One of the things that shocked me most when I came here was that people that never met each other would greet each other with a kiss, in Spain, two kisses...In Romania, you can't do that, especially in a business relation...here in Spain, at work, when I go meet any of my partners that I just see for the first time, I introduce myself and we give each other two kisses” –GL9
- “That was very difficult for me, because I had an entirely new team and people were just leaving at three or four and I was shocked. I was like, "This is your first week, you're leaving at three and I don't really understand what's happening here." I talked to some people to see if that's normal, and I talked to another woman in the office and she was like, "Yes. That's very normal here," but she was like, "You'll see a lot of people are logged on in the evening and working in the evening. If you go on at eight or nine o'clock, you'll see in Sweden people are very, very active doing their emails, chatting and catching up on work after their kids have gone to bed." That was a really big learning to me that I had to just relax and give the trust and the flexibility that they would just get things done around their personal schedule.” –GL25
- “There was some kind of friction or frustrations coming with time management...in terms of people...not showing up to meetings, and then not delivering on deadlines. I had to learn to understand and adjust, and figure out a different way of helping them understand why this is important, but also figure out how can I help them to be more successful in delivering, and if they're a little bit delayed that I build in buffer time, so that it's okay.” –GL23
- “It's easier to make friends in Mexico...people are really warm and welcome you...Here it's really difficult in that sense. Most of the cases you end up having only I would say expat friends, which is my case, actually. I have probably one or two people from Switzerland, but it's really limited. Swiss people are closed.” –GL11
- “Maybe if you put Japanese or Korean in the other room, or let's say Swedish, I might have to think about it. I might have to be aware that there are some things that is good or some things that I shouldn't do...If the audience was definitely Korean, I would be very aware and much better prepared...Depends on my

<p>Low perceived cultural distance decreases likelihood that leaders will develop a new leader identity because interactions with locals and local culture are manageable, making it unnecessary to adapt beyond small adjustments (e.g., cultural references)</p>	<p>personal judgment on what is different or what is new. If it's very different, then I'm conscious...might put some time to remind myself and maybe prepare before.” –GL5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I think it's been the absolute best life experience I've had. It's been really transformational for me, I think, because it was so different.” –GL23 • “I think I was very lucky to have this experience in Turkey. I think it's an experience that changed my life as a person, as a leader. I would say that I would recommend any person that wants to learn to lead people to have experience abroad, and to try to lead people that are very different from your culture because it gives a lot of richness to your life and to your experience...It was a great challenge but brings a lot of reward and a lot of unforgettable moments.” –GL24 • “For me, Lebanese-Spanish is not a big challenge, or it's not something that I would think a priority before I move...Spanish-Lebanese I think more or less not much awareness.” –GL5 • “If it was only local Singaporeans, I would be pretty much the way I am with Indians because it's very similar. They understand my accent well because a lot of Indians are in Singapore. Like 8% of Singapore population are of Indian origin. All of these reasons included it's not that difficult for me to interact with local Singaporeans. They understand my cultural background, my upbringing.” –GL19 • “I actually found moving to the UK really, really easy, and seamless. Part of that was the UK is quite similar to Australia...overall the transition has been very similar, it hasn't really felt like I'm moving countries that much.” –GL27 • “Italy has been a very different experience because in other countries where I don't know the language, and don't know the custom or the culture, there was more challenges to meet. I do feel at home here.” –GL7 • “Relationships are facilitated...The framework is a little bit different. While what I said to him might not have changed, there's a certain understanding like, "We get each other."” –GL13 • “As a leader, I will be delivering the same...the words and how I express myself, I think it will be different, but the delivery is going to be the same...the reference are going to be different, the words that I might use are going to be different.” –GL22 • “In terms of leadership, it will be very similar based on the fact that the cultures I find are quite similar.” –GL27
<p>New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities:</p> <p>Examples of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities related to role transitions, such as becoming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I was promoted to this position of regional manager while I was here in Madrid. I didn't officially lead the team back when I was in Romania.” –GL9 • “I started with my leadership roles/responsibilities once I moved to Singapore. The change from the individual mindset to the team mindset was significant.” –GL19 • “People leadership was a difference, but again it was more due to the job than the country. It came with a move, and then another difference was moving from an external consultancy towards instead an internal company. Again, that's a different dynamic. One was more sales oriented, this one was more on internal career development when I moved to the Netherlands.” –GL15

a first time leader or gaining more leadership responsibilities, moving into a more strategic, central, or global role, and learning to lead remotely

- “I think the way I see myself in my role has changed a bit...my job was just managing other people. My role now is a little bit more strategic and so the way I get work done is not by managing people, but more through influencing people.” –GL2
- “Yes, this role is very different. It's more global, it's more strategic, it's more holistic, it's more of a medium-term rather than short-term.” –GL5
- “Here in Switzerland, where we have the headquarters...it's also a double change, because you are no longer in a market, which is much more operational, day-to-day activities, and so on. You're moving into more strategical global projects.” –GL11
- “Now I can say I understood why in my company we say, we need to go to the central role to understand...the way things are done is very, very different. It needs different skills.” –GL5
- “The main change has been scope, bigger scope, and then being the leader of bigger teams...and that is not exactly because the role is in the US, this would have been anywhere...it is a role that it's very near the heart of the company. It is a managerial role that has a very direct connector to decisions that are being made at the center of the company, and so, your role changes in the sense that you now need to be the voice that conveys those decisions that are made at the center, and you need to bring those decisions to life and convert them into execution across team members that are located far away, in different continents, different countries, and at different stages of their own career. That is, I think, a specific that has to do with the US-based headquarter role.” –GL17
- “When I relocated, I also got promoted. I became a senior global director, which meant that I have a bigger team, more countries to look after, a bigger business to look after, and I became a member of the global category leadership team, which is the biggest leadership team that [global organization] had for any category...That meant that now I'm reporting directly to the president of the category, the president of that region...spread across multiple countries. They're reporting to me. Multiple countries and multiple functions.” –GL6
- “I was a departmental head basically. Here I am running my own firm. These two are completely different ballgames...Other than those mundane or the operational work, I always continuously have to think of maintaining and growing the revenue for the company.” –GL10
- “There were a lot of expanded responsibilities when I came to Iran.” –GL23
- “In my role right now, I need to be responsible for different markets and different people. The difference in how that works for me is that I have to speak with people in the Middle East and that is a different experience completely from being in Nigeria and working with Nigerians. If I need to speak to people in the Middle-East, in other parts of Africa, in Eastern Europe, in Russia for example, or in Israel, or in Belarus.” –GL4
- “When I still worked in Germany...I would say maybe 90% Germans in the headquarters there, and also very much localized. Not even from all over the country, but very much from that area around Frankfurt where the headquarters are located. Moving to Sweden and working globally just basically opens up to

<p>Examples of lack of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities</p>	<p>time zones, to countries...the names in my inbox and the people that I'm connected with on LinkedIn, the names become so much more interesting because there's so much more variety. It's so diverse. There's just literally people from everywhere in this context.” –GL26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “With my role here in Switzerland, for the first time being a global role, I had to interact with more countries and people from those countries, be it China, Australia, India, Middle East.” –GL20 • “It has changed quite a lot...because I've either moved into new roles or been promoted...I was moving from a local project management role. I was responsible for this project in Australia, and when I moved to Denmark, I became the global project manager.” –GL16 • “It's different when you're in a global role...the work...is more to inspire, to encourage, to motivate and then to get things done through by inspiring people. Whereas, in my role in Nigeria, my job then was more of...a very hands-on kind of job.” –GL4 • “The biggest change is I'm now managing teams remotely across different countries. When I was in Luxembourg, we were all sitting in the same office.” –GL25 • “When I was in Netherlands, I became manager over quite a big team, and then a couple of months later, we were all forced to just work from home virtually. Then I became a virtual leader.” –GL12 • “In terms of the role, it's pretty much the same.” –GL25 • “The role didn't change a lot.” –GL24 • “Yes, I did keep the company and mostly what I did at the beginning every day, so it was really useful.” –GL9 • “I actually knew the team quite well...because I was even relocating to work on the same project that I had been working on in Australia.” –GL16
<p>Interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities → Global leader self-complexity:</p> <p>New and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities represent a separate source of developmental challenge (in addition to cultural differences) that increases the likelihood that leaders will need to develop a new leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “One of the reasons why I wanted to change was to diversify my CV a little bit. I moved into a customer success role which I would describe as half customer support, and then half sales, business development, relationship building, and ultimately driving revenue for existing customer relationships. That was also new. I guess that the new things were the remote leadership, which I mentioned, obviously, new company, new company culture...I wanted to take on a slightly different skill or be in a role with slightly different skills.” –GL3 • “That wasn't on my mind – moving to a different a different country, different culture. It was more the career step that I was excited about because it was quite a promotion with global responsibility moving to Switzerland.” –GL20 • “I'm now a manager, which means that I also lead, I have responsibility for other people and their performance, and I have a team...Every day, I speak to people from, I would say, five different countries. That's my everyday life...I feel that has helped me grow so much and gain much more understanding. I'd like to think that I bring that into my leadership.” –GL12 • “I was traveling to Turkey, interacting with the local team, and mainly with the local partners of my company but I was not leading the local team. When you are there to lead them, it's a different story. I

identity to adapt to leadership
in host country

had to change the way in which I was interacting with the local team because...When you have to lead them and make them accountable for what you do and what they do is, of course, a different thing.” – GL24

- “The biggest mind shift is when I was just reporting to someone. I didn't have a team or anything. It's always about you...putting yourself on the other side of the table and sitting there and having these one-to-ones where you're spending 30 minutes or an hour. It's not about you at all.” –GL16
- “In terms of thinking or working that probably was the biggest challenge...this was a real multi-international environment, and actually in the office where I was working at the beginning, basically there were five, six different nationalities. Everyone was from a different nationality, and it was something that I didn't have when I was in Mexico.” –GL11
- “When I came here, group CEO of six different companies with different histories, with different mentalities, with different cultures...This is what I needed to adapt to...This was a big change when I came here, but it's not because of the mentality or the culture of the UAE. I think it's the job.” –GL1
- “I've drifted from being more...detail-oriented to a bit more...just get it done. I don't really attribute that to being in Denmark so much. It's just being a bit more experienced, and working for a bit longer.” – GL16
- “I had all the different countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. That was a totally different job...It was very tricky because not only did I now have all these countries, but I now had responsibility but not direct reports. I had to influence, impact, encourage, engage without directly being able to sit down and say, "This is what you have to do." It was a very different role on top of the move and the new environment and a new company.” –GL8
- “The scope and the strategic impact that I can have was amplified...also the relationships that I have – I have to cultivate relationships with more senior people, people who share similar levels of strategic impact...For me it's been a tremendous learning. I was ready for a move up, I was ready for additional responsibility, additional strategic opportunity...I had been asking for that growth opportunity for a while.” –GL13
- “It was the first time I was stepping up to that level where I was working with stakeholders from very senior stakeholders, and it was a very strategic and important initiative. I think myself and some other people around me was like, "Are you ready for this?" when I stepped up to the role...I managed to drive that program really effectively and came to really good results...That was a big step for me, stepping out of my comfort zone, starting to really lead.” –GL12
- “I think that changed a lot, the type of leadership that you need to develop, because the leadership when I was in Mexico, you need to manage people, but at a certain moment, you make the final call in the decisions you're making...Here, we are not talking anymore about Mexico and so on, here...You need to change your mindset. You need to move from being specific into being global...Leadership here, it really means...How can you convince or drive really the agenda across different functions or different zones?

	<p>For me, that's the most complicated part. It's something that you learn when you're here in the headquarters. You really need to manage your stakeholders and understand what are their needs, understand what are their constraints, and trying to figure out and connect the different functions, the different expectations and put everything into one table and make it happen. For me, that's the kind of leadership you develop here.” –GL11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Here in Bologna, it's exciting because we are looking to build a new campus somewhere...I've never built a school before...to construct a new facility is incredible. It's a great motivation for me.” –GL7 • “The biggest challenge that has been in my role since I moved to Singapore was...80% of my team is not based in Singapore...There's probably 60% of my team now I haven't actually met in person. The challenge has been building trust, understanding, getting to know them and getting to know their circumstances, because I've got team members that just have different family circumstances. Honestly, what it's meant for me as a leader is I have become a lot more hands-off.” –GL3 • “It's not only Spain. Spain gives you an element of exposure that you didn't have...Spain offered me a different role, a different culture, different thing. All of this changed me. If I want to admit or not, but it changed me a lot. Because, again, you see things in a new way. Every time you move, you see things a new way. It's never ending.” –GL5 • “All of these things just happen, but were amazing in the sense that we can actually adapt to new things, even though they seem like impossible in the start.” –GL12 • “I think that when you get transferred to a different country in a completely new company, completely new role, everything is new. It's a lot more difficult to find a base, to find something to relate to...you change your life, you change the way you work, you change everything. I think that we, as human beings, need some base to relate to. Either you move to the other country with your family, at least you have your family to represent that base, or you move with the same company like I did. Even if everything else is new, at least you have the same boss. You do more or less the same things every day...from day one, you still have some of your old connections to your old life. It really helps very much.” –GL9
<p>Lack of new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities decreases the need for leaders to develop a new leader identity to adapt to leadership in host country because role provides an identity “base”</p>	
<p>Previous international experience:</p> <p>Leaders entered current international experiences with varying amount of previous international experience in terms of years of experience, number of countries lived in, and perceived cultural distance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When I moved to Spain, now I've already lived in five or six different countries before that.” –GL14 • “I think that having moved, first, the US, then Canada, then Norway, and Denmark, and then Iran.” –GL23 • “I think for the last 10 or 11 years, I've been working with other cultures, working with different people from different backgrounds, ages, all the different diversities that you can get.” –GL3 • “It was the sixth country actually that I moved in, during all my professional experience.” –GL11 • “I'd done loads of more crazy international moves before that.” –GL14 • “I moved very young to France, then from France back to Switzerland, to France, from France to Italy, from Italy to the UK, from the UK to Austria, from Austria to Italy, from Italy to the UK, from the UK to Hong Kong, Hong Kong to the UK, UK to the UAE, so business as usual.” –GL1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Moving to China was the second time for me to make a move. I moved to London after graduation and then I moved to China...comparing cultures, comparing environment, London was a bit of a light move. Whereas China, Shanghai, was very extreme in every sense of the word.” –GL2
<p>Interacting with locals and local culture x perceived cultural distance x previous international experience → Global leader self-complexity:</p> <p>Leaders with more previous international experience felt less challenged by relocation to current host country because they had already developed confidence and skills related to moving, adapting, and interacting across cultures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now I know that whenever I move to a new country, I know you're going to find your places where you buy your stuff. If you want to meet, you're going to find meetup groups or things like that with common clubs. That's what you're going to meet people with similar interests...That was pretty rehearsed by the time I got to the Netherlands.” –GL15 • “I took those experiences with me to South Africa. That's why those things where people struggle were the easiest for me...settling down, finding an apartment, finding the restaurant to go to, getting a hospital, a dentist in place, finding a car, or figuring out your way around town, or getting a scooter. All of those things were something which came very naturally to me.” –GL6 • “What happened when I was in Switzerland is that having all these experiences in the past...I was prepared. I knew what was about doing the moving. I knew what was about going through all the customs, to get all the imports of your stuff will be new to the house. I knew what was looking for an apartment because I did it three or four times already in the past. I knew what to expect. In that sense, yes, definitely, it helped me all these past experiences to go in Switzerland getting here and for me, it was quite smooth.” –GL11 • “For me, it was very familiar. It was my fourth or fifth time moving abroad. It's like you keep in your brain, the process that you know what you have to do when you move to a new place.” –GL15 • “I've done it quite a few times. I studied abroad in Germany when I was in university and I moved to India when I was 26 for 18 months and then I moved to Singapore after that for about six years. I feel like I'm quite well adjusted to moving.” –GL27 • “I can say that somehow it's like next step for me because almost in all my career, 22 years that I've been working...every three and a half, four years, I've been moving from different countries. Somehow I lose that feeling that I used to have at the beginning of changing a completely different culture and so on.” –GL11 • “After 10 years, I think that becomes in some ways your comfort zone. When I moved to Singapore, that was 9 years into a 10 or a 11-year period of working overseas. Naturally, very curious, naturally, wanting to learn and excited. Not feeling any kind of confrontation, not feeling any sort of fear, because I have been through that process over the last 10 years, and been exposed to so many different things.” –GL3 • “I was born in Italy, but at the age of three, I moved with my parents to Egypt so I grew up in Egypt for seven years...in my family, the idea to move across the world was a normal thing. For me, staying stuck in Italy was something abnormal. The normality for me is traveling around for work.” –GL18 • “I had already experienced numerous times this cultural shock and process of getting adapted to local traditions, customs, et cetera. It wasn't really new or stressful.” –GL20

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- “South Africa was my fifth country, and Durban was my sixth city. By that time, this entire idea of moving countries had become pretty normal for me.” –GL6
 - “Because I've had previous experiences in picking up with all my stuff and going somewhere new and adapting, it was quite an easy transition.” –GL7
 - “I think the fact that I been in this situation already for five or six times, it prepares you to be ready to do anything.” –GL11
 - “I was prepared to do that because I'd been already working in another country before.” –GL24
 - “I think it's a common thing I try to do...The pattern is all the same. It's not that I did something specific to the UAE...It's the same approach I always do. There is no particular difference with the UAE versus when I went to Hong Kong, or versus when I was in Europe.” –GL1
 - “I think every time you do that change, you learn something about yourself, you learn something about others. I think that helped to be more agile, be more adaptable, be more reflective.” –GL23
 - “All of the other places have contributed in different ways, I would say, and added on to that expanding and broadening horizons of how people are, how people interact, how people are culturally, and how that affects daily lives, both at work and private.” –GL14
 - “For me, that was not challenging... I'd lived in a lot of places a lot further away from home.” –GL14
 - “When you're used to studying or to working somewhere else, you know from start that you're going to have to accept everybody. That you're going to have to feel that curiosity towards getting to know different people from different countries, different backgrounds, races, cultures, everything that you can imagine.” –GL9
 - “I already had kind of, I would say, exposure and openness to mix with the other cultures because that I have already done before.” –GL10
 - “I always try to adjust myself to be very, very mindful in the cultures. The fact that I've been jumping from country to country, I think that has exposed myself even in a deeper way to be more aware in that regard.” –GL21
 - “All of these moves around had also made me emotionally intelligent, which meant that I had a better appreciation for other people.” –GL6
 - “It definitely helped – growing up like that around the world and living in a few different countries or different cities and going to different schools and stuff, you become a bit more adaptable, and you can adapt either your style of communication or just the way you act. I'm a little bit more sensitive to how things are around me.” –GL16
 - “Just by traveling and by experiencing different cultures, I think you learn a lot about yourself...I've met a lot of...difficulties or challenges that I needed to solve, things that you encounter that you may not encounter in your home environment...When you overcome these challenges...I feel I gained a lot of self-confidence. I know that if I encounter something like this when living in a new foreign country...I can handle it because I've done it before.” –GL12

Previous international experience in countries perceived as culturally similar to current host countries (e.g., countries in the same region) especially minimizes the challenge of relocating

- “For me, it's something I get from past experience. It's about frustration. You need to stop getting frustrated because things don't work as you're used to in your past experience or in your country and so on. If you start thinking that nothing is going to change and everything is going to be like this, you're going to have the worst experience in your life. For me, it's about being open to learn. Be adaptive, of course, and then the rest is great.” –GL11
- “I don't think I've felt unsure or uneasy about working in a different culture. It's probably because I've already been working in the Philippines.” –GL3
- “I am a veteran in East Africa because I started my journey in Tanzania...I lived in Tanzania for a considerable amount of years, that is, I think, almost five years I lived there. Then we moved to Uganda for a very brief period, and then to Kenya...See, when we moved to Kenya, I already had exposure to the East African culture. They share the common language...We heard a lot about Kenya before when we were in the neighboring countries...I already had the exposure of living in the similar environment.” –GL10
- “I had already been living in Luxembourg for almost eight years...so I wasn't really worried about it at all...It was a pretty easy transition I think, because I've been in Europe for almost my entire real adult life” –GL25
- “For me it didn't feel like a huge move because it's still is within Europe...and I feel at home here now after so many years.” –GL25
- “Initially, I was a bit apprehensive...To go there and move, and live there permanently or for a long time...I was anxious a bit and also a bit apprehensive if I was going to fit in, if I would survive – different language, different culture.” –GL4
- “I think, naturally, at first when you work in those sorts of environments, you're operating a little bit outside your comfort zone. Because, for example, I was only used to New Zealand culture and I was a 22-year-old man. You are just a young person. You haven't been exposed to that many experiences.” –GL3
- “The bigger move was when I moved from the US to Luxembourg, and that was a much harder adjustment time and period. I was also much younger as well.” –GL25
- “I had to make huge adjustments in my leadership style or the direction that I gave, the way that I worked with the team, the goals that we set, the reporting relationship was different, the motivation I discovered was entirely different, the way you reward as well as give constructive direction, it was different...everything was different that had worked for me in the past.” –GL8
- “The first time I moved...Everything felt very, very unfamiliar. It's frustrating even.” –GL15
- “None any of my other moves were as hard as the initial one...it built resilience for my entire career.” –GL21
- “In Tanzania when I came...It was very, very different. Almost my gestation period, if I really remember it, was one and a half year.” –GL10

Illustrations of heightened challenge, as well as learning, when relocating without previous international experience as leaders recall their first international experiences

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I can imagine if this would be my first experience. It could be a little bit difficult...It could be a little bit complicated, but for me, it was okay, thanks to the past experience I had.” –GL11 • “I must say that this is the point of inflection in my life...to be more open-minded...These new skills that I might say I have. The [GL22] before going out of Mexico, the [GL22] once arrived in Panama, and the one who's in Colombia, it is completely shaped by my experience in Panama.” –GL22
<p>Previous leadership experience:</p> <p>Leaders entered current international experiences with varying amount of previous leadership experience in terms of years of experience, number of leadership positions held, and relevance to current role as a leader in host country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’ve been a head of school since 2014, in different places.” –GL7 • “It is the second time in my career that my job has a global exposure of that level.” –GL21 • “When I was living in France, but also in the UK, I had leadership positions in small teams...Yes, it was not the first time.” –GL15 • “I started with my role as a leader in Singapore.” –GL19 • “I’ve been a leader in a lot of roles.” –GL27 • “It’s only been sort of 12 months that I’ve been in this more formal leadership type role...I haven’t been in a leadership position in Australia.” –GL16 • “When I was in Luxembourg, we had every nationality on the floor, from Russian to Israeli, Italian, Spanish, so you got to learn about a lot of different cultures. Also from a leadership perspective you also learn how to work with a lot of different cultures and how their decision-making processes work...When I moved to Sweden, I was really happy that the office was quite international as well.” –GL25 • “The company offered me the position of Country Manager for a country that I have been working with for 10 years already.” –GL24
<p>Interacting with locals and local culture x new and unfamiliar leadership role responsibilities x previous leadership experience → Global leader self-complexity:</p> <p>Leaders with more previous leadership experience felt less challenged by relocation to current host country because they had already developed leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Every time you change...part of the world, job, you are confronted with different things, and...there is that underlying common path that I use.” –GL1 • “When you get nervous or in a bad situation, you go back to the basics.” –GL8 • “I believe in listening to the people and understanding what their needs are...to make life easier for the people who actually do the work. That is something I learned quickly when I was first appointed into a leadership position...Here too, I think I took that perspective, to really understand, what are the challenges and pain or wishes of my employees? How can I help facilitate and help them reach that? Those are quick wins to build a rapport and buy-in, so that the relationship is there.” –GL23 • “Having worked in different countries with many nationalities...It’s very transferable...I can definitely apply it as a leader in the Netherlands...given the fact that the Netherlands is very international.” –GL15 • “My previous experience...that has really given me, I would say, the context, the background, the thought process, what I might expect. That somehow, I would say, almost 40% to 50% was known to me...Half the battle is won.” –GL10 • “I was able to take some of my old success formulas.” –GL8 • “A lot of my ability to lead and manage comes from the experiences I’ve had in the past.” –GL27

Previous leadership experience in positions perceived as affording knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for current role (e.g., roles in same company) especially minimizes the challenge of transitioning into a new leadership role

- “The combination of all this experience in the market plus understanding how the global or the headquarters works...It really helps you to have a bigger impact in the markets. Yes, I guess it's a journey...definitely, all the experience I had in the past, it really helped me to do better at my job place here in Switzerland.” –GL11
- “Being a consultant was a really good school because you're forced in these new teams on a regular basis...I worked on maybe six months for one client, one company and in six months for another, and they were completely different and the company culture was very different...I think that experience definitely helped me to prepare to go to another country where people are not necessarily similar to myself.” –GL12
- “I already had kind of, I would say, exposure and openness to mix with the other culture because that I have already done before. Especially, I would like to mention that a little over two years, I was in [global organization] ...and we used to interact with the global clients. The colleagues used to come from US, UK, Far East, different Far East countries...was a very, very good mix with the multicultural environment in terms of the colleagues I mixed with and I worked with. Even our clients, our interactions, our communications used to be with a very wide range of customers from different countries.” –GL10
- “Working as a project leader or a key account manager...leading work and leading clients or communicating with clients on a daily basis – all of those experiences has obviously contributed to the person that I am today.” –GL14
- “When I moved to Turkey, I was very happy because I know Turkish culture quite well. I'd been dealing with Turkey, for business reasons, for more than 16 years, and so I was happy to deal with that culture and that situation...It helped a lot, of course, because I was interacting with the culture for a long time, and so I knew what were the main characteristic of the culture and the way in which people were doing business there...and the way of communicating.” –GL24
- “When I was in Mexico I think the important thing was really understanding the point of view from a market when you look at the headquarters. That's really important also because there are plenty of people in headquarters that never been in a market and they really don't understand why a decision that is taken here can have a lot of impact in a market that shouldn't happen. In that sense, I think that's one of the things that helped me.” –GL11
- “It was tremendously beneficial for me to learn about hotels specifically because I was new to the industry...just from day to day, I was working at one of the hotels from there, and understanding what those dynamics of those leaders are like, and how they feel about the corporate leadership helps to understand how that dynamic goes...In terms of job execution also, a lot of what I do involves an understanding of what is a hotel going to want to do in this situation? I make decisions that impact all of those hotels. Being able to look at it from their shoes makes a huge difference in my job.” –GL13

- “It gave me the technical skill to support a team of project managers and it gave me the technical understanding. I think it's fairly common in technical industries like pharma or engineering or whatever it might be that people get very specialized and experienced with something, and then they move into intimate leadership positions. It prepared me in that way...because you need to understand what these people working for you are actually doing every day.” –GL16
- “In Luxembourg, it was a much bigger mix of cultures. That definitely prepared me and maybe made it a little bit easier to have a team with people from Denmark, from Finland from the US.” –GL25
- “It was very helpful. When I was living in Dubai, I was leading a group of people that were from many different places. There were people from England, people from Canada, people from Africa. People from Dubai itself, people from France. There were also a couple of Turkish people, and I could feel the different way in which you have to relate to them in order to deal with them...it helps, always, to have to deal with someone that is different from yourself...Of course, it helps to have previous experience in order to be able to adapt.” –GL24
- “It was not a new company...I worked with [global organization] before. I had commuted from Germany to Sweden before...and felt rather comfortable with everything that I knew already. It wasn't a jump into the cold water as may be others...It almost felt a little bit like coming home.” –GL26
- “I'm the oldest in the company and I've been here since day one...That's actually something that has helped me because although I was the youngest of the team, my colleagues would come to me to ask me for specific things about my company. They would come to me to ask me about how things were at the beginning, what's the history with this account, let's say. These answers that I had, they didn't. This is what also helped me with dealing with them and managing them.” –GL9
- “The company culture is the same, whether you're in Luxembourg or in Sweden or in Spain or the US...each office has their own personality, but in terms of what's expected and how you work, it's very consistent across all the different countries. At work, it's a very comfortable environment for me because I know how to navigate that. It's probably a lot easier for me than some of the other international people that are coming in from all over the world that have never worked in that company. It's a much bigger adjustment to them, adjustment to Sweden, and then also adjustment to an entirely new working environment. I think I definitely had it easier in that sense.” –GL25
- “I think it would be very difficult to land in the US without that luxury of previous experience in different countries, but also the connection to the US culture, in a sense, via the companies that I've worked for.” –GL17
- “It's all a very [global organization]/Swedish type of leadership already even in those countries. Then coming to Sweden with [global organization], I feel I probably already knew what I was doing when I started here. Maybe the learning curve happened before. That's because [global organization] is such a Swedish company, that even in the other markets, it's all a first name basis. It's all discussion group work, consensus-driven.” –GL26

<p>Illustrations of heightened challenge, as well as learning, when transitioning into a new role without previous leadership experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This is the nice thing about global companies because the company culture itself and the values that a company like [global organization] has based on, they're valid for the entirety of the organization. In that context, it makes not so much difference where you work for or where work at for [global organization] because there's always going to be...this feeling that you get...when you walk in, you forget what country you're in...because the offices and the feeling is just so much the same...That anchors you, I guess, to a certain extent, and makes it easier, from a change perspective, for yourself to adapt if you have this continuity.” –GL26 • “I had almost zero experience or knowledge or any depth to draw on.” –GL8 • “As an individual, I am primarily responsible for my own career...I knew when I delivered something...it was my success. That move to a team, now, I felt responsible for everyone's successes and failures. That was so much anxiety. "Oh my God, we are not able to achieve this. Oh my God, we're not able to achieve that." I completely began to lose my head and I started declining at the beginning.” –GL19 • “I arrived in the UK for an internship after graduating as an Industrial Engineer. Having no experience, being a foreigner, speaking poor English and being a woman in a male dominated industry, pushed me to learn how to navigate the organization...From where I started, I had to either learn or go.” –GL21
<p>International experience duration:</p> <p>Leaders varied in terms of the number of years they had been living in their host countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have lived in Sweden for almost 23 years and am a dual citizen of the US and Sweden.” –GL8 • “Now I've been in Spain for about 18 years.” –GL14 • “We just applied for the Swiss citizenship because we have the 10 years here.” –GL20 • “Kenya, I have completed almost more than 10 years, 11 years now.” –GL10 • “Now it's five years and a half in Dubai.” –GL18 • “Almost 1.5 years, since Feb 2019.” –GL3
<p>Interacting with locals and local culture x international experience duration → Global leader self-complexity:</p> <p>Before leader identity development begins, leaders go through an initial period of adjustment, possibly including feelings of culture shock and overcoming logistical challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sweden was a lot of surprises and a long time to understand the culture, to really understand it and learn to love it and respect it and get along and thrive, I would say because, in the beginning, I was a little resistant. I just didn't understand it...I thought it was difficult.” –GL8 • “Well, for me, it took quite a while before I felt that, "Okay, I actually feel like this is my home." I think, for at least six months, I was thinking that I was on an extended trip. It takes a while until you find your ways around. There's something if I would go back to myself and give myself an advice, this is it, take your time. After six months to a year, you might feel more comfortable both in terms of work, in terms of the culture here, understanding these sometimes weird Dutch manners. It's just like it takes time and I don't think that maybe specifically for moving to the Netherlands but moving to another country or to another city.” –GL12 • “Things like getting a residence permit, getting Wi-Fi at the house or understanding how bills are paid and open bank accounts...Once you have everything in place, then everything's fine, but it took a while.” –GL7

Leader identity development occurs naturally over time in host countries and doesn't stop – self-complexity continues to increase with new experiences

- “I realized I went through the transition of being Swedish, where I actually started to change from trying that way to becoming a way that was an amalgamation almost, of the two which just evolved naturally because after 20 years, eventually, you're going to absorb that culture, you're going through osmosis and time and desire. Then I don't know where I changed, but somewhere along the line...At some point, I became this hybrid that was completely comfortable in those shoes. It just takes time...Once you get past that difficult initiation period...The first two years of international work is hell. It's like a honeymoon too. You're in that beautiful, exciting, romantic, "Oh, this is so great. I'm going to Prague for the weekend." You tell all your friends and they all think that's the coolest thing in the world. It is cool. We can be there in two hours and you're so excited and it's great...Then, all of a sudden one day, you realize that you're not the same person you were. It's not a role anymore. That's where I am today.” –GL8
 - “I've not stayed the same because it's been 18 years.” –GL14
 - “The feedback loop, of course, it's important. The channel should never shut down, even if you have many years in the country. Even countries, things evolve...that's the context also, not only where you are, but in what time you are.” –GL15
 - “This is not something that I've done throughout the last two or three years...No, this is a long process. Year after year after year, you learn more things and understand it differently, and you operate and you take decisions differently, and lead the teams differently.” –GL14
 - “I think for me, it was actually quite a gradual process.” –GL26
 - “My leadership style is really evolving...from learning, from feedback, you constantly adapt and evolve. At least I make a conscious effort to do so because you are with different people every day...That continuous involvement into being able to adapt to the situation and to the person, that I've never stopped doing.” –GL20
 - “Every day you have to analyze the situation, understand how you approach the situation, and change it.” –GL18
 - “You have some ideas, you need to listen, you need to learn, and you have to learn constantly, and every day you have to be able not to change your mind on the fundamentals of ethical things, but you have to be able to change your mind in what you need to do to reach your goal...I think in leadership, there is no recipe anymore. What is true today and what I'm telling you today may be changing tomorrow.” –GL1
 - “It's been a constant evolution through many different variables and factors.” –GL14
 - “Every day I gain new perspectives, observe different behavioral and leadership styles and learn new approaches.” –GL20
 - “The other thing which has not changed is, let's say, the tools that I use. I've always been a storyteller in terms of wanting to make these really nice, compelling presentations...Storytelling, that's who I am. That gives me a sense of purpose...I think my ability to tell stories continues to improve.” –GL6
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- Appreciation of cultural differences:**
- “I wish I had the opportunity to work and live in more countries than just Spain, actually. This was a dream I've had ever since I was a child.” –GL9

Appreciation of cultural differences entails intrinsic sense of curiosity, excitement, and openness towards interactions with other cultures – viewed as opportunities for learning

- “I think that's one of the joys of my life, I would say, and one of the things I feel gives me a lot of inspiration. Different cultural backgrounds, different experiences, different people, I will relish it, I enjoy it and feel pretty comfortable...I think I always had that interest, studied geography...I had my eyes out to the horizon of the world my whole life.” –GL8
- “My attitude towards it – I think I enjoy it, and I find it interesting, and get some energy from it.” –GL16
- “I actually really enjoy meeting people in different cultures and I very much look forward to it.” –GL27
- “I've always been curious about other cultures.” –GL23
- “It was exciting and actually it was one of my dreams.” –GL18
- “I think it was more exciting than anything else.” –GL13
- “Quite excited. This is the main feeling that I have... just to change the routine, change the way of working, and how to interact, try to discover how they really are...trying to find these new differences...is kind of an adventure...I always try to...interact with different people, because, when I have this feeling of being comfortable with something...it starts to be really boring. I need to have this little spark.” –GL22
- “In Italy, it is the same, as you're eating the same pasta every day because everyone has more or less the same mindset. You talk about the same thing. At the end of the day, it becomes boring...Here, instead, the fact that there are, I think, 95 different nationalities in Dubai, even the simplest conversation can lead to somewhere else. For example, it can be religion. I will learn something related to Muslim or Hindu or whatever it is...I prefer to be in a...multinational or multicultural environment.” –GL18
- “I felt just like curious and wanted to understand what the culture is, and wanted to experience the city and working environment as well. Yes, 100% curious and excited.” –GL12
- “You can definitely love your country and you should actually. You should always be an ambassador of your own country and your own family, and your own roots...you can both do this and also acknowledge the beauty in the difference.” –GL9
- “Open to all the new ideas, all the new worlds, all the new ways of working and how they...see the world. I recently heard a phrase "Be prepared to be amazed." It is like a good way to say...you have to be always open to not think that you know everything. You are starting again to learn...I think it is a phrase that I always have as an attitude when I'm interacting with people from different parts of the world and different cultures.” –GL22
- “Being so exposed to...many nationalities, that's something great. It's a really great way to learn a lot from how people think, how people work, even on the personal side, what the people really care about, and having this opportunity in Switzerland.” –GL11
- “I've hired teachers who've had a difficult time adjusting to a new culture because it was very different than their home country, and they didn't adapt well. I think it comes down to either character or personality. I don't know what it is, but for some people, it becomes too challenging...it doesn't work out for them, and they need to go back. Whereas others flourish. They adapt well.” –GL7

Illustrations of lack of appreciation of cultural differences as leaders draw comparisons between

themselves and other expatriates

- “Especially here in Dubai, many people arrive and they start to complain about the situation. For example, the fact that they cannot go and buy a beer as in the supermarket, because it's a Muslim country. The alcohol is into the hotel, so of course, the price – it's not the same in Italy or in Europe, where you go and buy a beer for one euro at the supermarket. It's not like that. If you think...that these aspects are important for you, then, of course, you don't like it, but it means, again, that you have your mind into a box. For me, I will accept whatever the country's giving to me, and I'll try to get the best from the country. I cannot drink a beer on the street? Fine. It means I want to change my habits and I go to the hotel. We cannot try to live as Italian in another country. You cannot pretend to have the same cappuccino and the same croissant at the bar like in Italy. You complain that the cappuccino is not good, because if this is your mindset then it's better you don't even go out from Italy. Don't even send CV abroad then try to come in another part of the world. That's my personal point of view. I arrived with the mindset that I wanted to discover everything. The beautiful, the positive things, the negative things, whatever it is, and accept for what the country is giving to me.” –GL18
- “Italy has its bureaucracies, and it is what it is. I'm not here to change it...I'm not like some other people, expats, where they go to a new country and they want to make it like their home country. Like, "Back in Canada, this is how we do things. This is how we function, and so on." My first things that I do when I move to a new place is look and listen, observe, and then make my choices as needed, but more to fit in with the culture than trying to change it. That's been my experience, and I've learned a lot through that.” –GL7

Appreciation of cultural differences → Interacting with locals and local culture:

Appreciation of cultural differences motivates pursuit of international experiences

- “I always wanted to work abroad.” –GL21
- “I always looked for some sort of an opportunity to work or to study abroad in order to just broaden my knowledge of the world and different kinds of people, and I always like that very much as a concept. I wanted to make it real. I was really, very drawn to the idea.” –GL9
- “One of the things that led me to resign from that company was the fact that there was no possibility to transfer in between the globe.” –GL18
- “I always feel like if I'm in the same environment for too long, things get stale. When things start to get stale, I'm almost yearning to try something new and to experience a new thing just to widen my perspective of the world.” –GL27

Appreciation of cultural differences energizes high quality interactions with locals and local culture, despite challenges, enabling learning and development – broadened worldviews and self-views

- “I'm a very open person, and I think that has helped me being here to be able to interact with different people.” –GL4
- “I think it's very interesting because people from different backgrounds, they give you different points of view on everything, so it is an experience that will enrich you if you are open to listen to them and to put yourself in their shoes.” –GL24
- “If I do my best to show interest in local culture, I feel that the response that I get is usually pretty enthusiastic. People are excited that I, as a foreigner, try to kind of learn about how things work. And so it helps me even build relationships with people over here by just showing some interest. I'd say that's

maybe not something I do specifically for China, but I think it's just something I try to do in general wherever I go, even on holidays.” –GL2

- “Generally speaking, what I tend to do is in interactions, you're more listening, at least I tend to listen more than I normally would because there is always something else to perceive...I kick into the gear more when interacting with people from different backgrounds compared to let's say the familiar the Italians the people from my own family or upbringing.” –GL15
- “Due to my job, obviously, I need to be able to have conversations with anybody, with various backgrounds. That also comes easy for me. When I meet families, especially now that I've traveled quite a bit that I've gained an appreciation of other cultures and religions and cuisines...I seem to connect well with families, especially once they learn that I've either visited their country or I've maybe picked up a few words of their language, it just helps in building relationships. Working in international schools, even though I live in Italy, we do have international families that it just makes their transition easier knowing that they can communicate with me or they trust me that their child is in a safe environment.” –GL7
- “I've always found it really interesting to learn about people with different backgrounds and people that weren't born and raised in a similar fashion, so that kind of openness, or maybe even curiosity towards different cultures, has helped me also to learn more.” –GL2
- “I was trying to understand the way in which they work, and why they work in that way. For me, it was not difficult because mainly, I like their culture and I respect that...When you like something, it's easier to understand it.” –GL24
- “It was really hard, but on the other hand, it was amazing to see how people in a country can think, operate, work in such a different way than in another one.” –GL21
- “I think for me, the first is you need to be very open, very receptive and really probably challenge yourself in the way you think and the way you want to approach different things or solve problems and so on, and really be open to understand the different point of views of the people. That's what really makes very, very rich, the experience of working in multinational environments.” –GL11
- “It's always been something that has inspired me because it's a richness in itself to be able to speak to other people who have different backgrounds, who have different values, different religions, and so on. For me, that has broadened my perspective as a person...Since I started traveling when I was 17, I've looked for that.” –GL14
- “I think that the more you change lives, ways of life, companies, interact with different cultures, it just makes you a more complete person and professional. From both points of view, both the professional one and the personal one, I think we should always aim to have in our circle of friends, as many friends from very, very different backgrounds, like I said, men, women, different races, different countries, continents, just different people, because you will never really live all the aspects, the complex aspects of human lives, and with all these differences across the world. At least through your friends or you or your

contacts or the people you work with, at least like this, you get to grasp a little bit more of everything that the world is.” –GL9

<p>Language ability:</p> <p>Leaders entered current international experiences with varying language abilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I speak French so Spanish I understand, so the language is not the big thing.” –GL5 • “At that time in Spain, we learn English, we study all our life but we are unable to even put a phrase together... You can read, you can write, but you cannot speak.” –GL21 • “The language would come in and I would be getting like 30%, and that was difficult because then when you're 30% into something, you don't know if you're really understanding everything fully.” –GL8
<p>Language ability → Interacting with locals and local culture:</p> <p>Language ability allows leaders to interact with locals and local culture, as they are able to make sense of their surroundings, communicate, and build relationships</p> <p>Lack of language ability presents barrier to interacting with locals and local culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I spoke the language, so it wasn't like I was moving somewhere where I just had no idea what's going on.” –GL13 • “I am seen as a welcome leader as I'm the first bilingual leader the school has had since it opened.” –GL7 • “I think they appreciate that I understand Spanish... For me, that's a shortcut for trust... they feel good about the fact that I understand what they say in their own language... This is how I gain respect and credibility.” –GL5 • “Truthfully it took me to be fluent in the language to really understand Swedes culturally and more nuanced. Once I had the language down... I found my interactions, trust gained and real growth improved.” –GL8 • “The challenge there became that I no longer was in a country which spoke the languages that I spoke. I had to quickly learn a new language... Not that my Turkish became really fluent, but just the effort that I put in, and the fact that I could greet people in Turkish, or say, "Hi," "Hello," or write a little bit of an email in Russian made a world of a difference. Again, I started making local friends.” –GL6 • “Morocco was probably the place where I got least into society, and understanding how they're thinking, because of a language barrier.” –GL14 • “That's actually the biggest hurdle that I see because there are so many amazing offers here in Copenhagen... There's a lot of social events taking place... They offer yoga classes and they offer bingo and they offer singalongs, and all of that is in Danish. I go, "I got to learn the language to be able to partake in this."... There's actually where I go, "I'd be joining that a lot more if I was more fluent in the language.” –GL26 • “The language difference, I think was a little bit of a block there.” –GL8 • “When I moved to Sweden it was really, really, really hard... if somebody speaks to you, you don't get anything. It was really hard at the beginning, and it was a truly cultural shock when I got there.” –GL21 • “Communication was a challenge... since I did not know the language.” –GL10 • “It was really hard going into a country where you don't speak the language. You cannot understand even the menu of a restaurant. It's really hard to communicate.” –GL11 • “It creates an obstacle, the fact that I don't speak their language.” –GL20

<p>Language ability includes both local language and language spoken in office – may not be same language, especially in multinational organizations, where English is primary language and corporate jargon can add linguistic challenge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “They thought I knew enough to talk to me, but I really didn't and I was too embarrassed in many cases to admit. I didn't really understand...there is that transition period with the language...you're trying to fit in, and getting enough to where they think you're with it, but you're really not, and you can have misunderstandings and you can have confusion or wrong signals. That took a lot of energy and probably affected my job.” –GL8 • “I wouldn't be here. I wouldn't be able to work here if I didn't speak Spanish.” –GL14 • “In the office, it's fine.” –GL20 • “We speak English all day, every day. Even small talk around the water cooler or lunch, it's in English. Emails are in English...I walk into a meeting and they're all speaking Danish and I say, "Can we do it in English?" It's fine. They switch like that. It's not even something that they think about. It's so easy.” –GL16 • “They tend to speak English among themselves also because it's considered very impolite to be speaking in Swedish because then others may not be able to overhear what they're saying, even if they're talking amongst themselves. Yes, and everything is in English. Everything's conducted in English.” –GL26 • “I think this is probably unique, a characteristic of corporate culture generally, but...The linguistic adjustment that I had to make was quite striking...there is unspoken pressure to conform linguistically that I actually think does a huge disservice to people for whom English really is a second language within a corporate culture...stuff like, "So, I'm going to circle back with you on this. I'm just going to socialize this with the company."...I'm usually a pretty eloquent person, but I couldn't figure out the adjustments that I needed to make in my language and nobody told me I had to do that, but I really felt the pressure to. If I wanted to have a really good positive transparent relationship with my boss, I needed to speak like her...there's so many sport references...A "Hail Mary," even like "touch base"... “out of left field.” How is somebody supposed to know what that means?” –GL13
<p>Social support</p> <p>Leaders entered current international experiences with varying access to social support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now, I'm on my own.” –GL7 • “I moved myself, alone.” –GL22 • “I honestly didn't have anybody because there was nobody...You just had to figure it out.” –GL8 • “I do have a couple of key people that are here in the UK that I would use like a point of contact if support is required and so on.” –GL21 • “My husband was coming with me. We were going to be together, and I know that my family in the US...I know that I can always go back to the US if I want to or if I need to.” –GL25
<p>Social support → Interacting with locals and local culture:</p> <p>Family and friends spread around the world can provide a secure base – social</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I think where I've always been able to draw strength from is...I knew when I moved to London, as well as I knew when I moved to China, and I still know it...I've got a really good bond with my family back home, and I think that has always been like, “Okay, whatever happens, no matter if something goes wrong, worst-case scenario, I always had this support group that I can fall back on.” And I think that's been an area where I've always been able to draw a lot of strengths from, and that hasn't changed. I think

resources that motivate interacting with locals and local culture	<p>that's always given me some peace of mind or some sort of sense of security that I can always go back.” – GL2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If something happened to me here, I go home.” –GL18 • “My friends are very spread out worldwide these days because I met them in different places and we all move around...but we still keep in contact. We still have that closeness.” –GL14
Networks of fellow expatriates in host country provide both friendship (i.e., social resources) and valued information that facilitates interacting with locals and local culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Expats and former colleagues within the Netherlands and just for personal life, but also for the advice and everything else.” –GL15 • “I had my boss that was the president of all the region that was also an expat like me...He was helping me through giving some advice because he was, more or less, in a situation like mine.” –GL24 • “Friends. It's always my circle of friends...For me, that's always been the biggest anchor in a place. To have this group of friends that I can actually do stuff with and talk to.” –GL20 • “You feel super happy with, "Oh, this is not going to be a problem." Until you get the first forms to fill out, and they're all in Danish...then the frustrations with administrative banks, getting your yellow card...your social insurance...Needing a permanent residence...That was when I was like, "Okay, I'm not at home." Slight panic mode, but I had friends who helped me through this.” –GL26 • “I had roommates too, and there were Mexicans...Somehow, I always discharged myself with all this frustration that I have in me about the culture that I've experienced with them.” –GL22 • “You have a safety net with your friends.” –GL15 • “You run into people that are foreigners...that have been here seven, eight years...You compare notes on, "Okay, how did you go apartment hunting?" Or again, back to the supermarket and personal life situation. They can short circuit that in one day...The network of expats...they can accelerate your integration...They've been through it.” –GL15
Expats are drawn to each other as sources of support – those high in self-complexity are attracted to others high in self-complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have always felt that I related better to people who felt like they had two identities.” –GL13 • “That international profile and those people who are also in that international profile, those are the people that I would really identify with...Those are the people that I really, really connect with.” –GL14 • “Those that have not lived abroad, that have not studied abroad...they're not as open to other ways of seeing life or of doing things...this is something I don't understand.” –GL9 • “Now, I'm just living by myself. I have to manage by myself...My professional wish is maybe going back to Mexico to have another role there, because I think I need to be in my country to fulfill myself with everything, with all my culture, be close to my family. I think this is a bit challenging...always this question, is everything worth it? Is being here 3,000 kilometers away from my family and my best friends worthy enough?” –GL22
Lack of social support in host country creates desire to return home – leaving interactions with locals and local culture behind	
Paradox mindset:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You're talking about where you want to go and how we can get there together, and how everyone in the room can contribute to getting there. It's just that it's being done in different ways.” –GL14 • “I think it's super interesting...how much we are letting the environment affect us.” –GL12

Leaders with a paradox mindset feel comfortable with and accepting of differences in who they are when leading people in their host versus home countries, seeing no conflict between adaptability and authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It's just different. That's all. Differences don't make a zero. They don't make us bad people or anything like that.” –GL20 • “I don't think it's changing your authenticity, it's just, the message is two-sided. There is somebody speaking and there is a recipient. You need to factor in the recipient, even in your own leadership style.” –GL15 • “I don't think it's a matter of authenticity...It's just the approach might be a little bit different.” –GL16 • “I actually feel very authentic in changing my approach...It's maybe like cooking dishes for guests. I'm German – that does not mean that I cook sauerkraut and bratwurst for my guests.” –GL26 • “All cultures are very similar and very different. So maybe the ambition or the dreams are the same, however, how they interpreted them is very different... Again, the dreams, the concerns, the fears are the same. However, the way they maneuver themselves in the culture is very different.” –G5 • “What I noticed since we were people from Europe, from North America, from Asia, Africa, from everywhere, basically, what I noticed for myself I guess, was that we're all the same. We're all the same in the sense that we're people with personalities...the only thing that differentiates us...is traditions.” –GL20 • “For me, that experience...really opened up – everyone speaks a different language, everyone...has a different perspective, but really at core, no one's that different.” –GL13 • “Every country has their own values, but there are some general values that are...a bit universal.” –GL24 • “Depending on time zones, we'll have calls all day with different countries, different markets, different names, different accents, different challenges, and opportunities, which funnily enough very often can have the same solution because humans are, when it boils down to it, driven by the same inner drives and that will not be so much different from the US to India.” –GL26
Leaders with a paradox mindset also recognize both cultural similarities and differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I hope that I am still kind of the same person...I hope that I don't drastically change my behaviors, or my ways based on who happens to be in the room, or where they happen to be from.” –GL2
Leaders lacking a paradox mindset feel uncomfortable with differences in who they are when leading people in their host versus home countries	
Paradox mindset → Global leader self-complexity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You have a style that tailors to who you're leading. You can't just do the same thing with different people...I think it's fair to say that the approaches will be different and that's fine for me to admit that.” –GL15
Paradox mindset encourages development of self-complexity as leaders embrace new identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I'm able to adapt while still remaining myself.” –GL25 • “I will not feel inauthentic. Of course, when you have an audience, you need to behave according to your audience.” –GL24

- Lack of paradox mindset
obstructs development of self-
complexity as leaders adhere
to existing identities
- “I will not be a different person in one room and the other one. I am who I am.” –GL1
 - “My approach to leadership doesn't change from country to country or job title to job title.” –GL7
 - “Not different today. I would be the same...that's how I like doing it so why would I behave differently?” –GL19
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Appendix D

Study 2 Measures

Home Country and International Experience Host Country and Duration

1. Please write the name of **the country where you are from originally** (i.e., the country where you were born and/or raised; your “home” country) below.
2. The following question is about **the country where you had** (and may still be having) **your international experience**.

Please write the **name of the country** and the **total number of years** you have lived there.

[Text entry boxes will be displayed here in columns labeled “Country name” and “Total number of years there”]

Appreciation of Cultural Differences:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your beliefs about interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds**. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

Motivational CQ subscale of the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS):

1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
2. I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
3. I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.
4. I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.
5. I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.

Interacting with Locals and Local Culture:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your interactions with the local people and culture during your international experience in** [host country]. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree that the following statements are representative of your experiences.

Local people include host country nationals (i.e., citizens), long-term residents, and anyone you view as a national cultural insider.

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

Adapted Cross-Cultural Engagement Questionnaire (CCEQ):

1. I left where I was staying to explore the surrounding area.
2. I did my best to avoid interacting with members of the local culture.
3. I interacted with members of the local culture.

4. I observed interactions among members of the local culture.
5. I recognized the local cultural norms.
6. I noticed when cultural norms differed from those of my culture.
7. I learned about the culture by watching local cultural members.*
8. I observed local leaders.*
9. I noticed when the behaviors of local leaders were effective.*
10. I participated in local customs.
11. I built relationships with members of the local culture (e.g., leader-follower, mentor-mentee, peer-peer, friend-friend).^{*15}.
12. I engaged in conversations with local cultural members to deepen my understanding of the culture.*
13. I attempted to model the behaviors of local cultural members.*
14. I adapted the behaviors of local cultural members to feel like mine.*
15. I used feedback (verbal and non-verbal) to improve my leadership in this culture.*
16. I used what I learned from my interactions to guide my behavior in later interactions.
17. My worldview changed as a result of my interactions in this culture.
18. I learned how to act in a way that is culturally appropriate.
19. I gained new perspectives on leadership as a result of my interactions in this culture.*
20. Through interacting with local cultural members, I learned new ways of thinking about the world.*

Items that were discarded following the pilot test due to poor factor loadings:

1. Most of my interactions outside of work were with non-members of the local culture (e.g., other expatriates).^{*16}
2. My job involved routine travel to other countries.*
3. Most of my interactions at work (face-to-face and remote) were with non-members of the local culture (e.g., other expatriates, people based in other countries).*

*Item has been modified or item added to the original scale

Scoring

Recode questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 with the following format:

- 1=7
- 2=6
- 3=5
- 4=4
- 5=3
- 6=2
- 7=1

Perceived Cultural Distance:

¹⁵ Original item: I interacted with members of the local culture.

¹⁶ Original item: I only talked to people from my culture.

Instructions: The following questions are about **your perceptions of how [host country] culture compares to [home country] culture**. Please indicate how similar or not similar the following cultural characteristics in [host country] are, as compared to [home country].

Response scale: (1) *Highly similar* to (7) *Not at all similar*

1. Religions and rituals
2. Values (i.e., basic convictions that people have regarding what is right and wrong, good and bad, important and unimportant)
3. Beliefs (i.e. assumptions and convictions that are held to be true, by an individual or a group, regarding concepts, events, people, and things)
4. Norms (i.e., acceptable standards of behavior within a group that are shared by the group's members)
5. Customs (i.e., practices followed by people of a particular group or region)
6. Ways of conducting business (e.g., networking, leader-subordinate relationships, interacting with customers)

New and Unfamiliar Responsibilities:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your job as a leader during your international experience in [host country]**. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree that the following statements are representative of your job as a leader in [host country].

*If you have had multiple jobs as a leader in [host country], please refer to the **first** job you had with leadership responsibilities after relocating.*

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

Unfamiliar responsibilities subscale of the Developmental Challenge Profile (DCP):

1. You lacked experience important to carrying out some aspect of your job (e.g., financial or market analysis, negotiation, budgeting).
2. For you, this job was a *dramatic* increase in scope (managing significantly more people, dollars, sites, functions, etc.).
3. You had to manage something (e.g., a function, product, technology, market), with which you were unfamiliar.
4. Others questioned whether you were “ready” for this job.
5. Compared to previous job incumbents, you didn’t have the credentials or background or experience expected for this job (e.g., come from the “wrong” division or function, have the “wrong” degree, etc.).
6. This job was no less than a change in your career direction -- you were doing a type of work *dramatically* different from what you had done before.
7. This job was a sudden, unexpected change for you.

Previous International Experience:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your international experiences before you relocated to [host country]**.

1. How many total years of experience did you have living in countries other than your country of origin **before you relocated to [host country]**?
2. The following questions is about the countries in which you had lived **before you relocated to [host country]**.

Please write the **name of the country** and the **total number of years** you have lived there.

[15 blank text entry spaces with labels Country 1, Country 2, Country 3, etc. will be displayed here vertically with columns labeled "Country name" and "Total number of years there"]

3. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statement for each country you listed: **This country is culturally similar to [host country]**.

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

[All countries listed will be displayed here vertically]

Previous Leadership Experience:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your leadership experiences before you relocated to [host country]**.

1. How many total years of experience did you have working in jobs with leadership responsibilities **before you relocated to [host country]**?
2. The following questions is about the jobs with leadership responsibilities you had **before you relocated to [host country]**.

Please write the **title of the job** and the **total number of years** you spent in that position.

[15 blank text entry spaces with labels Job 1, Job 2, Job 3, etc. will be displayed here vertically with columns labeled "Job title" and "Total number of years in position"]

3. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statement for each job you listed: **This job required some of the same knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for my job as a leader in [host country]**.

*Again, if you have had multiple jobs as a leader in [host country], please refer to the **first** job you had with leadership responsibilities after relocating.*

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

[All jobs listed will be displayed here vertically]

Global Leader Self-Complexity:

Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree that the following statements describe you as a leader today, compared to the leader you were before your relocation to [host country].

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

Global Leader Self-Differentiation:

1. When fulfilling my leadership roles, my interpretations of organizational events (e.g., an individual openly disagreeing with his or her boss) depend on the cultural context.
2. When fulfilling my leadership roles, my responses to organizational events (e.g., an individual openly disagreeing with his or her boss) depend on the cultural context.
3. When fulfilling my leadership roles, my expectations for organizational activities (e.g., meetings, negotiations, performance reviews) vary across cultural contexts.
4. I approach my leadership role tasks (e.g., giving followers feedback on their performance) differently depending on the cultural context.
5. When fulfilling my leadership roles, my approach to social interactions depends on the other person's cultural background.
6. When fulfilling my leadership roles, my behavior depends on the cultural context.
7. My leadership role behavior (e.g., resolving conflict, giving feedback, facilitating meetings) depends on the cultural backgrounds of the people I am working with at the time.

Global Leader Self-Integration:

1. I feel like I am being myself when fulfilling my leadership roles, no matter the cultural context.
2. Regardless of the cultural context, I have a clear sense of who I am as a leader.
3. No matter the cultural context, I understand why I lead the way that I do when fulfilling my leadership roles.
4. My views about myself as a leader are consistent across cultural contexts.
5. When I think about the ways I have fulfilled my leadership roles in different cultural contexts, they all reflect who I am as a leader.
6. Deep down I am the same person when I fulfill my leadership roles, no matter the cultural context.
7. Regardless of the cultural context, my approach to my leadership roles is grounded in the same set of values.
8. When I think about who I am as a leader in different situations, it is easy for me to identify connections.

Language Ability:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your language ability**. Please remember the purpose of this research is **not** to evaluate your performance.

1. What is the national or most widely spoken language in [host country]?
2. Is the language you listed above the primary language **within your workplace**?

Primary language refers to the language in which the majority of workplace communications (e.g., emails, meetings) are conducted.

Answer choices:

- a. Yes
 - b. No, the primary language within my workplace is:
3. Please select the option corresponding to your level of proficiency in [host country national or most widely spoken language].

Response scale: (1) *Minimal* to (7) *Completely Fluent*

1. Speaking ability
2. Listening comprehension
3. Reading proficiency
4. Writing Proficiency

[Question displayed is if participant selects “no” above]

4. Please select the option corresponding to your level of proficiency in [primary language within workplace if different from national or most widely spoken language].

Response scale: (1) *Minimal* to (7) *Completely Fluent*

5. Speaking ability
6. Listening comprehension
7. Reading proficiency
8. Writing Proficiency

Social Support:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your relationships**. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS):

Significant other subscale:

1. There was a special person who was around when I was in need.
2. There was a special person with whom I could share my joys and sorrows.
3. I had a special person who was a real source of comfort to me.
4. There was a special person in my life who cared about my feelings.

Family subscale:

5. My family really tried to help me.
6. I got the emotional help and support I needed from my family.
7. My family was willing to help me make decisions.

8. I could talk about my problems with my family.
- Friends subscale:
9. My friends really tried to help me.
 10. I could count on my friends when things went wrong.
 11. I have friends with whom I could share my joys and sorrows.
 12. I could talk about my problems with my friends.

Paradox Mindset:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your regular experiences at work**. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

Response scale: (1) *Strongly disagree* to (7) *Strongly agree*

1. When I consider conflicting perspectives, I gain a better understanding of an issue.
2. I am comfortable dealing with conflicting demands at the same time.
3. Accepting contradictions is essential for my success.
4. Tension between ideas energize me.
5. I enjoy it when I manage to pursue contradictory goals.
6. I often experience myself as simultaneously embracing conflicting demands.
7. I am comfortable working on tasks that contradict each other.
8. I feel uplifted when I realize that two opposites can be true.
9. I feel energized when I manage to address contradictory issues.

Social Desirability Bias:

Instructions: The questions on this page are about **your general tendencies and attitudes**. Please indicate if the following statements are true or false.

1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.
2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my own way.
3. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.
4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
5. No matter who I am talking to, I am always a good listener.
6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.
7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
8. I sometimes try to get even, rather than forgive and forget.
9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.

Scoring

Add 1 point to the score for each “True” response to statements 5, 7, 9, 10, and 13. Add 0 points to the score for each “False” response to these statements.

Add 1 point to the score for each “False” response to statements 1,2,3,4,6, 8, 11, and 12. Add 0 points to the score for each “True” response to these statements.