What does it mean to be a global citizen?

A qualitative interview study with Indian and Nepalese young adults concerning their perceptions of global citizenship

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ABSTRACT

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Today’s increasingly interconnected world creates new challenges related to the use and understanding of the concept of citizenship. The idea of a global citizenship is not new; however, in recent years there has been an evolution of increasing research leading to the expansion of interest with regard to the exploration of the concept and how it could be implemented in practice. This study attempts to deepen the understanding of the qualitatively different ways of perceiving this concept amongst a number of Indian and Nepalese young adults. The study is based on a phenomenographic research approach, where the data material was collected through semi-structured interviews. The results of the study show that global citizenship can be perceived as being related to equality, cultural diversity, global responsibility, global communication and cosmopolitan governance. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the young adults perceive themselves either only as national citizens, or as both national and global citizens. Finally, the respondents believe that formal education can contribute to the promotion of global citizenship by including the concept in the educational curriculum and by encouraging cultural exchange. The role of formal education in promoting global citizenship is also perceived to be unclear due to terminological confusion.

Key words: global citizenship, global citizenship education, South Asia, young adults, phenomenography
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Introduction

"I think that education in Nepal should promote citizenship globally. You know, when everything becomes global, we can get lots of ideas, we can share a lot of things, a lot of technology, a lot of culture... I think that it is better if we also get a chance to know about citizenship globally, not just in the context of Nepal" (Respondent 6, 2013).

The above quotation comes from one of the Nepalese young adults who took part in this study. The concept of citizenship has traditionally been analysed mainly from a national context. A citizen has then primarily been referred to as a member of a community with rights and responsibilities, engaging in a mutual relationship with the government of that community. However, our increasingly interconnected world has led researchers to start reinvestigating the citizenship concept from a global perspective. There is a growing interest in the possibility of a global citizenship and the potential of education for promoting global citizenship (Pashby, 2011).

Audrey Osler, a British professor of Citizenship and Human Rights Education, has rightly pointed out that "education for living together in an interdependent world is not an optional extra, but an essential foundation" (Osler, 2002, p. 1).

During the exploration and further development of this concept, it is important to make sure that all groups of people are given the chance to express their thoughts and ideas. Since the term global citizenship education is beginning to appear in various educational policy documents (Zahabioun et al., 2013), it is vital to gain an understanding of how the concept of global citizenship is perceived by different people in order to determine how to best implement it in formal education.¹

This qualitative interview study focuses on presenting different perceptions of global citizenship amongst a selected number of Indian and Nepalese young adults. After going through existing research on global citizenship and global citizenship education, it became clear that many researchers have based their studies on quantitative methods and especially large-scale surveys. The present study attempts at deepening the understanding of how global citizenship can be perceived by adopting a qualitative and explorative approach.

¹ Formal education is defined as "education provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other formal educational institutions that normally constitutes a continuous 'ladder' of full-time education for children and young people, generally beginning at age five to seven and continuing up to 20 or 25 years old" (UNESCO, 1997).
1.1 Research objective and questions

The objective of this study is to investigate existing perceptions of global citizenship amongst a selected number of young adults from India and Nepal who are studying or have studied at a higher education institution. The study also aims to analyse the respondents' ideas about how global citizenship could be promoted through formal education.

This objective will be achieved by answering the following questions:

- How do the selected Indian and Nepalese young adults perceive the concept of global citizenship?
- How do the selected Indian and Nepalese young adults view themselves in relation to their own ideals of global citizenship?
- What should be the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship according to the selected Indian and Nepalese young adults?

2 Background

Here follows an overview of central terms that are used and referred to throughout the rest of the thesis, as well as basic information on India and Nepal that will facilitate the understanding of the remaining sections of the paper.

2.1 Globalisation

During the past few decades the world has been witnessing a profound intensification of the scale and speed of global interconnectedness. This ongoing transformation of society, commonly referred to as globalisation, is taking place largely as a result of great advancements in the fields of transport and communications technology. As a result of the intensification of the global interconnectedness, more and more people are becoming aware of the fact that their actions may not only have local implications, but also influence people and communities across the borders. Although it is now widely accepted that the world is undergoing this process, the term has been defined in various ways. Held and McGrew have referred to globalisation as "the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of transcontinental flows and patterns of social interaction" (2002, p. 1).
Giddens (2002) has also discussed globalisation and its impacts on society. He views today's world as a runaway world and argues that the tremendous speed of flows of ideas, capital, goods, services and people across the world are making it impossible for anyone to determine or predict the future of our planet since we are no longer in control over the situation.

As can be understood, globalisation is not only affecting political, economic and cultural relations between nations, but also the daily lives of ordinary people. The concept is thus both complex and multidimensional. Globalisation has challenged and created new conditions for nation states and national cultures. Power has increasingly been transferred downward to private corporations and upward to regional institutions and transnational agencies. This being said, nation states also remain powerful players in global politics, while national cultures continue to play a fundamental role in people's lives (Ho, 2009; Kennedy, Hahn & Lee, 2008; Law, 2004; Law, 2006; McCollough, 2008; Moon, 2010).

### 2.2 Global citizenship

The concept of citizenship has traditionally been associated with the relationship between the individual and the nation state. Citizenship has generally been understood as "a basis for community, a source of personal identity, and a model of social organization" (Law, 2004, p. 255). Globalisation is now challenging the traditional meaning of the citizenship concept because of the new power structures that exist in the global arena. Nation states are no longer the only actors that strive to achieve political legitimacy. For these reasons, the citizenship concept now needs to be reinvestigated from various perspectives. Researchers have started exploring the possibility of a global citizenship either existing alongside or replacing the national citizenship (Pashby, 2011).

Some argue that the concept of global citizenship does not serve any function in today's world. The critique is based on the assumption that the nation state remains the single foundation for political belonging, identification and participation. It has been claimed that people can only be fully involved in political activities within relatively small communities where everyone trusts each other to such an extent that they can work together to achieve common goals and interests. In this sense, citizens have rights and responsibilities towards their national authorities. Another argument brought forward by sceptics is that global citizenship can never be feasible without a global government (Schattle, 2008, p. 1-3).
Despite this critique, the concept of global citizenship is now used and accepted by many private corporations, non-profit organisations and even some governments. Many of those who refer to the concept today, however, do not think that it is necessary to create a centralised global government or downgrade the importance of national citizenship. In many cases global citizenship is instead associated with the idea that political identity and involvement actually can be expanded to cover the global and local levels (Schattle, 2008, p. 3). Global citizenship is thus not always seen as a legal concept, rather it is mainly understood as a form of political identity characterised by processes of affiliation, consciousness and active involvement in global politics, which take place at the individual level (Shukla, 2009).

The world is now facing huge challenges that are global in nature, such as poverty and environmental degradation. Global citizenship can be seen as "an approach to understand, see and act" (Brigham, 2011, p. 16). Firstly, it is a way of understanding how the world functions and the connections between our own lives and those of individuals in every part of the globe. Secondly, it is a way of seeing social justice, diversity, interconnectedness and the opportunity of making a difference. Lastly, it is a way of acting by exercising political rights, engaging in critical thinking and fighting against social injustice (ibid).

Issues of identity, culture and morality, as well as notions related to rights and responsibilities, are no longer only analysed in relation to nation states, but are now increasingly being explored from a global perspective. A global citizen is not only a citizen of a nation state, but is often thought to be linked to all other citizens of the world through relationships that are based on care and mutual understanding. One could view the promotion of global citizenship as a way to develop an inclusive world in which all citizens make political, economic and social choices that benefit the world as a whole. In this sense, all citizens see each other as equals whilst appreciating human diversity (Zahabioun et al., 2013).

### 2.3 Global citizenship education

Education is an extremely contested field. The goals and structures of educational systems differ greatly between societies for many reasons, including social, political, historical and cultural differences. Nonetheless, one goal of education which most societies have in common is that it should help learners to develop as responsible citizens that can promote the well-being of their communities. The new conditions which have arisen with globalisation and the contested notion
of citizenship in this global age raise fundamental questions about how educational activities should be designed and what skills need to be taught in order for people and the environment to enjoy well-being and prosperity (Zahabioun et al., 2013).

The term global citizenship in itself is not new, but it is only recently that global citizenship education as a concept started to appear in educational policy documents from various countries (Brigham, 2011). It has been observed that many challenges still exist with regard to the implementation of this concept in educational institutions. These challenges can be accredited to teachers' inability to transform theory into practice due to lack of training or resources (Lee & Leung, 2006). Equally it has also been argued that education for national citizenship continues to dominate over education for global citizenship in most societies (Law, 2004; Law, 2007; McCollough, 2008; Moon, 2010).

Despite such challenges, researchers and educators have now started exploring the concept of global citizenship education, in order to develop education that can help young people to understand that their individual actions and behaviours can have global consequences (Lee & Leung, 2006). According to Zahabioun et al. (2013), global citizenship education involves helping learners to develop a sense of global connectivity and responsibility.

### 2.4 Information on India and Nepal

This subsection provides general information to acquaint the reader with the current social and political conditions endured by the respondents in their respective homelands and to a certain extent, how their governments might interpret the citizenship concept.

#### 2.4.1 India

India is the second most populous country in the world, with an estimated population of 1.3 billion inhabitants. The country is known for its social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. India became independent from Britain in 1947. Since 2004, the country has been ruled by a coalition government led by the Indian National Congress Party. Although India is currently going through a period of rapid economic advancement, the country still needs to tackle huge problems related to poverty and inequality between different social groups (Swedish South Asian Studies Network, 2012a). Religion plays a central role within cultural life. India has 22 languages
that have been given official status. In addition, there exist many other small, local languages and dialects (ibid).

According to the current educational policy in India, education should aim at developing entrepreneurs capable of succeeding in today's globalised world. The Indian government has emphasised the importance of making sure that students acquire skills in foreign languages and information technology. At present, Indian educational policy links values of cooperation and understanding with national issues rather than global issues. According to educational policy in India, a good citizen is seen as someone who respects all Indians as equals, appreciates diversity and shows pride and loyalty to the nation. It is possible to identify two major reasons why national citizenship is promoted to a much larger extent than global citizenship in India. Firstly, India is struggling to create a national identity because of the huge variety of cultures and languages in the country. Secondly, there was a great need to develop the Indian concept of national citizenship during the time after the independence from Britain (Ohara, 2009).

2.4.2 Nepal
Nepal is one of India's neighbouring countries. It has a population of approximately 27 million inhabitants. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. It became a republic and acquired a Maoist-led coalition government in 2008, a couple of years after the end of a ten-year long civil war between the central government and Maoist fighters. Before and during the civil war, many people in Nepal showed a high level of dissatisfaction with the monarchy (Swedish South Asian Studies Network, 2012b). The country still experiences a certain level of political instability (Stamatoukou, 2012). Nepali is the official language in Nepal, but there also exist approximately 40 other small, local languages in the country (Swedish South Asian Studies Network, 2012b).

It has not been possible to obtain any data concerning interpretations of the concepts of citizenship or citizenship education in Nepal. This is most likely due to the political instability that is still affecting the society as a whole.

3 Previous research and theoretical framework
Here follows a presentation of the previous research and theories that were used to analyse the findings of this study.
3.1 Previous research

The following account of previous research within the field enables a contextualisation of the present study. The findings of the present study will later in the paper be discussed and compared with the results of the previous research presented here.

Research on global citizenship and global citizenship education in Asia has gained attention in recent years. In many cases, the research questions in focus have been related to the complex ways in which local, national and global forces are determining the future of the citizenship concept in a globalised world. Globalisation is a central term that is being referred to in the research. There is an interest in investigating how globalisation affects the conditions for national identity construction and whether or not it can be possible to develop a sense of belonging to both one's own home country and the world as a whole. Ho (2009), for instance, has discussed how the Singaporean secondary school curriculum for social studies addresses the separate goals of helping learners to develop as responsible national citizens and encouraging learners to create a sense of affiliation towards the world. The aim of the research was to investigate how citizenship could be discussed from a global perspective in a country that is also struggling to develop its national identity. Kennedy, Hahn and Lee (2008) have also discussed issues related to the ways in which the citizenship concept can be viewed by people from countries that are strong nation states.

Much of the research has focused on what skills should be taught and what opportunities and challenges exist with regard to the transformation of theory into practice. Many researchers have attempted to investigate how governments view global citizenship and global citizenship education by analysing educational curricula and/or textbooks for students (Ho, 2009; Law, 2004; Law, 2006; McCollough, 2008; Moon, 2010). However, some research projects have instead been aimed at investigating teachers' or students' ideas concerning the concept of global citizenship (Lee & Leung, 2006; Pan, 2011; Parmenter, 2011).

The research shows that global citizenship is a contested concept and that there are different ideas concerning the goals of global citizenship education. According to Ho (2009) the Singaporean secondary school curriculum for social studies suggests that students should not only learn about national conditions, but also acquire knowledge about the world through case studies that deal with problems in other countries (Ho, 2009).
Kennedy, Hahn and Lee (2008), have found that students from Hong Kong often think of a global citizen as someone who is ready to help other people and protect the environment. Hong Kong students also believe that it may be possible to be a citizen of not only one's home country, but also a citizen of the world.

In Hong Kong, there is a belief that global citizenship can be promoted by making sure that students learn to appreciate diversity and understand that they have duties and responsibilities towards the world. Global citizenship is in Hong Kong related to values including the sanctity of life, human dignity, plurality, interdependence and human rights (Law, 2004). Both in Taiwan and in South Korea, learning to respect and appreciate cultural diversity is viewed as a fundamental condition for the promotion of global citizenship in education (Law, 2004; Moon, 2010). An interesting conclusion drawn by Moon (2010) is that global citizenship could be promoted in formal education by strengthening the cooperation between schools and grassroots movements. This cooperation could enable students to learn about the concept of global citizenship through their local communities.

The remainder of this subsection consists of an introduction to two studies on Indian interpretations of global citizenship and one study that partly dealt with ideas about global citizenship presented by people from Hindu and Buddhist areas of Asia. Research questions, methods and conclusions are presented.

Shukla (2009) has discussed learning for global citizenship in India in her study "Power, discourse and learning for global citizenship: a case study of international NGOs and a grassroots movement in the Narmada Valley, India". The study focused on a small, local, Indian grassroots movement, large Western-based international non-governmental organisations and their launching of a campaign as a protest against the World Bank financed construction of a dam on the Narmada River. The aim of the research was to investigate the different learning opportunities for global citizenship offered by the Indian grassroots movement and the international organisations. Although the study does not focus on formal education, it still provides an increased understanding of how ordinary people from India may perceive global citizenship. The actions of the grassroots movement were examined by adopting an ethnographic approach and carrying out qualitative interviews with leaders of the movement and village inhabitants. The work of the international organisations was examined through a text analysis of written documents. The study found that the movement leaders and village inhabitants viewed a
global citizen as someone who appreciates that the problems related to the survival and prosperity of humans and the environment are global in nature and that all who are making efforts to solve these problems are fighting for a common cause. Rather than seeing the construction of the dam as their own local problem that could only be solved with support from outside, they thought of it as a global problem that should be tackled through mutual effort. Their perceptions of global citizenship differed from those of the international organisations that instead associated a global citizen with someone who takes responsibility for helping people who are in need of outside support to solve local problems.

Katzarska-Miller et al. (2012) have investigated Indian interpretations of global citizenship in their study "Cross-national differences in global citizenship: comparison of Bulgaria, India, and the United States". The objective of their study was to investigate and compare how people in these countries define global citizenship and what they believe characterises the global citizenship identity. The researchers conducted quantitative surveys based on written questionnaires with students and older adults. The study concluded that Indian respondents linked global citizenship with a connection to people across the world and acting for the global good to a greater extent than the Bulgarians and the Americans.

Parmenter (2011) has also conducted research on perceptions of global citizenship. Her study "Power and place in the discourse of global citizenship education" focused on the views of university students from different parts of the world, including Hindu and Buddhist areas of Asia. The objective of the study was to determine whether or not the perceptions of the university students coincided with the ideas about global citizenship presented in research literature within the field. Parmenter used two different methods in her study. She first did a literature-mapping exercise in order to analyse already existing research. She based the analysis on 199 journal articles, from which she gathered information about the geographical locations of the researchers and the geographical areas that had been the focus of the research. In addition, she found details about what issues were most frequently mentioned in the literature. After making this analysis, she conducted a large-scale, quantitative survey study with university students. The literature-mapping exercise showed that most of the research on global citizenship education concentrates on the Western part of the world. There is one conclusion drawn from the survey with university students that concerns perceptions of global citizenship in Hindu and Buddhist areas of Asia. The study found that the students from these areas generally tend to connect the notion of global citizenship with the idea of transformation of the self. This way of thinking,
stands in contrast to the ideas of students from the Western part of the world, which are more based on the relationship between the global citizenship concept and transformation of society.

3.2 Theoretical framework

This subsection aims to present the theory of multidimensional citizenship and the theory of vertical and horizontal global citizenship. These theories were used as tools during the analysis of the results of this study.

3.2.1 Citizenship as a multidimensional concept

According to the theory of multidimensional citizenship, various forms of citizenship can exist. These forms may include, but are not limited to, global citizenship, national citizenship and citizenship in the local community. Law (2006), who has conducted research on the conditions for citizenship education in China in today's globalised world, argues that one form of citizenship does not exclude others. This means that it can be possible for an individual to learn about these different forms of citizenship simultaneously and develop as a citizen at different levels. The promotion of multidimensional citizenship in education can enable students to develop multiple identities (Pan, 2011).

According to Law (2006), one possible consequence resulting from the promotion of multidimensional citizenship may be the increase of the competition within and between the different levels of the multileveled polity. This can then lead to nation states trying even harder to focus citizenship education on national issues in order to be able to compete with the local and the global levels, resulting in the domination of national perspectives over local or global perspectives in citizenship education.

3.2.2 Vertical and horizontal global citizenship

As mentioned, global citizenship is a complex concept that can be viewed in different ways. Researchers have come to the conclusion that global citizenship can operate both vertically and horizontally. Some people may have ideas that relate more to the vertical view of global citizenship, whilst others may have ideas that are more associated with horizontal global citizenship.
The vertical view of global citizenship is based on a linear relationship between ordinary people going through various challenges and powerful agencies or organisations. In this sense, people acting at a grassroots level can be seen as dependent on the support provided by those with authority (Shukla, 2009).

The basic concept of vertical citizenship can be defined by drawing a comparison with national citizenship, whereby national citizenship is based on the relationship between the individual and the state. Individuals have rights and the state is responsible for protecting these rights. At the global level, however, the conditions become more complex and unclear. There are discussions concerning the possibility of viewing global citizenship in a similar way. Some argue that this may require the introduction of some form of global government (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010), whilst others mainly associate the vertical view of global citizenship with the relationship between powerless individuals and powerful agencies and institutions, even if there is no actual global government (Shukla, 2009).

The horizontal view of global citizenship involves the appreciation of the global nature of development problems including poverty and environmental degradation. This means that local struggles are seen as part of a global fight against these problems. As a result, if a local community manages to take a step forward towards solving a particular problem, it is viewed as an achievement that will benefit the whole world. In addition, it includes the recognition of the fact that all people trying to improve the current situation at any level are equals acting in unity. In this sense, individuals and organisations are both giving and receiving support with the purpose of improving global well-being (Shukla, 2009).

Global citizenship is here linked with affiliation with a greater community. This view of global citizenship does not concern the relationship between the citizen and those in power, but rather the relationship between citizens. This view has been advocated by people who are of the opinion that global citizenship involves principles of equality and common goals of humanity rather than unequal power relations between individuals/local communities and global institutions (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010).
4 Methodology

The purpose of this section is to describe how the study was realised. The section includes a short introduction to phenomenography as a research approach, descriptions of the entire process of carrying out the study and discussions on ethical aspects as well as validity and reliability of the study.

4.1 Phenomenography

This study is based on phenomenographic research. Phenomenography is a qualitative and empirical research method, which is very useful when trying to capture the different perceptions that exist concerning a particular phenomenon. It focuses on determining the similarities and differences between these varying perceptions. According to Marton (1986), this method is helpful for studying how people experience and interpret values. The assumption of phenomenography is that there is one world, which is perceived in different ways by different individuals. The phenomenographic research focuses on relations between people and their surrounding world. After collecting the data, the different perceptions as shown by the interviews are classified into categories, so called categories of description. These categories describe the existing perceptions of a phenomenon in an easy and accessible way (Uljens, 1989, p. 12).

I considered the described research approach to be appropriate in this case since the research questions are qualitative in nature and focus on people's perceptions of global citizenship. Furthermore, the study focuses to a great extent on issues related to how people learn about and understand this concept. The main interest of phenomenographic research is to investigate issues related to "learning and understanding in an educational setting" (Marton & Booth, 2000, p. 147). The aim of this study is not to generalise the results to a greater number of young adults, but rather to describe the qualitatively different perceptions that exist amongst the selected number of young adults.

4.2 Selection of subjects for the study

As mentioned in the background section of this paper, both India and Nepal are experiencing processes of transformation. India, a land of diversity going through rapid change through economic globalisation, is trying to develop a sense of national identity amongst its citizens. Nepal is a country that has gone through years of conflict and political instability and that now
must make efforts to strengthen its political system and general functions of society. Respondents from these two countries were selected for this study in order to gain an appreciation of how the concept of global citizenship can be perceived by individuals living in countries that are trying to develop their national citizenship. It was my belief that individuals from these two countries could be included in the same study as a result of their cultural and traditional similarities. The fact that India and Nepal are at different stages of development was not considered to be an obstacle but rather an opportunity, since the main aim of the study is to present different perceptions of global citizenship.

The study concentrates on the views of a selected number of young adults between 20 and 30 years of age. Individuals belonging to this group have gone through all stages of formal education. I made the assumption that young adults with experience of studying at a higher education institution would be able to critically discuss and reflect on issues related to citizenship and globalisation from different perspectives. Naturally, it is just as important to investigate how other groups relate to these issues, such as elementary school children or teachers. These questions should be tackled in further research.

The process of selecting respondents was initiated through an email message about the research study, which was sent to a few Indian and Nepalese people within my contact network. These individuals were not young adults themselves; however, they were actively involved in educational activities. I therefore assumed that they would be able to spread the message to young adults within their circles of acquaintances. Those who showed interest in the study by contacting me after receiving the email invitation were selected as respondents. At a later stage, I personally contacted other potential study participants through Facebook. The fact that these individuals and I had mutual friends certainly facilitated the contact establishment process. A few of these individuals also showed their interest in the research and were then selected as respondents.

Larsson (1986, p. 29) points out that the main objective of phenomenographic research is to try to find as many perceptions as possible of a particular phenomenon. Most of the young adults that took part in the study are taking or have taken courses in subjects within either the humanities or the social sciences. However, an attempt was still made at recruiting participants with different academic backgrounds in order to increase the chances of finding a variety of perceptions of global citizenship. The respondents are studying or have studied subjects including law, political science, journalism, anthropology, English literature and commerce. Additionally,
the respondents have different social backgrounds, which coupled with the variety of academic disciplines enabled the inclusion of different perceptions of global citizenship in the analysis. In the end, five Indian and two Nepalese young adults participated in the study. An attempt was made at contacting an equal number of respondents from the two countries; however, there were some difficulties in connecting with the Nepalese. These problems were most likely partly caused by limited Internet access in their areas of residence, as well as the enormous difference in population between India and Nepal, resulting in the Indian respondents being the majority.

4.3 Collection of data

The data for this study was collected through qualitative interviews. This is the most common method of obtaining data for phenomenographic research (Uljens, 1989). Denscombe (2009, p. 232) argues that the interview is a suitable method of collecting data for research projects that aim at developing a deeper understanding of complex issues, which is exactly what I wanted to achieve with this study. According to Kvale (2009, p. 43), the interview as a research method can also allow researchers to gain a greater insight into the relations between individuals and their life-worlds. Since this study focuses on people's perceptions of particular issues, it was necessary to use a method which could enable the creation of such an understanding. Yet another reason behind the choice of the interview as the method of data collection was the fact that the concept of global citizenship is still in its infancy. Esaiasson et al. (2012, p. 253) point out that interviews are useful when the purpose of the research is to study an unexplored topic.

All the interviews were semi-structured. This means that the questions were prepared prior to the interviews, though they were flexible enough to allow the respondents to reflect freely and openly on the issues that were the focus of the research (Denscombe, 2009, p. 235). This approach to interviewing was considered very suitable for this study. On one hand, the concept of global citizenship is very complex and as a result it was necessary to partly guide the respondents through the interviews with the aid of the already prepared questions. On the other hand, the concept of global citizenship is still in its exploratory phase, therefore it was important to let the respondents express their own thoughts on the topic.

All the interview questions relate to three selected theme issues that correspond to the research questions. These three theme issues are: perceptions of the concept of global citizenship, perceptions of self in relation to ideals of global citizenship and perceptions of the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship.
The interviews were conducted through Skype. The sound quality was very high with one exception and there were no major difficulties in understanding what was being said. During one of the interviews the sound quality was not perfect, but still high enough to enable a transcription of the interview.

Kvale (2009, p. 144) stresses the importance of making sure that the respondent can feel confident and secure enough to be able to openly express his/her views and opinions during the interview. Before each interview, I had a general conversation with the respondent concerning their education. It was believed that this initial contact would make it easier for the respondents to feel comfortable and relaxed enough in the situation to be able to openly discuss the interview topics.

I used the prepared questions as guidance during the interviews; however, I did not always ask the questions in the same order as they are presented in the appendix since I found it important to retain the spontaneity by letting the respondents reflect freely on the issues in focus.

The Skype conversations were recorded and then transcribed. I made the transcriptions immediately after the interviews. The transcriptions do not include repetitions of words. Beyond this, they are a true representative of the actual recordings. However, it is highly likely that some minor changes in the material took place during the transcription process, since I, for instance, had to decide when to end each sentence. This is inevitable and therefore I continuously returned to the original recordings throughout the entire research process.

A very important issue that needs to be taken into account is the role of the researcher throughout the process of collecting data. In this case, I conducted all the interviews independently. My preconceived ideas and preconceptions have most likely affected the entire data collection process. It was essential to determine these preconceptions in order to later be able to make an accurate analysis of the topic. It is important to note that I come from a different part of the world than South Asia. As a result, I do not have the same cultural background as the respondents. The cultural differences can sometimes cause confusion and misunderstandings and therefore affect the data collection process (Denscombe, 2009, p. 368). The interviews were held in English, which is not the native language of either the respondents or me. This might also have had an impact on the interviews; however, I still felt that there was a natural flow in the conversation.
4.4 Analysis

The main purpose of the analysis was to look for similarities and differences in perceptions presented by the respondents. Marton and Booth (2000, p. 167-168) state that the process of analysing data in phenomenographic studies begin already during the actual interviews. The fact that I recorded the interviews meant that I could pay full attention to the way the respondents expressed themselves without having to listen and make notes at the same time. This is a clear advantage with recording interviews (Kvale, 2009, p. 194).

After I had transcribed all the interviews, I read through the written material several times in order to gain a deep understanding of its content. During this stage, I also listened to the recordings a few times. Only after these initial reading and listening sessions were completed, I was able to summarise each interview. As stated by Esaiasson et al. (2012, p. 271), it is necessary to summarise the information in a way that allows the creation of a general structure of the material when the conversations with respondents do not entirely follow a strict schedule. The summaries enabled the determination of the particularities of each interview. An important task during this stage was to find words and phrases, which in some way relate to the main objective of the study and the research questions.

When I had analysed the individual interviews, it was possible to distinguish patterns in the material. A few main perceptions were found concerning each of the three theme issues. These perceptions then formed the categories of description. As mentioned by Uljens (1989), the focus in phenomenographic research is not on how many individuals represent a specific category, but rather on the qualitatively different ways of perceiving a particular concept.

My previous experiences and preconceived ideas of the research topic have most certainly affected the analysis and interpretation of the material. It is necessary to have an understanding of the concept prior to the research process; however, this previously attained understanding can also affect the results of the study. It may not be possible to determine whether or not these preconceived ideas have had too much of an impact on the analysis and interpretation of the interviews. However, I am hoping that this is not the case because of the fact that several respondents presented similar perceptions and the fact that many of these perceptions also have been found in previous studies.
4.5 Research ethics

The relevant recommendations concerning research ethics presented by the Swedish Research Council (2002) were followed throughout the process of conducting this study. The study participants were informed about the main objective of the research. They all agreed to take part in a research study prior to the interview. I made clear to the respondents that the interview was not a knowledge test, but rather an attempt to learn about their thoughts and ideas. In addition, I mentioned to the respondents at an early stage that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to leave the interview at any time. I recorded the interviews only after the participants had given their consent. The participants were also told that their names would not be published. In this report, each respondent has instead been given a number in order to retain their confidentiality. In some cases where it is important to make it easy for readers to know which respondent made a particular statement, it may be more appropriate to instead give the respondents fictitious names. However, here I chose to give each respondent a number since the single objective of this study is to present existing perceptions of global citizenship. The aim here is not to connect the perceptions with certain individuals.

4.6 Validity and reliability

A study with a high level of validity is usually thought of as one that actually measures what it intends to measure (Bjereld, Demker & Hinnfors, 2009, p. 112). In this case, I tried to formulate interview questions that corresponded well with the research questions. To achieve this, I carefully and continuously read through the research questions during the formulation of the interview questions. I used the theoretical framework as an analysing tool during the entire process of collecting data. As Ekengren and Hinnfors (2006) point out, this approach usually results in a strengthened validity of the research.

A study with a high level of reliability is one that is based on findings that have been produced in the right way (Bjereld, Demker & Hinnfors, 2009, p. 115). The level of reliability of qualitative interview studies is often investigated by determining the likelihood that the findings can be reproduced at other occasions (Kvale, 2009, p. 263).

It is important to note that reliability is not an obvious concept in relation to phenomenographic studies. Qualitatively new ideas can of course show up throughout history. However, this does not mean that the level of reliability of the study will be compromised. Naturally, there is a possibility that the respondents in this study may have given different answers to the questions if
I had asked the questions a second time. Although it is possible that people's perceptions may evolve over time, it can also be argued that their rudimentary ideals could remain unchanged, thus resulting in unaffected general points of view. This then suggests that the attained interviews will not significantly differ over time, therefore demonstrating the worthiness of the reliability of the study. It is also worth noting that some people's opinions can easily be subjected to external influences. Nevertheless, this is a process that is not likely to affect a considerable number of respondents, hence it is a factor that can be ruled out from affecting the overall results of the interviews, therefore adding further strength to the reliability of the study.

The reliability of phenomenographic research has been questioned because of the possibility of two different researchers presenting different categories of description even though they are analysing the same data on their own. However, this critique can be met by remembering the fact that once the various categories have been identified and described, any researcher should be able to use them in further investigations. Thus, it is possible to strengthen the reliability of this type of research by making sure that the categories can be used in future research (Marton, 1986).

As mentioned earlier, I switched between the recordings and the transcribed material during the analysis with the purpose of obtaining an accurate understanding of the different perceptions before classifying them into categories of description. In addition, I left the material completely for a few days to later return to it in order to make sure that I had not committed any mistakes or made any interpretations that were evidently incorrect. These efforts hopefully resulted in accurate categories describing the existing perceptions of global citizenship amongst the selected number of Indian and Nepalese young adults.

5 Results

Here follows an account of the results of the study. In this presentation, the respondents 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 come from India, whilst the respondents 6 and 7 come from Nepal. The section is divided into three subsections, one for each theme issue. Each subsection starts with a general overview of the categories of description which were found in the material. It then follows by examples in the form of illustrative quotations and comments.
5.1 Perceptions of the concept of global citizenship

The concept of global citizenship is perceived in several different ways by the respondents. These different perceptions have been classified into five categories of description: equality, cultural diversity, global responsibility, global communication and cosmopolitan governance.

5.1.1 Equality

According to respondents, global citizenship can be linked to the concept of equality. Respondents stated that global citizens should always enjoy equal rights, equal chances and equal opportunities. The implementation of all human rights was mentioned as a necessary condition for the promotion of global citizenship. In addition, it was pointed out that the implementation of equal rights would greatly contribute to global development.

One respondent mentioned that we all should have equal rights no matter where in the world we are. "Global citizenship per se as a concept certainly implies that each citizen or each person has, you know, rights irrespective of which place he is at or wants to go to" (Respondent 3, 2013).

Another respondent discussed equality from a slightly different perspective. The following quotation illustrates a perception of global citizenship as a concept that involves making sure that everyone, including people living in developing countries, gets equal access to technology and information. "All this segregation and not feeling of unity has created inequality and differences. Like in Nepal, we are a developing country and we are unknown of many things like technology and different parts like accessibility. If we have a right to get information and a responsibility to have the opportunity to gain the information, then I think we could also be encouraged. The developed countries should keep helping the developing countries to come ahead and then the world could develop" (Respondent 6, 2013).

The issues related to equality were brought up by yet another respondent in the following way: "There are many cases where we as human beings should be equal and have rights and responsibilities. We can give an example. Every person of the world whichever nation do they belong to, should have the right to get education, the right to get good health services, the right to get employment and the right to get all human rights" (Respondent 7, 2013). The same respondent continued this discussion by stating that promoting equality is the only possible way
to end conflict and violence in the world. "We are hearing that many disputes and conflicts are occurring. If every people are able to get equal rights, equal opportunities and equal access, then there will not be any conflict and there will not be any violence in the world and all the people will be equal" (Respondent 7, 2013).

It was also mentioned that global citizenship will only be a relevant concept to use once everyone has equal access to education. "The gap in educational background is creating big barriers. We need to start come up with programmes to remove that" (Respondent 3, 2013).

Although the respondents were found to have different ideas concerning the concept of equality, it is clear that they view equality as a central component for global citizenship.

### 5.1.2 Cultural diversity

This category includes the perceptions of the concept of global citizenship that are in some way related to perspectives on cultural diversity in terms of an obligation to respect, protect and include, as well as to acknowledge cultural diversity as an asset and an advantage. The perceived relationship between global citizenship and respect for and acknowledgement of cultural diversity was discussed in the following way by one of the respondents: "We should accept the cultures of other nations and we should power our mind to accept the views from other countries and at the same time we should give them a protection" (Respondent 1, 2013).

The above quotation implies that the respondent thinks that a global citizen is someone who respects other cultures but also protects people even if their culture is different from his/her own. The same respondent went one step further by suggesting that global citizens should also try to include everyone in society, irrespective of their cultural background. "We should not feel that 'this person is a foreigner or this person is away from India'. We should have a brotherly attitude" (Respondent 1, 2013).

Global citizenship is also perceived as a concept that involves seeing cultural diversity as something positive and rewarding. "We are humans and we are not made equal, not even in India all the people have the same mind, same thinking and same ideologies. So, worldwide, if we accept that 'okay, we are different', we can be moving ahead by respecting each other's differences. For example, the West would take some good qualities from India, we would take
some good qualities from the West and when they would mingle, the false qualities or the flaws of each country would eradicate all naturally" (Respondent 4, 2013).

A global citizen is thus also viewed as someone who respects and values diversity by looking at it as an asset and an advantage.

### 5.1.3 Global responsibility

Global citizenship can also be associated with the notion of global responsibility. Respondents reflected on the idea that every human being has a special responsibility towards the world. This relationship between all people and the world was described in the following ways: "A global citizen should be responsible for so many things. He should have obligations and duties towards the globe and he should have a responsibility to beautify and purify the world that he inhabits" (Respondent 2, 2013). "There should be some global responsibilities for every human being, like alleviating environment pollution and a few other things which make this world a better place" (Respondent 5, 2013).

One respondent further discussed the positive outcomes that can result from an increased awareness of our responsibilities as global citizens. "If we look at crime ratio, that would be far lesser then because every citizen would look towards himself as a citizen of a same globe, so everyone would feel the responsibility for lessening any crime or eradicating any social myths or social orthodox behaviours" (Respondent 4, 2013).

As can be seen, this global responsibility can mean different things to different people. However, this responsibility does, according to the respondents, involve working to increase the general well-being of people and the environment.

### 5.1.4 Global communication

Respondents also believe that there is a strong connection between global citizenship and global communication, in the sense that the implementation of the concept of global citizenship can only happen when people all around the world are able to communicate with each other without any difficulties. One respondent thinks that global citizenship would only be possible if "anyone could communicate with the whole world and if the barriers of citizenship are alleviated"
When asked what initial thoughts come to mind when hearing the term global citizenship, one respondent said: "we could communicate easily" (Respondent 4, 2013).

Another respondent suggested one possible solution to the communication problems. "We can establish platforms where people do not have to really travel from one place to another and that sort of thing" (Respondent 3, 2013). It is believed that such platforms could be created with the aid of current information- and communications technology. The results thus show that respondents see communication problems as obstacles in promoting global citizenship, whilst recognising the potential of modern technology for improving the possibilities for communication across borders.

5.1.5 Cosmopolitan governance

Global citizenship is also perceived as something that can only be realised if it is possible to introduce cosmopolitan governance. One of the respondents reflected on the concept of global citizenship from this perspective. "We can trace this in so many words and so many theories. We can go back to the emancipatory critique of the constructivist thinkers, people like Andrew Linklater, people like Ken Booth and so on. They have a concept of global citizenship where, you know, the nation states are essentially constraints or exploiting structures on humanity. Human emancipation is only possible when we have a global community, a cosmopolitan citizenship or cosmopolitan governance" (Respondent 2, 2013).

According to this view, a global citizen is part of a global community with one single political authority or a world government.

5.2 Perceptions of self in relation to ideals of global citizenship

As mentioned in the previous subsection, the respondents have different ideals of global citizenship. This means that their answers on the questions about how they perceive themselves in relation to their ideals of global citizenship are based on different initial assumptions. Nevertheless, their reflections on issues related to how they perceive themselves can still provide new insights into the complex nature of the concept of global citizenship. The perceptions of self in relation to ideals of global citizenship have been classified into two main categories of description: national citizen as well as national and global citizen. It is important to note here that
the respondents never stated that they perceive themselves entirely as global citizens; however, some of the respondents view themselves as being closer to their own ideals of global citizenship than others.

5.2.1 National citizen

There are those who primarily see themselves as citizens of their home countries. In these cases the respondents feel that they themselves are far from their ideals of global citizenship. The following quotations exemplify their reasoning: "Identity... I still think that should be ruled by the country you belong to, your home country, so in that sense I would like to be identified as an Indian citizen" (Respondent 3, 2013). "Frankly saying, I am mostly, immediately in my mind, I feel I am a citizen of Nepal. I hardly think that I am a citizen of the world" (Respondent 6, 2013).

This means that there are those who consider themselves to be so far from their ideals of global citizenship that they cannot in this point in time see themselves as global citizens. The respondents did not directly specify why they do not view themselves as global citizens; however, based on the interview material, it can be understood that their difficulties in relating themselves to the concept of global citizenship are caused by a recognition that they are not able to fully communicate with the entire world or take advantage of all those opportunities to gain information that are available only in certain parts of the world.

5.2.2 National and global citizen

In other cases the respondents are able to relate themselves both to the concept of national citizenship and their own ideals of global citizenship. This category includes all those perceptions that in some way relate to viewing oneself as both a national citizen and a global citizen.

One respondent perceives himself first and foremost as an Indian citizen. He only thinks of himself as a global citizen after recognising himself as a citizen of India. "In my mind, I prefer myself as an Indian citizen, because I belong to India, only then the world or global citizen comes into my mind" (Respondent 1, 2013).

Another respondent is able to think of himself as someone who strives to be a global citizen without first viewing himself as an Indian citizen, though admitting that his country has
influenced him in certain ways. "I must be honest that my country also has spoon-fed me with its own textbooks on history and its own conception of nationhood and so far I have not been able to completely come out of it yet. I have been able to share many ideas which I consider nuisance or futile ideas, so I do not consider myself an Indian in a hardcore sense or I am not a hardcore Indian. I very much consider myself a global citizen but in some respects I am still struggling with myself" (Respondent 2, 2013).

It is thus clear that respondents can relate themselves to their own ideals of global citizenship. The perceptions included in this category are further illustrated in the following two subsections.

5.2.2.1 National and global citizen depending on the context

A few respondents did not say whether they see themselves more as a citizen of their home country or a citizen of the world, as it depends on the context. Here follows an example: "In terms of Indian citizen I certainly have my responsibilities, legal duties and rights and I do perform them all, like I vote, I socially aware people about various things which are wrong and I appreciate or increase the parts of society in India that are weak and need to be increased to grow and to blossom. When it comes to seeing my own self as a global citizen, I surely do that as well. I communicate with different creeds of different nations across the world" (Respondent 4, 2013). This suggests that the national citizenship and the global citizenship can be perceived as different concepts and that both of them may be relevant in different contexts.

Another respondent stated that she sees herself as a global citizen at certain times; however, at other times she sees herself as a national citizen when she realises that certain opportunities are not available everywhere in the world. "In certain cases I find myself as a citizen of my own country and in certain cases I find myself as a citizen of the world, especially regarding the environmental issues. When I heard about and began to realise the environmental issues, I think that everyone of us should protect the environment and everyone of us should work for the welfare of this because we are all citizens of the Earth. In such situations I feel that we all are citizens of the globe. Similarly, regarding the issue of security, when I sometimes hear attacking in different countries, I feel that we should be the citizen of not the country but the globe. But it is true that when I have to be confined in some infrastructure facilities or education, sometimes such facilities are not available in my country. Just we can give the example that as my country is to some extent a poor country, we are not able to get the technologies that are made for the persons with disability. We are not able to get the education system that so called developed
countries have, so when I do not get the same chances I feel like a citizen of my own country" (Respondent 7, 2013).

This indicates that the respondent argues that it may only be possible to truly implement the concept of global citizenship by working towards eliminating discrimination and injustice.

5.2.2.2 National and global citizen wishing to create change

Some of the respondents who perceive themselves as global citizens in addition to being citizens of their own home countries feel certain that they can become even better global citizens by contributing to the development of their local communities and/or the world as a whole. They said that their actions may not just lead to themselves becoming better global citizens, but also to the promotion of global citizenship in their local communities and/or across the world.

The respondents reflected on what they would like to do or are already doing to become better global citizens. The following quotation comes from a respondent who believes that he could become a better global citizen and strengthen the concept of global citizenship by promoting cultural diversity. "What I would like to do, if I could, is to promote all cultures. I mean, I am quite aware of the fact that this project of global citizenship may well be hijacked or may well be monopolised by those who are in power of the world or by those who are ruling the world. Their culture, their economy, their politics may come to rule the idea of global citizenship. They might impose their own culture on the rest of the cultures. What I would like to do is to see that all the cultures are promoted and that a confluence of different diverse multiple cultures takes place at a global level, not the homogenisation or imposition of a particular culture or a particular conception of global citizenship for that matter" (Respondent 2, 2013).

Another respondent mentioned that she already tries to be a global citizen alongside being a citizen of her home country by promoting cultural awareness amongst her friends and acquaintances. "I communicate with different creeds of different nations across the world. We talk about cultures and whenever we discuss or whenever we converse with each other, we do, or especially me, I try to erase some false images, like you know, many of the Westerners think that Indians are simply like snake charmers or they are uneducated and they are not able to participate in the global citizenship. So I try by my conversation and discussions, to aware them, aware my European friends that we are all part of same globe and that we are also capable to support you, support everyone for making this world a global world" (Respondent 4, 2013).
One respondent who sees the close relationship between global citizenship and equality suggested that she as a young person could become a better global citizen by educating others about this relationship. "Being a youth member of the community, I have certain responsibilities towards the globalisation and the global citizenship. I think that if I educate the people or if I can tell the people around me about the concept of global citizenship and the concept of equality and if they become educated, at least some of the people might change their concept" (Respondent 7, 2013).

These respondents certainly believe that they have a special role to play in promoting global citizenship, although the strategies that they would like to adopt to reach these goals differ slightly. Some of the strategies are more focused on acknowledging all cultures and spreading cultural awareness, whilst others are more directed towards informing about the importance of equal rights and responsibilities.

### 5.3 The role of formal education in promoting global citizenship

The respondents have different experiences with regards to whether or not they have discussed issues related to global citizenship in formal education. All of them have studied about globalisation, but most of the respondents have only read about citizenship from a national perspective. The concept of global citizenship has often not been brought up at all by their teachers.

The respondents think that global citizenship is an issue that should be discussed in formal education, but they have various thoughts and ideas about how formal education could contribute to the promotion of global citizenship. The perceptions have been classified into three categories of description: the inclusion of the concept of global citizenship in the curriculum, the encouragement of cultural exchange and unclear role due to terminological confusion.

#### 5.3.1 The inclusion of the concept of global citizenship in the curriculum

It is perceived by the respondents that formal education should contribute to the promotion of global citizenship through the inclusion of the concept in the curriculum. The respondents have different opinions about how the concept of global citizenship should be incorporated into the general school and university education.
One respondent suggested that global citizenship should be a central concept in the curriculum at university level. "Universities can play an immensely significant role in actually creating an atmosphere for people to conceptualise global citizenship. I think that the things that have to be included in the educational system curriculum should be that we should promote global peace, global citizenship and global coexistence as a whole. We should not compartmentalise or segmentalise this planet in the name of nations and so on. You know, universities actually should promote a universal kind of framework of education where we are out of the cocoons of nationalities and I think the universities also should try to promote an education which basically talks about citizenship not in narrow terms of nationality but in broader terms of the world as a whole" (Respondent 2, 2013).

It is also perceived that global citizenship should be included in the curriculum in order to make sure that no one is excluded in today's globalised world. "I think that education system could be opened up, because in my opinion students must be given an opportunity to learn about global citizenship and about the changing scenarios of the world because no one should be limited in today's era of technology, information, communication and all that. So I guess no one should be limited or confined to just his own country or particular region" (Respondent 5, 2013).

Respondents believe that schools and universities should encourage discussions about issues related to the ways in which the citizenship concept is challenged in today's globalised world. Just like rights, responsibilities and duties are being discussed at a national level, the respondents think that such issues should also be dealt with in a broader context. According to the respondents, such topics could be included in the study of already existing subjects, or alternatively be discussed during specific courses on global citizenship.

5.3.2 The encouragement of cultural exchange

It is also perceived by some of the respondents that the main role of schools and universities in promoting global citizenship should be to encourage cultural exchange. The following quotation illustrates this well: "There are many universities in India too that have cultural exchange programmes at management level at postgraduation level but because of few legal restrictions the students are not being shared, you know, they are not being sent out or neither the Western students are taken in. If a culture exchange is possible then a global citizenship will be far more better understood by each country's students and upcoming youth" (Respondent 4, 2013). The
respondent suggested that university education could contribute to the promotion of global citizenship by making sure that students are given the opportunity to participate in cultural exchange activities.

### 5.3.3 Unclear role due to terminological confusion

As pointed out earlier in this paper, the concept of global citizenship is still in its exploratory phase. This can also be understood from comments made by the respondents in this study. They think that it may be necessary to reduce the level of confusion by developing clear guidelines about what is actually meant by global citizenship before trying to determine the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship.

One respondent discussed this terminological confusion and the difficulties in turning words on paper into practice. "There is a lot of chaos and confusion, so unless we are clear about what global citizenship means and what rights and responsibilities will come with it, how do we transform these concepts into practice?" (Respondent 3, 2013). The same respondent continued by saying that "we really need to sit down and let out clearly as to what we are trying to achieve with the concept of global citizenship" (Respondent 3, 2013).

There is not only confusion regarding the concept of global citizenship in itself, but there is also a lack of awareness amongst people about national citizenship, which may, according to one respondent, further complicate the struggle to succeed with the attempts to promote global citizenship through formal education. "The fact that we should agree on is that even the people do not know what the national citizenship is and people are forgetting the citizenship. I think it takes a lot of time and the government and the whole education system have to work a lot if they are going to inform the people on the global citizenship. I think that the education system should include courses on global citizenship, but if they are going to do so, as people do not even know about the criteria for national citizenship, if they are going to do so, really the whole education system should have to work and the courses should be totally changed" (Respondent 7, 2013).

To sum up, the current level of terminological confusion and unawareness within society is perceived to be so high that it makes the promotion of global citizenship through formal education extremely challenging.
6 Discussion

This section contains reflections on the results of the study. The discussion is based on continuous referrals to the previous research and the theoretical framework presented earlier in the paper. Each theme issue is discussed separately.

6.1 Reflections on perceptions of the concept of global citizenship

The answers given by the respondents on the questions related to their perceptions of the concept of global citizenship clearly demonstrate the complexity of this concept. As mentioned, global citizenship can be perceived in terms of equality, cultural diversity, global responsibility, global communication and cosmopolitan governance. This shows that there are different ways of understanding issues related to global citizenship, what personal qualities and traits a global citizen should have and what rights and responsibilities should be associated with the global citizenship concept.

The section "Previous research and theoretical framework" earlier in this paper provides an explanation of the theories of vertical and horizontal global citizenship. It can be understood from the results of this study that the perceptions presented by the Indian and Nepalese young adults tend to correspond more with the horizontal form of global citizenship, especially those perceptions belonging to the categories of equality and global responsibility. As Shukla (2009) stated in her article on learning for global citizenship, horizontal global citizenship refers to viewing everyone as equals working to solve global issues through mutual effort. Although the respondents did not express themselves in exactly this way, they still made clear that they think global citizenship is very much related to the idea that we as humans are equal and also have responsibilities towards the world.

The vertical view of global citizenship is also represented in the interview material, but to a lesser extent. The ideas that can be understood as having some connection to the vertical view of global citizenship are the ones that relate to cosmopolitan governance. Global citizenship is here perceived to be based on the relationship between the individual and a world government.

The fact that the horizontal view of global citizenship dominates in the collected material indicates that many of the respondents believe that global citizenship does not require the
introduction of a world government or the recognition of power relations between those who are dependent on support and those who are providing the support.

It thus becomes clear that there still exists a certain level of controversy around the concept of global citizenship. As mentioned, the creation of a cosmopolitan government as a prerequisite for promoting global citizenship has been brought up in the results section of this paper. The present study shows that it is possible to perceive the establishment of a world government as being a necessary condition for global citizenship. However, the study also shows that everyone may not share this view. Schattle (2008) has found that there are those who claim that the creation of this world government is neither wanted nor feasible. Consequently, there is one debate concerning the meaning of the concept of global citizenship and another one relating to the relevance and desirability of a world government as a condition for global citizenship.

Respondents discussed a great deal about the responsibilities of all human beings to create a harmonious and prosperous world society. This statement corresponds with the findings presented by Katzarska-Miller et al. (2012) concerning how global citizenship is perceived by people from India, Bulgaria and the United States. As mentioned earlier in this paper, that study concluded that Indians often tend to relate the concept of global citizenship to actions for the global good. Although people have their own conceptualisations of global responsibility and action for the global good, it is still clear that these issues are believed to be closely linked to the concept of global citizenship.

The results of this study clearly show that global communication can be seen as something that can create both opportunities and obstacles in the promotion of global citizenship. Global communication can lead to a higher level of understanding and cooperation across borders. However, it can also lead to difficulties which are not only caused by language barriers, but also by the fact that many people still do not have access to technological devices, which may be necessary to be able to participate in the communication with the rest of the world. Unless such issues are resolved, it may, according to the respondents in this study, be very difficult or even impossible to fully implement the concept of global citizenship everywhere in the world. As can be understood from the results of the study, it is believed that the future of global citizenship as a concept may come to be determined by groups of people who are in power or who may impose their ideas about global citizenship onto other people who may not have the same possibilities to take part in the debate concerning this concept. It may therefore be necessary to find solutions to
issues related to lack of access to communication before even trying to develop any kind of global guidelines describing what characterises a global citizen and what rights and responsibilities a global citizen should have. Then whether such guidelines are even necessary or desirable is another question which should also be discussed.

6.2 Reflections on perceptions of self in relation to ideals of global citizenship

The results of this study show that people perceive themselves in different ways in relation to their own ideals of global citizenship. Although a few of the respondents do not identify themselves as global citizens at this point in time, they still demonstrate an interest in learning about the world outside of their own home countries. There may be various reasons why someone does not relate himself/herself to the concept of global citizenship; however, one contributing factor may be the lack of exposure to the concept in general. Another reason behind the difficulties in identifying oneself as a global citizen can be lack of access to facilities and opportunities that are only available in certain parts of the world. This problem was brought up by a few of the respondents.

The fact that some respondents are able to see themselves as citizens of both their own home countries and the world, proves that citizenship can be viewed as a multidimensional concept. This particular study primarily focuses on two forms of citizenship: global and national citizenship. However, one respondent also mentioned being a member of a local community, which adds further strength to the assumption that it is actually possible to develop multiple identities and strive to preserve them all.

The strategies suggested for becoming a better global citizen are primarily related to transformation of society. The respondents stated that they would like to become better global citizens by promoting social change locally and globally. They would, for instance, like to help increase people's cultural awareness and educate others about equality. None of the respondents mentioned anything about becoming a better global citizen through the transformation of the self. This is an interesting conclusion, since the study by Parmenter (2011) found that many university students in Hindu and Buddhist areas of Asia associate global citizenship with the transformation of the self.
It is not possible to determine the reasons why the respondents in this study did not mention improving themselves as individuals when discussing strategies for becoming better global citizens. This study is a small-scale, qualitative interview study with a few respondents, whilst the study by Parmenter is a large-scale, quantitative survey study with a greater number of respondents. The fact that the seven young adults that took part in this study did not include transformation of the self in their answers does not necessarily mean that such perceptions of global citizenship do not exist amongst these individuals; it only means that they did not appear in the respondents' answers of the questions in this study. It is important to note that this interview study is based entirely on open interview questions, whilst the survey study by Parmenter was based on both closed and open questions.

It is nonetheless worth reflecting on the links between global citizenship and transformation in relation to the findings of this study. Since all the communication with the respondents took place via the Internet, it can be assumed that they use the Internet on a regular basis to stay connected with people and to stay updated on what is happening in the world. Furthermore, they experience many hardships themselves and see others go through difficult challenges. These factors may together have led the respondents to develop a sense of frustration and also a sense of responsibility to change the current situation. This may partly explain why they think that they could become better global citizens by initially transforming society.

### 6.3 Reflections on perceptions of the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship

First of all, it is worth mentioning that most of the respondents focused their answers on how they perceive the role of university education in promoting global citizenship. School education was also mentioned, but university education was given special attention. The reason for this is most likely the fact that the respondents are or have recently been university students themselves. As a result, they may have found it easier to reflect on their current or recent experiences at university than on more distant memories from their schooldays.

Many of the respondents confirmed my preconceived idea that their discussions and readings on citizenship in formal education mainly focused on national citizenship. Both India and Nepal are in the process of strengthening their national communities. Globalisation and the promotion of
multidimensional citizenship may lead to the nation states making harder attempts to focus citizenship education on national issues in order to preserve their own identities.

Despite the current conditions, the respondents believe that citizenship should also be discussed from a global perspective. This indicates that there are those who think that the contents of today’s school and university curricula should be overhauled and changed, to make it possible for students to reflect on the citizenship concept in a broader context. Many respondents stated that they would like to see the inclusion of the concept of global citizenship in the educational curriculum. However, they are generally not certain about how the curriculum should address these issues or how to transform theory into practice.

Previous research from several countries show that formal education should contribute to the promotion of global citizenship by creating opportunities for students to learn to respect cultural diversity and develop their cultural awareness (Law, 2004; Moon, 2010). According to one of the respondents in the present study, this could be achieved by encouraging students to participate in cultural exchange activities. Such activities could be completed in different ways, either through trips to other countries or through the exchange of ideas and information with the help of modern communications technology. An urgent matter in this regard is finding ways of increasing the number of schools and universities capable of providing such opportunities.

As pointed out in the account of the results of the study, the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship is perceived to be unclear due to terminological confusion. This could mean that it may not be possible to determine exactly in what ways formal education can contribute to the promotion of global citizenship until there exist clear definitions of the actual concept of global citizenship. It is obvious that it would be a big challenge to come to an agreement concerning the meaning of the concept of global citizenship and the strategies for implementing it in formal education. Since education is a much contested field which is to a great extent influenced by national political interests, it would most certainly be a difficult process to try to come up with guidelines that everyone can accept. In addition, the situation becomes even more complex and problematic because of the fact that many people also lack awareness about the criteria for national citizenship.

For these reasons, the goal should perhaps not be to come up with exact definitions and principles regarding the promotion of global citizenship in formal education that everyone has to
agree upon. A more realistic goal may instead be to provide teachers and others working within the field of formal education with necessary tools and resources to be able to present different perspectives on global citizenship. This way students get the support and information that they need to develop their own critical thinking and curiosity, thus hopefully resulting in a greater willingness to further explore possible ways of living and acting in order to improve the current conditions at all levels of society.

7 Final conclusions and suggestions for further research

This study clearly shows that the respondents are interested in discussing the citizenship concept from a global perspective. Those of the respondents who can relate themselves to the concept of global citizenship have presented ideas concerning how they would like to further spread awareness about this concept and thus contribute to positive social change locally and globally. Although some of the respondents currently consider themselves to be far from their ideals of global citizenship, they all still demonstrate a willingness to learn and discuss about this concept. Furthermore, they believe that formal education can contribute to the promotion of global citizenship through the inclusion of the concept in the curriculum or through the strengthening of cultural awareness amongst students by encouraging their participation in cultural exchange programmes. However, the respondents confirmed that a great deal of confusion still exists concerning the meaning of the concept of global citizenship.

Further research therefore needs to be conducted in order to increase the general understanding of these issues. Research contributions could be made by individuals from a variety of academic backgrounds because of the complexity and multidisciplinary nature of the concept. This study focuses on how Indian and Nepalese young adults perceive the concept of global citizenship, how they perceive themselves in relation to their own ideals of global citizenship and how they perceive the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship. An interesting question that could be investigated in further research is how this concept could be promoted collectively outside schools and universities.

As mentioned in the subsection "Previous research", Parmenter (2011) concluded that most of the research that has been done so far has been conducted by Western scholars and focused on countries or areas in the Western part of the world. It may therefore be necessary to conduct further research concerning to what extent this concept can be applied in the rest of the world. In
addition, it would be interesting to investigate the ways in which ideas about global citizenship relate to cultural traditions and living conditions. Lastly, it may be important to further look into ways of including all people in discussions about global citizenship through the use and spread of modern technology in a large-scale experiment.

Currently, there are many people who are marginalised and do not get the chance to participate in research and development that may affect them. Efforts should therefore be made to give all people the opportunity to discuss what it can mean to be a global citizen.
References

Interviews


Written sources


Appendix: interview guide

Perceptions of global citizenship:
- What are your initial thoughts when you hear the term global citizenship?
- What personal qualities do you think a global citizen should have, if any?
- What rights and responsibilities do you think a global citizen should have, if any?

Perceptions of self in relation to ideals of global citizenship:
- Reflect on the possibility of you being a global citizen and a citizen of your nation at the same time. Is it possible?
- How do you view yourself in relation to your ideal of global citizenship?
- Is there anything that you would like to accomplish in order to become a better global citizen? If yes, could you tell me more?

Perceptions of the role of formal education in promoting global citizenship:
- In what context, if at all, have you discussed or reflected on issues related to globalisation and citizenship in school and at university?
- What are your thoughts on the experience/non-experience that you have had so far in discussing issues related to globalisation and citizenship?
- In what ways do you think that school and university education can help encourage people to develop themselves as global citizens?